



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: June 29, 2015

In reply refer to: P-15-38

The Honorable Audrey Zibelman
Chair
Public Service Commission of the State of New York
3 Empire State Plaza
Albany, NY 12223

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 the Public Service Commission of the State of New York to take action on the safety recommendation that is 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, four to Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc., and the following recommendation to the New York State Public Service Commission:

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).

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Revise your gas utility operator program to ensure all elements of the regulations are included in the 5-year audit plan.

Chairman HART, Vice Chairman DINH-ZARR, and Members SUMWALT and WEENER concurred in this recommendation.

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is 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 it. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation 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