

Bulletin 2019-08

June 19, 2019

Changes to the AUC's application process for gas utility pipeline applications

On January 30, 2019, the Alberta Utilities Commission issued Bulletin 2019-01 Revision to AUC Rule 020: *Rules Respecting Gas Utility Pipelines*, in which it asked stakeholders to provide written comments on proposed changes to its application process for gas utility pipeline applications under Rule 020.

The Commission regulates applications for new gas utility pipelines and for amendments to existing gas utility pipelines under the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*, the *Gas Utilities Act* and the *Pipeline Act*. In Alberta, gas utility pipelines are pipelines owned by ATCO Gas and Pipelines Ltd. (ATCO) and AltaGas Utilities Inc. (AltaGas), are operated at pressures greater than 700 kilopascals and are licensed under the *Pipeline Act*.

While the Commission is the approving authority for gas utility pipelines, the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) includes all approved gas utility pipelines in its pipeline database. Accordingly, when the Commission approves a new gas utility pipeline or an amendment to an existing gas utility pipeline, the AER database must be updated to reflect the amendment.

Currently, the Commission issues a decision report and a licence for each gas utility pipeline application, regardless of the scope or nature of the application. If the Commission approves an application, it then initiates updates to the AER's pipeline database by filing an application through the AER's OneStop system to reflect the amendment it has approved.

The Commission proposed two material process changes to its application process for gas utility pipeline applications. First, while the Commission would continue to issue a licence for all approved applications, the AUC would discontinue filing related applications to update the AER database using the OneStop system on behalf of ATCO and AltaGas. Instead, ATCO and AltaGas would be responsible for filing the OneStop applications following approval from the AUC. Second, the Commission would continue to issue updated licences for pipeline amendment applications that address minor, administrative changes, but would no longer issue decision reports for these minor applications. The Commission would continue to issue licences and decision reports for all other gas utility pipeline applications.

Written comments were received from ATCO and AltaGas. A comment matrix, which summarizes stakeholder comments and AUC staff responses to these comments, was created and can be found on the AUC's website, in the rule-related consultations section under "Consultations for Rule 020."

The Commission is satisfied that the changes proposed to its application process for gas utility pipeline applications acknowledge that it is more efficient for the holder of the gas utility pipeline licence to make the necessary updates to the AER database because the licence holder has all of the pertinent information related to the pipeline that is the subject of the application. The changes described above will be implemented by amending Section 5 of Rule 020. The amendments will come into effect on **August 1, 2019**.

If you have any questions or feedback with respect to the amendments to Rule 020, please contact Lekan Osanyintola of the Facilities Division at 403-592-4369, or by email at lekan.osanyintola@auc.ab.ca.

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