

By: Representative Powell

To: Public Utilities

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1186

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO TEST NATURAL GAS PIPING  
2 SYSTEMS IN THEIR FACILITIES; TO CREATE THE DUTY TO PRESSURE TEST;  
3 TO PRESCRIBE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TEST; TO REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE  
4 OF THE TEST TO SUPPLIERS; TO PROVIDE FOR DISCONTINUANCE OF SERVICE  
5 IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES; TO REQUIRE SCHOOLS TO REPORT GAS LEAKAGE  
6 TO SCHOOL BOARDS; TO ALLOW FOR THE PROMULGATION OF RULES; TO  
7 PROVIDE FOR THE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS ACT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

9 **SECTION 1. Applicability.** This article applies to a  
10 facility of a public elementary or secondary school, including a  
11 charter school, or a private elementary or secondary school, but  
12 does not apply to a home school.

13 **SECTION 2. Definitions.** For the purposes of this article,  
14 the following term has the meaning ascribed in this section:

15 "Supplier" means an individual or company that sells and  
16 delivers natural gas to a school facility. If more than one (1)  
17 individual or company sells and delivers natural gas to a school  
18 facility, each individual or company is a supplier for purposes of  
19 this article.



20           **SECTION 3. Duty to Pressure Test.** (1) A person responsible  
21 for a school facility shall perform an annual pressure test on the  
22 natural gas piping system in the school facility. The test must  
23 be performed and results reported to the facility's natural gas  
24 supplier before the beginning of the school year each academic  
25 year.

26           (2) If the person responsible for one or more school  
27 facilities operates the facilities on a year-round calendar, the  
28 pressure test in each of those facilities must be conducted and  
29 reported to the facility's natural gas supplier not later than  
30 July 1 of the year in which the pressure test is performed.

31           (3) A natural gas piping pressure test performed under a  
32 municipal code satisfies the pressure testing requirements  
33 prescribed by this section.

34           **SECTION 4. Requirements of Test.** (1) The person  
35 responsible for a school facility shall have a pressure test  
36 performed by a qualified plumber to determine whether the natural  
37 gas piping downstream of the school facility's meter holds at  
38 least normal operating pressure over a specified period determined  
39 by the Mississippi Public Service Commission.

40           (2) During the pressure test, each system supply inlet and  
41 outlet in the school facility must be closed.

42           (3) At the request of a person responsible for a school  
43 facility, the Mississippi Public Service Commission shall assist  
44 the person in developing a procedure for conducting a test.



45           **SECTION 5. Notice of Test.** (1) A person responsible for a  
46 school facility shall provide written notice to the school's  
47 supplier specifying the date and result of each pressure test or  
48 other inspection.

49           (2) The supplier shall maintain a copy of the notice until  
50 at least the first anniversary of the date on which the supplier  
51 received the notice.

52           **SECTION 6. Discontinuance of Service.** (1) A supplier shall  
53 discontinue service to a school facility if:

54           (a) The supplier receives official notification from  
55 the firm or individual conducting the test of a hazardous natural  
56 gas leakage in the facility piping system; or

57           (b) A test or other inspection at the facility is not  
58 performed as required by this article.

59           (2) A supplier is not liable for any damages that result  
60 from a failure to discontinue service as required by subsection  
61 (1)(b) of this section for a facility other than a school district  
62 facility.

63           **SECTION 7. Report of Leakage.** (1) The results of the  
64 annual pressure test in any facility of a public elementary or  
65 secondary school, including a charter school, or any school  
66 accredited by the State Board of Education, must be reported to  
67 the State Department of Education within thirty (30) days of the  
68 testing.



69 (2) An identified natural gas leakage in a school district  
70 facility in the performance of the required testing must be  
71 reported by the firm or individual conducting the test to the  
72 board of trustees of the district in which the facility is  
73 located, as well as the State Department of Education. An  
74 identified natural gas leakage in the performance of the required  
75 testing in another school facility must be reported by the firm or  
76 individual conducting the test to the person responsible for the  
77 school facility.

78 **SECTION 8. Rules and Enforcement.** (1) The Mississippi  
79 Public Service Commission, as the state agency charged with  
80 enforcement of natural gas pipeline safety standards, shall  
81 promulgate rules to implement the requirements of this subsection  
82 on or before December 31, 2025, to be applicable for the 2026-2027  
83 school year.

84 (2) For those suppliers that are natural gas utilities whose  
85 rates are regulated by the Mississippi Public Service Commission,  
86 each such natural gas utility may include in its energy efficiency  
87 plan and/or energy delivery plan a program that provides financial  
88 assistance for schools to offset the costs of implementation of  
89 the Mississippi Public Service Commission's rules implementing  
90 this article.

91 **SECTION 9.** Sections 1 through 8 of this act shall be  
92 codified in Title 77, Chapter 11, Mississippi Code of 1972, as a



93 new Article 9 entitled "Testing of Natural Gas Piping Systems in  
94 School Facilities."

95         **SECTION 10.** Section 8 of this act shall take effect and be  
96 in force from and after July 1, 2025, and the remainder of this  
97 act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2026.



## TITLE 39: UTILITIES

### PART V: Testing of Natural Gas Piping Systems in School Facilities

#### Chapter 01: Introduction

The purpose of this section is to implement the requirements of Miss. Code Ann. §§ 77-11-401, *et seq.*, relating to the testing of natural gas piping systems in school facilities.

