

Questions for June 22 Meeting clerk@newtonma.gov, aleary@newtonma.gov
From Mothers Out Front Newton, ccallaway083@gmail.com June 13, 2022

Mothers Out Front Newton is very concerned that National Grid is not maintaining the gas turn-off valve covers (curb or gate boxes) in compliance with regulations regarding the safety (accessibility, operability) of the gate boxes. See our [May 18 Memo to Alison Leary](#).

As Councilor Leary requested, in anticipation of the June 22 meeting, we submit the questions below for Newton City Councilors, National Grid, Newton DPW and the Newton Fire Department. We hope the answers will identify opportunities to prevent harm to people and damage to property in an emergency such as the fire in [Marshfield, May, 2021](#), when it took 12 hours for crews to find the valves and shut off the gas.

For City: Fire Dept, Councilors

1. Who in the City is monitoring National Grid's management of Newton's unsafe gas turn-off valves?
2. Does the Fire Department have maps locating gas turn off valves? (Mandl memo to Board of Aldermen 8/26/15, p.3 last paragraph)
3. Can the City suggest that citizens use the 311 process to report bad valve caps? If we call in a bad cap, what would happen?
4. The DPU requires gas companies to correct paved over gas valves within 9 months of discovery. (Mandl memo to Board of Aldermen 8/26/15, p. 3, footnote 2) This does not appear to be happening. How is NG identifying paved over valves to be raised? How is NG coordinating repairs with the City?
5. Are City contracts with paving companies written so that they do not pave over gas valves? Have contracts with City contractors been revised to notify the DPW that gate boxes are not paved over and that there is monitoring of gate boxes by the City in newly paved areas? (Mandl memo to Board of Aldermen 8/26/15, p.9, paragraph 3)
6. Has Newton asked National Grid to include in its permit application for pipeline replacement the pipeline leak grade information as well as pipeline material? (Mandl memo to Board of Aldermen 8/26/15, p. 8, paragraph 4)

For DPW, McGonagle, Fire Dept.

1. What is National Grid's plan to maintain gas turn-off valves in safe functional condition?
2. Who is monitoring National Grid's management of Newton's gas turn-off valves?

3. Have Newton's first responders had National Grid's training for those who may arrive at a gas emergency before gas company personnel? If so, when? How often? (National Grid, Dec. 9, 2020, slide 18)
4. Are permits for pipeline replacement being granted when other work has NOT been completed? (Mandl memo to Board of Aldermen 8/26/15, p. 8 Paragraph 4)

For City Councilors

1. Given the mandates of the 2050 MA Climate Roadmap Law and the Newton Climate Action Plan, has the legal department made any study or recommendations to promote gas pipelines repair rather than replacement?
2. Have National Grid and the City of Newton addressed the risks and followed up on the actions identified in the [*Climate Impacts On Utilities, Page 54 - 56*](#) in the [**City of Newton Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan Final Draft, December 2018**](#)?
3. Did DPU respond to the City of Newton's [10/13/2018 letter](#) asking for oversight and enforcement of safety requirements? If so, what was the action taken?