

Log 1-6 Oct 568 Rec P-71-2
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: March 9, 1971

Adopted by the NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
at its office in Washington, D. C.
on the 27th day of January, 1971.

FORWARDED TO:)
Honorable Carl V. Lyon)
Acting Administrator)
Federal Railroad Administration)
Washington, D. C. 20591)

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION P-71-2

This is in regard to the regulations requiring the reporting of accidents which occur in liquid pipeline systems. There has been a delay in the notification to the National Transportation Safety Board of certain major accidents. The reason for the delay appears to stem from a deficiency in the regulations themselves.

As you know, the accident reporting requirements are found in 49 CFR 195.50 through 195.62. It is noted however, in section 195.52, that immediate notice to the Administrator, by telegraph or telephone, is required only upon the death of any person as a result of the accident.

The deficiency of these regulations is pointed out in a recent accident. On November 17, 1970, a 6-inch liquefied petroleum gas line operated by the Mid-America Pipe Line Company (MAPCO) was struck by a ditching machine near Snyder, Texas. The line was ruptured and the resulting fire severely burned two men, requiring their hospitalization. One man subsequently died on November 21, 1970, and the other on November 23, 1970. MAPCO forwarded a telegram dated November 23, 1970, which was received in your office on the morning of November 24th. Your Bureau of Railroad Safety personnel quickly notified the Safety Board of this accident; however, by that time, it was 7 days after the accident occurred. Any investigation by any agency at that time would not have been very meaningful, as repairs to the damaged line would have been completed and the area cleaned up, resulting in the removal of most of the evidence. It is noted that according to the regulations, initial notification should have been forwarded by the carrier immediately upon being made aware of the death of the first workman on November 21. However, this still would have been 4 days after the occurrence of the accident.

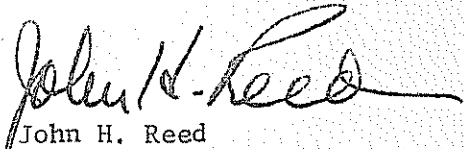
On the other hand, requirements for reporting leaks in natural gas pipelines are more comprehensive in 49 CFR 191.5. It also is noted that requirements for telephonic reports of certain hazardous materials incidents have recently been issued under 49 CFR 171.15.

Based on the foregoing discussion, the Safety Board recommends that:

The regulations for reporting accidents which occur in liquid pipeline systems be revised to require immediate telephone reports under circumstances similar to those which now require immediate reports of gas pipeline and hazardous materials accidents. This will enable the Department and the Safety Board to be made aware, without delay, of accidents requiring investigation, and will result in more meaningful investigations.

This recommendation will be released to the public on the issue date shown above. No public dissemination of the contents of this document should be made prior to that date.

Reed, Chairman, Laurel, McAdams, Thayer, and Burgess, Members, concurred in the above recommendation.


By: John H. Reed
Chairman