

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1325 G STREET, N.W., SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005**

ORDER

December 18, 2024

FORMAL CASE NO. 1154, IN THE MATTER OF WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF PROJECTpipes 2 PLAN,

and

FORMAL CASE NO. 1179, IN THE MATTER OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY'S STRATEGICALLY TARGETED PIPE REPLACEMENT PLAN, Order No. 22344

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By this Order, the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia ("Commission") denies Washington Gas Light Company's ("WGL" or "Company") Application for Partial Reconsideration of Order No. 22317.¹

II. BACKGROUND

2. *PROJECTpipes* is WGL's proposed 40-year Accelerated Pipe Replacement Plan, devised to replace aging, leak-prone pipeline structures with the highest risks (e.g., cast iron mains) on the Company's natural gas distribution system in the District. The second iteration of *PROJECTpipes* ("PIPES 2") was initially approved for a period between 2020 and 2023.² By Order No. 21960, the Commission extended PIPES 2 for another year until February 28, 2025.³ On December 22, 2022, WGL filed an application for approval of the third installment of *PROJECTpipes* ("PIPES 3") program and intended it to be in place when PIPES 2 ended.⁴ However, on June 12, 2024, the Commission rejected WGL's proposal as deficient and directed WGL to file a new restructured Pipes Application ("District SAFE Plan" or "Plan").⁵ The

¹ *Formal Case No. 1179, In the Matter of the Investigation Into Washington Gas Light Company's Strategically Targeted Pipe Replacement Plan ("Formal Case No. 1179")*, Washington Gas Light Company's Application for Partial Reconsideration, filed November 20, 2025 ("WGL's Application").

² *Formal Case No. 1154 In the Matter of Washington Gas Light Company's Application for Approval of PROJECTpipes 2 Plan ("Formal Case No. 1154")* Order No. 20671, rel. December 11, 2020.

³ *Formal Case No. 1154*, Order No. 21960, ¶ 20, rel. February 23, 2024.

⁴ *Formal Case No. 1175, In the Matter of Washington Gas Light Company's Application for Approval of PROJECTpipes 3 Plan*, filed December 22, 2022.

⁵ *Formal Case No. 1179*, Order No. 22003, ¶ 49, rel. June 12, 2024.

Commission gave WGL until July 27, 2024, to file the new Plan.⁶ On July 17, 2024, The District of Columbia Government (“DCG”) requested that the Commission extend the time for WGL to file the Plan so that interested stakeholders could have enough time to meaningfully discuss the Plan with WGL before it was filed with the Commission.⁷ WGL opposed this Motion on July 23, 2024, and requested an extension of PIPES 2 through December 31, 2025.⁸ The Commission denied WGL’s request to extend PIPES 2 on July 26, 2024.⁹

3. On October 4, 2024, OPC and DCG filed a Joint Motion to extend the deadline for the filing of direct testimony for the District SAFE Plan, claiming that the time period was too short for them to go through the District government’s procurement process.¹⁰ WGL opposed this Motion and again requested an extension of PIPES 2 through December 31, 2025.¹¹ The Commission granted the Joint Motion to extend the time to file direct testimony by roughly two months and extended PROJECTpipes 2 for the same period, which resulted in the program being extended from February 28, 2025, to April 30, 2025.¹²

4. On November 20, 2024, WGL filed an Application for Partial Reconsideration of Order No. 22317.¹³ On November 27, 2024, the Office of the People’s Counsel for the District of Columbia (“OPC”) and Earth Justice/Sierra Club (“Sierra Club”) both opposed WGL’s request for reconsideration.¹⁴

⁶ *Formal Case No. 1179*, Order No. 22003, ¶¶ 1, 49, and 61.

⁷ *Formal Case No. 1179*, District of Columbia Government’s Motion for Modification of Procedural Scheduled in Order No. 22003, at 5-6, filed July 17, 2024 (“DCG Motion”).

⁸ *Formal Case No. 1179*, Washington Gas Light Company’s Opposition to the District of Columbia Government’s Motion for Modification of Procedural Schedule, at 5 and Appendix A, filed July 23, 2024 (“WGL’s Opposition to Motion for Modification”).

⁹ *Formal Case No. 1179*, Order No. 22241, ¶¶ 1, 9, and 10, rel. July 26, 2024.

