

CATS CONNECTION

(Community Assistance & Technical Services)



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Pipeline and
Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration**

*Office of
Pipeline Safety*

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Control Room Management

Working at a fast paced schedule, PHMSA's Control Room Management (CRM) team is diligently drafting a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). The NPRM will affect various aspects of the control room operations for hazardous liquid, LNG and gas distribution and transmission pipeline facilities. While control rooms across the nation are very diverse, elevated public safety and asset protection can be achieved by helping to assure that controllers are well prepared to do their jobs and will react appropriately to abnormal and emergency situations. PHMSA has been actively working for some time to enhance control room operations. This is evidenced by the advisories issued in 1999, 2003, and 2005 affecting SCADA operations or controller fatigue. Work continued with the Controller Certification Project (CCERT) as summarized in the recommendations found in Section 6 of the report to Congress entitled "Qualification of Pipeline Personnel" (Dec 2006) and the public workshop conducted in the Spring of 2007. The Pipeline Inspection, Protection, Enforcement, and Safety (PIPES) Act of 2006 also identified control room enhancements in Sections 12 and 19. The pending NPRM will combine many aspects of these previous efforts.

El Paso Consent Decree

In June of 2001, the Department of Transportation announced a proposed fine of \$2.52 million against El Paso Natural Gas for issues that led to the Carlsbad, NM pipeline tragedy that killed 12 people. A consent decree formalizing the settlement terms was entered with the New Mexico District Court in July 2007. The Public Comment period ended September 1, 2007 and the comments are now being evaluated. This case was the first judicial settlement brought under new authority in the Pipeline Safety Act, with the penalty ultimately being increased to \$15.5 million. In addition to the fine, El Paso Natural Gas agreed to spend more than \$86 million to improve their pipelines' integrity and inspection capabilities. Some of the major actions include making 93% of 10,000 miles of their pipelines piggable. They have already increased the internal inspection of those pipeline miles from 6% to 67%. El Paso also agreed to significantly increase their gas quality monitoring to ensure control of potentially corrosive gas constituents and provide increased training to personnel to better deal with corrosion. A copy of the consent decree is available on the U.S. Justice Department website at http://www.usdoj.gov/enrd/Consent_Decrees/ElPaso/ElPaso.html

NASFM Pipeline Safety Advisory Bulletin

PHMSA has partnered with the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM) to develop an Advisory Bulletin for the fire service based on the lessons learned from a December 2005 gas distribution incident in Bergenfield, NJ. NASFM also developed a gas line break scenario demonstrating the appropriate response to a natural gas leak. PHMSA has posted a link to the Advisory Bulletin and scenario on the Emergency Officials page of the PHMSA Pipeline Safety Stakeholder Communications web site at <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/EmergencyOfficials.htm>.

Pipeline Emergencies Training Materials On-Line

Portions of NASFM's Pipeline Emergencies training curriculum will soon be available on-line. Pipeline operators will be able to provide the Pipeline Emergencies link to Emergency Officials as part of their awareness outreach to these critical stakeholders. The on-line content is not intended to replicate classroom training, but will provide basic information about pipeline safety and instructions for how to get more. NASFM hopes to have web pages available by the end of 2007.

Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA)

PHMSA contracted with the Transportation Research Board (TRB) to study land use practices, zoning ordinances, and preservation of environmental resources with regard to pipeline rights-of-way. The TRB special report, *Transmission Pipelines and Land Use: A Risk-Informed Approach*, recommendations included developing risk-informed land use guidance to address the range of appropriate land uses, structures, and human activities compatible with pipeline rights-of-way. Setbacks, and other measures that could be adopted to protect structures that are built and maintained near pipelines also need to be considered. In January 2007, PHMSA, in conjunction with other Federal agencies, will convene the Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) to develop the land use guidance. In order to be effective, PIPA will require a wide variety of expertise, including planning & zoning, real estate, and pipeline operation & maintenance. Additional information is available at <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/LandUsePlanning.htm>

PHMSA Policy Statement & Request for Comments on Biofuels

PHMSA published a policy statement and request for comments asserting its jurisdiction over the transportation of unblended biofuels by pipeline. Although most biofuels are currently transported by marine vessel, rail, or highway, increasing production volumes may lead to pipeline transportation. PHMSA plans to continue collaborating with stakeholders on biofuel pipeline research & development. PHMSA also stands ready to help resolve technical issues and if necessary, clarify safety standards. The policy statement and comments submitted by stakeholders can be viewed by entering 28136 at <http://dms.dot.gov/search/searchFormSimple.cfm>

INGAA Foundation ROW Workshops

The INGAA Foundation sponsored three workshops related to rights-of-way (ROW) issues in Houston during July. Approximately 45 interested industry professionals from over 15 natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline companies attended the workshops. Topics ranged from ROW acquisition to ongoing environmental issues. John Pepper, OPS Southwest Region CATS Manager, led a discussion on some of the current regulatory issues associated with ROW. John emphasized that CATS Manager assistance is available to resolve issues with class change and the attendant pipe replacements. The workshop also provided another opportunity to promote the use of the new 811 "Call Before You Dig" number.