#### Chapter 02: Definitions

When used in this chapter, the following terms and phrases shall have the following meaning:

- 100 “Natural Gas Supplier”** means an individual or company that sells and delivers natural gas to a school facility. If more than one (1) individual or company sells and delivers natural gas to a school facility, each individual or company is a natural gas supplier for the purposes of this section.
- 101 “Commission”** means the Mississippi Public Service Commission.
- 102 “School facility”** means all piping, buildings and structures located downstream of a meter measuring gas service in a public, charter or private school in which students receive instruction or participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities, excluding maintenance or bus facilities, administrative offices, and similar facilities not regularly utilized by students.
- 103 “Person responsible for a school facility”** means, in the case of a public school, the superintendent of the school district or the superintendent’s designee previously specified in writing to the natural gas supplier. In the case of a charter or private school, the principal of the school, or the principal’s designee previously specified in writing to the natural gas supplier.

#### Chapter 03: Testing and Reporting

- 100** A natural gas piping pressure test performed under a municipal code satisfies the pressure testing requirements prescribed by this section.
- 101** A pressure test to determine if the natural gas piping in each school facility will hold at least normal operating pressure shall be performed as follows:
1. School facility pipe testing includes all gas piping from the outlet of the purchase meter to each inlet valve of each appliance.
  2. The test procedure used must ensure discovery of all potentially hazardous leaks in the segment being tested.

3. For systems on which the normal operating pressure is less than 0.5 psig, the test pressure shall be 5 psig and the time interval shall be thirty (30) minutes.
4. For systems on which the normal operating pressure is 0.5 psig or more, the test pressure shall be 1.5 times the normal operating pressure or 5 psig, whichever is greater, and time interval shall be thirty (30) minutes.
5. A pressure test using normal operating pressure shall be utilized only on systems operating at 5 psig or greater, and the time interval shall be one hour.

**102** The testing shall be conducted by a licensed plumber.

**103** During the pressure test, each system supply inlet and outlet in the school facility must be closed.

**104** The testing shall be completed annually, no later than July 1.

**105** A person responsible for a school facility shall provide written notice to the natural gas supplier specifying the date and result of each pressure test or inspection no later than July 15, annually. The results of the annual pressure test in any school facility must also be reported to the State Department of Education within thirty (30) days of testing.

**106** If the school facility operates on a year-round calendar, the results of the required pressure testing must be completed and reported to the facility's natural gas supplier no later than July 1 of the year in which the pressure test is performed.

**107** If any leaks are identified during the test, the firm or individual conducting the test shall immediately report such findings as follows:

1. For all school facilities, an identified natural gas leakage shall be reported to the natural gas supplier and the State Department of Education.
2. In a public school facility, an identified natural gas leakage shall also be reported to the person responsible for the school facility and to the board of trustees of the school district.
3. In a charter or private school facility, an identified natural gas leakage shall also be reported to the person responsible for the school facility.

#### **Chapter 04: Discontinuance of Service**

**100** A natural gas supplier shall discontinue service to a school facility if:

1. The natural gas supplier receives written notification, from the firm or individual conducting the test, that a hazardous natural gas leakage or condition has been detected in the facility piping system; or

2. The natural gas supplier does not receive written notification of the date and the results of the test as required by Miss. Code Ann. §§ 77-11-401, *et seq.* and Chapter 03 of this Rule.

**101** If a natural gas supplier discontinues service pursuant to the provisions of this Rule, the person responsible for the school facility shall notify the Commission of such discontinuance, and the reasons therefore, within fourteen (14) days thereof.

**102** A person responsible for a school facility shall provide written notice to the natural gas supplier confirming that any hazardous natural gas leakage has been repaired or no longer exists in order to resume natural gas service to the school facility.

### **Chapter 05: Procedures**

**100** Natural gas suppliers shall develop procedures for:

1. Receiving and retaining written notice from a person responsible for a school facility specifying the date and result of each test as provided by Chapter 03 of this Rule. The natural gas supplier shall retain a copy of the notice for at least one (1) full year following receipt of the notice.
2. Terminating natural gas service to a school facility in the event that:
  - a. The natural gas supplier receives notification of a hazardous natural gas leak in the school facility piping system pursuant to this Rule; or
  - b. The natural gas supplier does not receive written notification specifying the date that testing has been completed on a school facility as provided by Chapter 03 of this Rule, including the results of such testing.
3. A natural gas supplier may rely on a written notification complying with this rule as proof that a school facility is in compliance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 77-11-401, *et seq.*, and this Rule.
4. A natural gas supplier shall have no duty to inspect a school facility for compliance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 77-11-401, *et seq.*

**101** Procedures for Requesting and Receiving Assistance from the Commission: Should a school facility need additional assistance or guidance regarding the development of internal procedures for implementing these testing requirements, the Commission shall provide such assistance as follows:

1. The person responsible for a school facility shall submit a written request for assistance to the Commission on or before March 15 for any pressure test that must be performed prior to the start of the school in the same calendar year.

2. Written requests shall be submitted to the attention of the Division of Pipeline Safety.
3. The written request shall specify the particular ways in which the person responsible for a school facility needs assistance or guidance in implementing the testing requirements of Miss. Code Ann. §§ 77-11-401, *et seq.*, and this Rule.
4. The Commission shall attempt to respond to timely written requests for assistance within three months of receiving the request. Such responses will be provided in writing and to the person responsible for a school facility.

#### **Chapter 06: Records**

- 100** Each natural gas supplier shall maintain for at least two years a listing of the school facilities to which it sells and delivers natural gas.
- 101** Each natural gas supplier shall also maintain copies of the written notification regarding testing in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 03 of this Rule.

