

March 24, 2011

Office of Consumer Services
NYS Public Service Commission
3 Empire State Plaza
Albany NY 12223

Draft

Subject: Request To Investigate Public Utility Infrastructure Located In A Growing Sink Hole Area

Dear Sir:

We the undersigned are requesting immediate assistance related to the possible disruption of utility service and subsequent safety concerns due to the presence of a large sink hole. This sink hole is located in a common area between Parkwood St. and Elmwood St. in the Hamlet of McKownville approximately 300 ft North of Western Ave. (Rte. 20). The sink hole is 15 feet in diameter and has flooded an area of 20 ft by 100 ft with up to 12 inches of water. We believe that the sink hole is the result of a broken storm water pipe. We are concerned that this sink hole is expanding as a steady stream of water has been flowing from it for over the past two weeks and is flooding yards and basements of numerous homes. Emergency services from the McKownville Fire Department were required four times during this period to avert further damage to property. We believe this sink hole is a result of a broken storm water pipe. (To date no resolution to the repair of the suspect storm water pipe has been identified) ???

Public utility poles which carry the services for this area are located in this flooded area. One utility pole is located right in the sink hole and is starting to lean over. This pole contains telephone and cable lines. The National Grid power line was removed from this line and subsequently installed on a new pole this past January, 2011. However, the sink hole has grown significantly in size since then and could now be jeopardizing the stability of the new pole. In addition with the development of the continuously flowing stream of water to the back of several homes we are concerned that if the power line were to fall into the sink hole area the entire pool and stream could become electrified resulting in electrocution of anyone or thing within this wet area. In addition disruption to National Grids natural gas service has recently occurred in this area requiring national grid to provide emergency services to at least two homes due to frozen gas lines. Finally, any emergency repairs or maintenance of the utilities within this flooded area would be severely restricted due to the high water and resultant muddy soils.

We would request that all utilities located on the leaning pole located in the sink hole be immediately removed and the pole itself removed. In addition we would request that the other utility poles located within this sink hole area be examined and that any safety measures that can be installed to prevent possible electrocution of persons or things located within the stream of water flowing from the sink hole area be enacted.

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