Emergency Special Permit Guidance

The Pipeline Inspection, Protection, Enforcement and Safety (PIPES) Act of 2006 gave PHMSA new authority to issue Emergency Special Permits. PHMSA may temporarily modify compliance with Federal pipeline regulations to address an actual or impending emergency. Emergencies may be either natural or manmade, but the Special Permit must be in the public interest and may not be inconsistent with pipeline safety. PHMSA will determine the duration of the Special Permits on a case-by-case basis, however no Emergency Special Permit may be issued for a period of more than 60 days. Additional information is available at http://ops.dot.gov/new/emergency_sp.htm

Internal Corrosion in Hazardous Liquid Pipelines

PHMSA has issued a notice of availability of data on the risk of internal corrosion on hazardous liquid pipelines. The notice is at <http://dmses.dot.gov/docimages/p103/486211.pdf>

Rulemakings

Final Rule on Integrity Management Program Modifications and Clarifications (49 CFR Parts 192 & 195)
PHMSA issued a final rule modifying the integrity management regulations for both gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines. The modifications include:

- Adding an eight-month window to the period for reassessing hazardous liquid pipelines
- Modifying pressure reduction and defect evaluation notification requirements
- Repealing a requirement for gas operators to notify local authorities
- Allowing alternatives in calculating pressure reduction when making an immediate repair on a hazardous liquid pipeline

The Final Rule was effective August 16, 2007. The Final Rule can be viewed at <http://dmses.dot.gov/docimages/p101/476749.pdf>

CATS Around the Country

What CATS have been up to lately...

Central Region

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- Participated in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska Regional CGA Meetings
- Participated in Department of State DEIS Meetings for the Keystone Pipeline in Carrollton, MO, Yankton, SD, Stanton, NE, and Seward, NE
- Presented an overview of PHMSA to the McLean County Farm Bureau in Bloomington, IL, the Women's League of Voters in Seward, NE, and at the Indiana Energy Conference
- Participated in API's RP1167 Alarm Standard development committee
- Presented information about the CGA DIRT software to the SWO Safety Council in OH and at the CGA 811 Summit in Lenexa, KS
- Presented information about PHMSA's emergency responder initiatives at the KC Region 7 and Cook County, IL LEPC Meetings
- Participated in Iowa Pipeline Association meeting to prepare for the Second Annual Iowa Pipeline Safety Summit for Emergency Responders
- Assisted Enbridge with permitting concerns related to the Saginaw River Crossing

Eastern Region

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- Presented information about PHMSA damage prevention initiatives during three 2007 Pennsylvania Damage Prevention Safety Days

Southwest Region

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- Presented information on Public Awareness Programs for Pipeline Operators at the Louisiana State Pipeline Safety Seminar
- Presented information on 80% SMYS Waivers (Special Permits) to the National Association of Pipeline Coating Applicators
- Presented information on Damage Prevention and Public Awareness at the Texas Gas Association Operations and Management Conference
- Presented information about the PIPES Act of 2006 during the Arkansas PSC State Pipeline Safety Seminar
- Presented information about PHMSA's Prevention Through People initiative and Public Awareness at the Southern Gas Association Operating Conference
- Represented PHMSA at the Incident Action Plan Workshop conducted jointly by the Central Texas Coastal Area Committee, the Houston-Galveston Area Maritime Security Committee, the Harris County Fire Marshal's Office, the Harris County Office of Emergency Management and the U.S. Coast Guard
- Presented information on the CGA DIRT software at the AGC of Texas annual meeting

Western Region

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- Worked cooperatively with the Alaska Joint Pipeline Office (JPO) regarding oversight of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS)
- Presented information on Pipeline Safety Regulations at three FERC Public Meetings for the Transwestern Pipeline Phoenix Expansion Project in central Arizona
- Presented information on Public Awareness at the NAPS Western Region Meeting in Seattle, WA and the Western Regional Gas Conference in Phoenix, AZ

Headquarters

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- Presented PHMSA proposal for enhancing transmission pipeline damage prevention best practices at the Pipeline Excavation Forum in Calgary, Alberta, Canada
- Led Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) Steering Committee Meeting
- Presented information on the PIPES Act of 2006 and Damage Prevention Grants at the CGA Regional Partner Committee Meeting in Nashville, TN