



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: June 29, 2015

In reply refer to: P-15-34 through -37

Mr. Craig Ivey
President
Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.
4 Irving Place
Room 1409-S
New York City, NY 10003

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters. We are providing the following information to urge Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., to take action on the safety recommendations that are being issued in this letter.

On June 9, 2015, we adopted our report concerning the March 12, 2014, accident in which two adjacent multiuse five-story buildings in the East Harlem district of the Borough of Manhattan in New York City were destroyed by a natural gas-fueled explosion and resulting fire.¹ Additional information about this accident and the resulting recommendations may be found in the report of the investigation, which can be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>, under report number PAR-15-01.

As a result of this investigation, we issued six new recommendations, including one to the City of New York, one to the New York State Public Service Commission, and the following four recommendations to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.:

¹ *Natural Gas-Fueled Explosion and Resulting Fire, New York City, New York, March 12, 2014, PAR-15/01* (Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board, 2015).

P-15-34

Revise your plastic pipe fusion welding procedure to require cleaning of the surfaces to be welded with suitable solvents to remove all dirt, water, oil, paint, and other contaminants as recommended in ASTM F2620, *Standard Practice for Heat Fusion Joining of Polyethylene Pipe and Fittings*.

P-15-35

Revise your plastic pipe fusion welding procedure to specify that the solidified beads should be visually examined after completing a joint to ensure the beads are uniformly shaped and sized around the joint as recommended in ASTM F2620, *Standard Practice for Heat Fusion Joining of Polyethylene Pipe and Fittings*.

P-15-36

Provide clear written guidance to the Gas Emergency Response Center staff on the conditions for promptly notifying the New York City Fire Department and provide additional staff training.

P-15-37

Extend your gas main isolation valve installation program to include strategic locations where long distribution mains currently cannot be isolated, giving priority to pipelines in more densely populated areas.

Chairman HART, Vice Chairman DINH-ZARR, and Members SUMWALT and WEENER concurred in these recommendations.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement them. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov. If it exceeds 10 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

[Original Signed]

By: Christopher A. Hart,
Chairman