

January 13, 2017

Honorable Rick D. Chandler, P.E.
Commissioner
NYC Department of Buildings
280 Broadway, 7th floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Gas Service Restoration

Dear Commissioner Chandler:

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to request that you consider limited procedural revisions to allow for a more timely restoration of residential gas service, after emergency repairs have been certified by a Licensed Master Plumber.

I completely understand that the need for safety is paramount, and I am in no way suggesting that safety be compromised. However, after discussions with plumbing industry professionals, I believe there are modifications that could and should be made – especially during the heating season – that would allow homeowners to safely have their gas service restored and their heating systems up and running more quickly.

It has been explained to me that your agency's request to update all the appliances and address other non-complying conditions hamper the expeditious restoration of service by the utility during the heating season. Perhaps there should be a process that requires the owner to address other non-compliances separate and apart from the issue at hand.

If an owner has service shut off due to a gas leak, the application filed by the plumber should solely address that issue. The DOB can make a final inspection before the application is complete, and issue violations to the property owner if additional non-compliances are observed outside the scope of work filed by the plumber. The owner can address those issues on a separate timeline and DOB can follow up with appropriate enforcement as necessary.

I therefore ask the DOB to consider an alternate enforcement process that will not stand in the way of gas restoration after the work is complete and the utility confirms that the leak has been corrected.

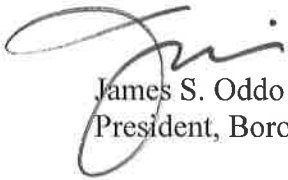


Additionally, I request that the DOB start allowing the filing of LAA applications within the borough of Staten Island. Having dedicated DOB personnel that specifically addresses these applications with the plumbing division in Borough during the heating season would drastically reduce the timeline for processing applications.

Again, I agree that safety is paramount, but the industry makes a very persuasive argument that the modifications suggested herein would not sacrifice safety to any extent, would address the identified unsafe condition through an emergency filing and would allow heat to be restored in a timely fashion during the most critical time of the heating season.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration. I hope to hear from you soon regarding this issue – winter is here.

Sincerely,



James S. Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island

