



**January 16, 2013**

*Issued 3:30 p.m. EST*

## A Statement by Jimmy D. Staton, EVP and Group CEO

Today the National Transmission Safety Board (NTSB) issued its preliminary report on the investigation into Columbia Gas Transmission's December 11 incident in Sissonville, West Virginia. The NTSB has been swift in their response and thorough in its analysis. Columbia's team has also been hard at work, as party participants, assisting the NTSB in examining our transmission line to obtain answers and identify the source of the pipeline failure. In addition, we have taken a number of specific steps, in coordination with the U.S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), the West Virginia Public Service Commission and other state and local authorities, to thoroughly test, inspect and verify the safety and operational integrity of our system in the Sissonville area.

### **We Continue to Work with NTSB**

We will continue to work in close collaboration with the NTSB as the investigation continues. Columbia is committed to a thorough and complete analysis of all factors potentially contributing to the incident. Based on that analysis, we will continue to work with the NTSB and PHMSA -- as well as state and local officials -- to take all steps necessary to ensure the continued safety of our pipeline system. We will also implement appropriate measures based on the recommendations from the NTSB into our infrastructure modernization plan.

### **We Continue to Help Those Impacted By the Incident**

Our teams are doing everything they can to help each and every family in Sissonville impacted by this incident. We have been actively working with affected residents, charitable organizations, state and local agencies and emergency responders following the incident.

Most importantly, we recognize that part of helping Sissonville residents is delivering on our commitment to safe operations. As we continue to restore the facilities that were damaged in the incident, we assure you that the transmission line will not be returned to service until the necessary repairs are made and it is thoroughly tested. We are committed to working with federal, state and local officials, the Sissonville community and our customers to appropriately

restore service to our transmission line and make additional upgrades to enhance the reliability of our system across our entire footprint.

### **We Are Committed to Modernizing Our System**

Over the last several years Columbia has been working to make upgrades to our pipeline system across our entire footprint. In September of 2012, Columbia announced an additional long-term, \$4 billion infrastructure investment plan for pipeline and system upgrades to improve public safety and increase customer reliability and service ([Click to read news release](#)). The initial five year phase of this plan – which has the effective support of all of our customers - is currently awaiting approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). By working in conjunction with customers from across our pipeline system, we believe these efforts represent an integral part of the safe and reliable transportation of natural gas for decades to come.

We are committed to keeping the communities where we operate safe and serving as a reliable source of natural gas transportation to our customers.