



# 5 Minute Meeting

June 27, 2014

## Immediate Changes to Plastic Qualifications

### AUDIENCE:

- Gas T&D Operations
- Gas T&D Construction
- All personnel who perform heat fusion plastic connections, including butt, socket, saddle and electro fusions

## Why It Matters To You

Effective immediately, we are stopping all non-emergency heat fusion work by all employees until they are re-qualified using both a visual verification **and** appropriate destructive testing. This includes butt, socket, saddle and electro fusions. We will perform any emergency work that arises during the stand-down period, and we have outlined the specific steps that need to be taken in the key discussion points.

We have identified a gap concerning our plastic qualifications process. Effective immediately our re-qualification procedure will require both a visual verification and destructive test, similar to our initial qualification requirements consistent with federal and state regulations.

A list of employees who are qualified was published June 27, 2014 and will be updated as qualifications continue on a daily basis. Only employees on this list are deemed to be qualified. Inspectors must continue to assure contractors can demonstrate proof that they possess the necessary qualifications.

This issue does not impact work conducted by our contractors and applicant installers, or by employees who were **initially** qualified to perform this work during the past 12 months, as the qualifications for these groups included destructive testing in addition to a visual verification. We will be working to re-qualify employees as quickly as possible and will provide additional details separately.

In addition, we want to emphasize that employees and inspectors have the responsibility to immediately report to their supervisor every instance where a heat fusion on plastic pipe is accepted visually and then subsequently fails during the pressure test or soap test. The employee or contractor who performed the work will need to be re-qualified with both visual verification and destructive test requirements.

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## Key Discussion Points - - Emergency Response

- 1) During emergency response, the first actions are to "make safe".
- 2) After that, an employee or contractor who is currently qualified under both the visual and destructive test criteria should be the primary option to perform any fusion work.
- 3) If there is no employee or contractor available who is qualified under the visual and destructive testing criteria, consider using mechanical fittings to make the repair (e.g. stab fittings, bolt on, and other approved fittings).

- 4) If steps 2 or 3 cannot be followed, then an employee who was previously qualified under the former criteria of visual verification can perform the fusion.
    - a) If that connection is successful (passes a pressure and soap test), then the excavation should be secured on a temporary basis using appropriate barricades and/or plates.
    - b) If that connection is not successful, the employee who performed the connection will be deemed unqualified and the joint must be replaced. In this circumstance, the employee should not perform any other fusion work until the employee is re-qualified with visual verification and destructive test requirements.
    - c) Another employee must step in to make a successful fusion connection and the excavation should be secured on a temporary basis.
  - 5) The employee involved in 4a or 4c above, will be re-qualified on a prioritized basis within the next work day to the extent feasible.
    - a) If the employee passes the re-qualification, the successful connection made as part of the emergency response will then be accepted and the excavation can be backfilled.
    - b) If the employee does not pass the re-qualification, the connection made during the emergency response will need to be cut out and replaced by an employee that meets the new re-qualification requirements.
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## For Additional Information

Please contact Redacted / 925-328-5783), **Peter Kenny** (PXKZ / 925-244-3109), or **Ross Leverett** (RALW / 209-576-6586) if you have any questions regarding the stand down or requalification process.