

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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\$3.4 Million Proposed Civil Penalty for Excavation Damage

On March 4, PHMSA issued a Notice of Probable Violation (NOPV) and \$3.364 million proposed civil penalty to the Colorado Interstate Gas Company, a subsidiary of El Paso Corporation, for eight probable violations related to a November 11, 2006 excavation damage incident. Three of the probable violations accounted for \$3 million of the proposed civil penalty. The NOPV can be accessed from the Enforcement section of the Stakeholder Communications web site by selecting the link titled Enforcement Information for Specific Operators, then Colorado Interstate Gas Co. at

<http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/reports/enforce/Enforcement.html>

Damage Prevention, NARUC, EDPI, and Nine Essential Elements

At the Winter meeting of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), the Gas Committee approved a resolution for excavation damage prevention. The resolution calls for States to incorporate the nine essential elements of an effective damage prevention program, as found in the PIPES Act of 2006. Through the Excavation Damage Prevention Initiative (EDPI), stakeholders produced a Guide to the 9 Elements. This document provides guidance to stakeholders, State legislatures, and State commissions working to incorporate the nine elements into their State damage prevention programs. The NARUC resolution can be viewed at

<http://www.naruc.org/Resolutions/Excavation%20Damage%20Prevention.pdf>

The Guide to the 9 Elements can be viewed on the [EDPI Page](#) of the CGA Web Site.

State Damage Prevention Program (SDPP) Grant Applications

PHMSA closed the first round of SDPP grant applications on February 18. A team of damage prevention stakeholders are currently reviewing the applications and awards are planned for the end of March. State authorities can submit applications in the second round which will close on April 18. The first round applications totaled just under \$1 million, so there will be at least \$500k available for the second round. The SDPP grant opportunity can be accessed by searching on CFDA number 20.720 at

<http://www.grants.gov/search/basic.do>

CGA DIRT Deadline for CY 2007 Excavation Damage Data

The deadline to submit 2007 data into CGA's Data Information Reporting Tool (DIRT) is April 30, 2008. Based on member feedback, CGA's Data Reporting & Evaluation Committee has tightened the schedule for collecting data and publishing the report for 2007. Next year, the data submittal deadline will be further tightened to March 31. By moving the submittal deadline closer to the end of the calendar year, the DIRT report can be published sooner. This report provides valuable insights into the causes of excavation damages to help stakeholders focus their education efforts. All stakeholders, regardless of technological sophistication, will find an efficient method of submitting data at www.cga-dirt.com

Gas Gathering FAQs

Where does gas gathering begin and end? What's the difference between Type A and Type B? These and other questions are answered at http://ops.dot.gov/regs/gathering_faqs_7112007.pdf

Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA)

On January 15-17, PHMSA hosted the initial meeting of PIPA, which will rely heavily on the enterprise approach to improving both community and pipeline safety. Representatives from associations of property developers, home builders, real estate agents, pipeline operators, and Local, State, and Federal Government agencies met to begin identifying best practices for land use planning adjacent to transmission pipelines. Three Task Teams were formed: Protecting Communities, Protecting Transmission Pipelines, and Communications. The Task Teams have been meeting by tele and web conference, and will meet face-to-face in Kansas City, MO on July 9 & 10. The PIPA Steering Committee intends to establish the best practices and communication plan by January 2009. Information about PIPA can be found at <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/PIPA.htm>

Public Awareness Workshop Presentations and Web Cast Archive

On February 20, PHMSA hosted a public workshop on pipeline operator Public Awareness programs in Houston, TX. PHMSA shared findings from the Clearinghouse review of written operator public awareness programs and presented information on supplemental enhancements. Participants also discussed potential changes to API RP 1162. Pipeline operators shared lessons learned from the implementation of RP 1162-style programs. All presentations and the web cast archive are available from <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/PublicAwarenessWorkshops.htm>

Pipeline Marker Workshop Presentations

On February 21, PHMSA hosted a public workshop on gas transmission and liquid pipeline markers in Houston, TX. Markers are a crucial component of awareness for all pipeline safety stakeholders. Discussion during the workshop centered on the appropriate interval between markers, and conditions that make the use of markers impractical. All presentations from the workshop are available at <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/meetings/MtgHome.mtg?mtg=50>

Mechanical Coupling Issues for Gas Distribution Systems

On March 4, PHMSA published an Advisory Bulletin urging gas distribution operators to consider the failure modes of mechanical couplings. The modes include inadequate restraint, incorrect installation, and component degradation. Operators are also urged to ensure leak surveys are adequate to detect mechanical coupling failures. This bulletin updates information originally published in ADB-86-02. The new Advisory Bulletin can be viewed at http://ops.dot.gov/regs/adv/2008/ADB_08_02_Mechanical_Couplings.pdf

Snow & Ice Threat to Gas Distribution

On March 10, PHMSA issued an Advisory Bulletin in response to recent events on natural gas distribution systems. These events appear to be related to either the stress of snow and ice or malfunction of pressure control equipment due to ice blockage of equipment vents. PHMSA urges gas distribution operators to prevent damage to pipeline facilities from accumulated snow or ice. The bulletin can be viewed from <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=DocumentDetail&o=09000064803ef1d5>