¹⁰ *Formal Case No. 1179*, Office of the People’s Counsel for the District of Columbia and District of Columbia Government’s Joint Motion for Enlargement of Time to File Direct Testimony, filed October 4, 2024 (“Joint Motion”).

¹¹ *Formal Case No. 1179*, Washington Gas’s Opposition to Joint Motion (“WGL’s Opposition to Joint Motion”), filed October 8, 2024, at 4.

¹² *Formal Case No. 1179*, Order No. 22317, ¶ 14, rel. October 24, 2024.

¹³ WGL’s Application.

¹⁴ *Formal Case No. 1179*, Office of the People’s Counsel for the District of Columbia’s Opposition to Washington Gas Light Company’s Request for Reconsideration of Order No. 22317, filed November 27, 2024 (“OPC’s Opposition”); *Formal Case No. 1179*, Earthjustice/Sierra Club’s Response to WGL’s Application for Partial Reconsideration of Order No. 22317, filed November 27, 2024 (“Sierra Club’s Response”).

III. DISCUSSION

5. WGL's request for reconsideration essentially seeks the same relief that it has repeatedly sought before: an extension of PROJECT*pipes 2* until December 31, 2025.¹⁵ The reason is also the same: an assertion that denying the Company its requested relief prevents the Company from operating efficiently and effectively while simultaneously disrupting and diminishing the effectiveness of a vital safety program.¹⁶ WGL is particularly troubled by repeated extensions and a pattern of funding the Company's infrastructure replacement projects in temporary increments.¹⁷

6. OPC notes that the Commission has the discretion to control its docket and that granting an extension for the government parties to go through the government's mandatory procurement process to obtain the necessary experts was reasonable.¹⁸ OPC also notes that WGL is statutorily obligated to furnish safe and reliable service regardless of whether there is an accelerated recovery mechanism.¹⁹ And that the Commission has a statutory obligation to ensure that WGL fulfills its decisions while considering the District's climate goals.²⁰ The Sierra Club adds to OPC's objection, its view that WGL's Application is a backdoor approach to getting the Commission to approve an additional eight months of PROJECT*pipes 2*.²¹

IV. DECISION

7. The Commission has both inherent and statutory authority to reconsider non-final interlocutory decisions if we think reconsideration is warranted.²² In our opinion, WGL is simply reasserting the same argument that has already been considered and rejected by the Commission without providing any further explanation than it has already offered. That being the case, we see no reason to change our decision at this time, and WGL's Application for Reconsideration of Order No. 22317 is hereby denied.

¹⁵ WGL's Application at 5.

¹⁶ WGL's Application at 6-7.

¹⁷ WGL's Application at 10-11.

¹⁸ OPC's Opposition at 4-5.

¹⁹ OPC's Opposition at 7.

²⁰ OPC's Opposition at 9.

²¹ Sierra Club's Response at 4.

²² The Commission has previously noted that it has the authority to modify its orders at any time. *See Formal Case No. 1156, In the Matter of the Application of Potomac Electric Power Company for Authority to Implement a Multiyear Rate Plan for Electric Distribution Service in the District of Columbia*, Order No. 20676, ¶ 5, rel. December 16, 2020, citing D.C. Code § 34-602.

THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

8. Washington Gas Light Company's Application for Partial Reconsideration of Order No. 22317 is **DENIED**.

A TRUE COPY:

BY DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSION:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brinda Westbrook-Sedgwick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CHIEF CLERK:

**BRINDA WESTBROOK-SEDGWICK
COMMISSION SECRETARY**

COMMISSION ACTION

FORMAL CASE NO. 1154, IN THE MATTER OF WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF PROJECT *pipes 2* PLAN,

and

FORMAL CASE NO. 1179, IN THE MATTER OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO WASHINGTON GAS LIGHT COMPANY'S STRATEGICALLY TARGETED PIPE REPLACEMENT PLAN,

Date 12/18/24 Formal Case Nos. 1154 & 1179 Tariff No. _____ Order No. 22344

	Approve Initial & Date	Dissent Initial & Date	Abstain Initial & Date
Chairman Emile Thompson	<u>ET/CL 12/18/24</u>	_____	_____
Commissioner Richard A. Beverly	<u>RB/CL 12/18/24</u>	_____	_____
Commissioner Ted Trabue	<u>TT/CL 12/18/24</u>	_____	_____

Certification of Action

C. Lipcombe
General/Deputy General Counsel

Alex Woodward
OGC Counsel/Staff