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NG15-006

- 1-1) Explain the significant increase in L&U percentages. If there was a leak, explain what steps will be taken to ensure the same issues won't arise again.

NorthWestern is not aware of any specific leaks that were present to drive this number. The historical lost and unaccounted numbers for NorthWestern range from 0.20% to 2.41%. The proposed 2015 number of 2.12% fits within this band of historical percentages.

- 1-2) Explain the measures NorthWestern takes to minimize lost and unaccounted for gas.

A partial list of the measures NorthWestern takes to minimize lost gas is as follows:

- A five year leak survey program where 1/5 of the system is inspected every year.
- Public awareness. Educating contractors, fire safety officials and the general public.
- Locating programs.
- Annual maintenance on regulator stations.
- Valve sectioning of pipelines that limit the area affected by a leak.
- Atmospheric corrosion inspection of above ground facilities every three years.
- A leak reporting process for leaks down to the residential meter fit.
- Odorant checks twice monthly at various locations of the system to insure odorant is reaching the farthest reaches of the line inspected.
- Meter testing program of corrected/uncorrected meters every five years.
- Large ethanol plant meters are tested annually.
- Flow alarms are set up for the early detection of leaks.