Brittle-Like Failure of Older Plastics

On September 6, 2007, PHMSA published an Advisory Bulletin for operators of gas distribution systems concerning the susceptibility of older plastic pipe to premature brittle-like cracking. PHMSA previously issued three Advisory Bulletins on this subject. The previous bulletins are summarized in the most recent bulletin:

http://ops.dot.gov/regs/adv/2007/ADB_07_02_Brittle_Like_Cracking.pdf

On February 29, 2008, minor corrections to the Advisory were published:

http://ops.dot.gov/regs/adv/2008/Correction_ADB_07_02.pdf

SENTRI-LD for Monitoring Pipeline Rights-of-Way

On March 5, PHMSA co-sponsored a workshop in Houston, TX to discuss a project named Sensor Enabled Nextgen Technology for ROW Inspection & Leak Detection (SENTRI-LD). The project will focus on various remote sensing technologies and their use in monitoring pipeline rights-of-way for gas and liquid leak detection, ROW encroachment, and change detection. The technology will initially be incorporated onto fixed-wing aircraft and ultimately on Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). The purpose of the workshop was to educate pipeline operators and the pipeline trade associations about the project, discuss related R&D conducted to-date, discuss project structure and financing, and request their continued participation in the initiative. A follow-up meeting will convene in mid-May 2008 at the NASA Ames Research Center near San Jose, CA.

CATS Around the Country

What CATS have been up to lately...

National Events

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- CATS Staff participated in the PIPA Plenary session in January, facilitated the initial Task Team meetings, and are participating in on-going Task Team meetings
- CATS Staff presented information about the Clearinghouse review of public awareness program, supplemental enhancements, and future inspection plans at the February 20 PHMSA Public Meeting
- CATS Staff continue to work with operators to resolve deviations noted during the Clearinghouse review of public awareness programs
- Participated in API Damage Prevention workshop in January and presented proposal for enhancement of CGA Best Practices for transmission & hazardous liquid pipelines
- Presented summary of Clearinghouse review of public awareness programs during the Southern Gas Association web conference in March
- Participated in meetings of the API RP 1162 review committee

Central Region

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- Participated in the Plastic Pipe Ad Hoc Group meetings to discuss with other State and Federal regulators the necessary information to prevent incidents
- Participated in the API RP1167 Alarm Standard Committee
- Participated in the FERC Draft EIS Hearings on the Rockies Express East Pipeline and answered questions about pipeline safety from the general public

- Provided instruction at the SCADA class for OPS Office of Training & Qualifications
- Participated in two FEMA regional training meetings regarding ESF#1 team activation
- Presented information on DIMP and PHMSA Regulatory Update at the 10,000 Lakes Chapter Annual Conference of NACE International
- Provided Control Room Management presentations to the Southern Gas Association
- Presented information on the partnership with the National Association of State Fire Marshals and the National Pipeline Mapping System at the Missouri Pipeline Safety Summit involving First Responders from across Missouri
- Provided Damage Information Reporting Tool presentation for the Kansas Regional CGA and the Associated General Contractors of Iowa
- Provided coordination with FERC, FERC 3rd Party Monitoring Inspection, Mo PSC, Mo DNR and Audrain PWS #2 regarding Rockies Express West construction excavation damage
- Provided pipeline safety information, including information on a special permit, to several citizens who live near the proposed Rockies Express East pipeline
- Provided information to the MO DNR regarding pipeline corridors, vegetation and an understanding of Unusually Sensitive Areas

Eastern Region

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- Participated in and presented information about OPS damage prevention initiatives at the CGA regional meeting in Wall Township, NJ in January
- Spoke at the Pennsylvania One Call Board meeting in Hershey, PA in January
- Participated in the FERC public meeting in Middletown, MD regarding a proposed compressor station for Dominion Gas Transmission
- Presented an overview of OPS at NAFSM's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Meeting in Montour Falls, NY in March
- Conducted a construction inspection at the Dominion Cove Point LNG plant in Cove Point, MD in March

Southern Region

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- Presented on DIMP and Guided Wave Ultrasonic Testing of Cased Crossings at a NACE Birmingham Section meeting
- Discussed PHMSA regulatory requirements at the EPA Region 4 Regional Response Team meeting, in response to questions raised from the anhydrous ammonia pipeline leak in Tampa, FL
- Attended a project meeting for the PHMSA R&D project "Augmenting MFL Tools to Assess Coating Condition"

Southwest Region

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- Served as PHMSA representative on a Pipeline Corporate Security Review conducted by TSA
- Provided a Pipeline Report to the Greater Houston Local Emergency Planning Commission
- Completed construction reviews for new LNG plants on the Texas & Louisiana Gulf Coast
- Participated in the PHMSA Plastic Pipe Ad Hoc Committee held in Austin, TX
- Delivered an "Introduction to Pipeline Safety Regulation" presentation at the University of Texas Petroleum Extension Service
- Provided comments to PHMSA HQ regarding environmental issues associated with expansion of a major refined products line
- Facilitated establishing a CGA Regional Partnership in Louisiana

Western Region

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- Presented PHMSA Strategic Initiatives to NACE Conferences in Idaho, Wyoming, and Colorado in January
- Presented PHMSA Updates at GTN's annual EPT kick-off meeting in Portland, Oregon in January
- Participated in planning meetings for Inspection Integration in Houston (January) and DC (February)