



Contact: Deborah Flanagan
Phone 404-656-2316
Fax 404-656-3020
E-mail: bille@psc.state.ga.us

Georgia Public Service Commission

244 Washington St., S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Phone: 404-656-4501
Toll free: 800-282-5813

News Release

PSC Accepts Amended Stipulation With Atmos Energy On Fatal Gainesville Natural Gas Explosion; Schedules Hearings On Green Power Programs

ATLANTA, May 20, 2003 – At its Administrative Session, the Georgia Public Service Commission (Commission) unanimously accepted an amended stipulation with Atmos Energy to resolve issues involving the December 17, 2002 explosion in Gainesville, Georgia, which later resulted in the death of a citizen and serious injury to a second person. In the amended stipulation Atmos Energy agreed to pay a penalty of \$285,000 in two parts: \$195,000 to fund a statewide natural gas public safety education program in English and Spanish and a credit of \$90,000 to the pipe replacement program. This credit would reduce the monthly rider paid by customers for the twelve months beginning October 2003. The \$195,000 for public education will be under the control of the Commission and Atmos will not derive any advertising benefit from this program. The stipulation also requires Atmos to survey and repair all leaks in its pipes with specified deadlines under Commission oversight and to resolve the 13 alleged violations of federal and state regulations outlined in the Commission's February 24, 2003, report on the incident.

The Commission also rescheduled hearings to be held on July 1 and 2, 2003, regarding Georgia Power Company and Savannah Electric and Power Company's proposed Green Power Programs and Green Energy Pricing. In 2001, the Commission directed Georgia Power to file a proposed Green Energy Program that would allow green energy to be purchased by its customers at an established price but would not impact bills of customers who chose not to participate. Green pricing will allow participating customers to support a greater level of investment in renewable energy technologies, such as solar, wind, limited biomass and limited hydro as defined by the Accreditation Committee Stakeholders Group. The Commission is expected to render a decision in these cases on July 15, 2003.

###