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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

PSC Investigating Natural Gas Line Damages in Snellville

ATLANTA, September 30, 2009 – The Georgia Public Service Commission (Commission) is investigating two incidents that damaged natural gas pipelines inside the city of Snellville, Georgia on Tuesday September 29, 2009 and today September 30, 2009, at U.S. Highway 78 and Fountain Drive. These incidents caused local authorities to close several businesses and evacuate citizens resulting in economic loss and the disruption of traffic and citizens lives. Tuesday's incident involved the cutting of a two inch natural gas line while today's incident involved damage to a four inch natural gas line, both owned by Atlanta Gas Light Company.

The Commission is charged under Georgia law with the enforcement of Georgia's Utility Facility Protection Act (GUFPA), passed in 2000 by the Georgia General Assembly and amended in 2005, aimed at protecting underground facilities from damage and destruction during excavation activities. Violations of the Act are punishable by civil penalty up to \$10,000 for each violation. In addition, the Commission also enforces federal safety regulations for natural gas systems inside the state.

State law and Commission rules require excavators to contact the Utility Protection Center before they excavate near underground utilities in order to have the utilities' locations marked. Once work begins, excavators must use reasonable care to ensure underground utilities are not damaged.

The Commission conducts ongoing education programs to ensure excavators, utility locators and utility employees are familiar with their duties and responsibilities under GUFPA.

For additional information, please visit the Georgia Public Service Commission web site, www.psc.state.ga.us.

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