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For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

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Commission Approves Innovative Program for Pipeline Safety Training *Training Approved for Firefighters*

ATLANTA, June 7, 2012 – The Georgia Public Service Commission today unanimously approved an innovative program to train Georgia firefighters on how to respond and prevent incidents involving natural gas and liquid pipelines in Georgia. The program is funded through a \$100,000 payment by Atlanta Gas Light Company as the result of the settlement of an incident involving alleged violations of federal pipeline safety regulations in Docket 35665. The incident occurred on June 7, 2011 in Cherokee County.

Upon adoption of a motion by Commissioner Lauren “Bubba” McDonald, Jr., the Commission directed the \$100,000 be directed to the Georgia Fire Chiefs Association to implement and manage the program. The Association will conduct the instruction at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, Georgia.

“The people of Georgia will benefit from this program since there is currently no program in place to give first responders, especially firefighters, training to deal with and prevent incidents involving damage to pipelines that traverse our state,” said McDonald, “Especially since 70 per cent of Georgia firefighters are volunteers.”

McDonald’s motion included a requirement for the Association to file semi-annual reports on the program for Commission review.

"This action by the Commission not only will help curb the number of strikes on our vulnerable gas pipelines, but it helps provide preventive training to small and large fire departments across the state," said Commission Chairman Tim Echols.

The Commission enforces pipeline safety laws and regulations in Georgia both under state law and through federal authority granted by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

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