



Office of the Mayor

Satya Rhodes-Conway, Mayor

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October 3, 2019

Mike Rowe
Chairman, President and CEO
American Transmission Company
PO Box 47
Waukesha, WI 53187-0047

Dear Mr. Rowe,

On July 19, a malfunction of one of your transformers at the Blount Street substation in Madison caused a dangerous fire and a lengthy power outage on the hottest day of the year.

City, county and state governments were forced to shut down, disrupting government operations for a full day, and average citizens were forced to leave downtown businesses without electricity and negotiate dangerous streets without traffic lights. This was an extremely costly event to the governments and businesses involved.

Thanks to the quick work of the Madison Fire Department, the Madison Police Department, Traffic Engineering and all day emergency planning by the city and the county, no lives were lost. The county worked hard to provide a day-time cooling operation at the Kohl Center and night-time cooling operation at the Aliant Energy Center. Emergency provisions were made for the homeless, the elderly and other vulnerable populations in the impacted area.

On August 5, I met with Greg Levesque, ATC's Director of Environmental and Local Relations, to ask detailed questions about the cause of the explosion, but received few answers. At that meeting, Levesque informed us that a privately contracted, investigative report would be available within a week.

It has been almost two months now and neither the city nor the county have been given the final report related to this troubling incident. This morning, Mr. Levesque refused to turn over the report to my office, indicating that the press release released this week by ATC was sufficient.

But the release raises further questions. ATC says it "consulted with the component manufacturer, conducted additional inspections July 15, 16 and 17, and made plans to take the transformer out of service for a detailed internal inspection on Monday, July 22." But the transformer blew in the interim, on July 19.

October 3, 2019

Page 2

Many questions remain unanswered —

What were the indicators of a significant problem with the transformer?

Why didn't ATC take a troubled transformer so close to the downtown and to a gas station out of service immediately?

What decisions were made by ATC employees and supervisors that contributed to the disaster?

Have any employees or supervisors been held responsible for incident?

What new rules and procedures have been put in place so that such an incident never happens again?

The public deserves to see the full investigative report without further delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SRConway". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Satya Rhodes-Conway
Mayor