

Log P-52 Not 1369 P-76-61-163

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: September 17, 1976

Forwarded to:

Mr. Frank N. Ikard
President
American Petroleum Institute
2101 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20037

SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

P-76-61 through P-76-62

About 1:51 a.m. on August 2, 1975, an 8-inch pipeline which was owned by the Sun Pipe Line Company ruptured in Romulus, Michigan. Propane escaped from the rupture, sprayed into the air, vaporized, and ignited; flames 500 feet high engulfed a 600-foot-diameter area, destroyed four houses and damaged three others, burned 12 vehicles, and consumed 2,389 barrels (100,338 gallons) of propane. Nine persons were injured as a result of this accident. 1/

A valve at the terminal had been closed against the pipeline stream and caused an abnormally high pressure to build up in the pipe at the leak site. Surface cracks in the 8-inch pipe, which had been dented and gouged previously by outside forces, propagated until failure occurred. The damage had been undetected and unreported.

Although the pump station had been shut down automatically by low-flow controls, the pump was started again manually without clearance, and pumped an additional amount of propane out at the leak site.

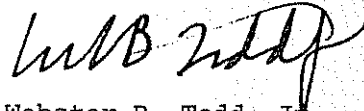
Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the American Petroleum Institute:

Advise its member companies that operate similar pipeline facilities to reassess their station and terminal operating procedures in light of this accident. (P-76-61) (Class II, Priority Followup)

1/ For more detailed information on this accident, read "Pipeline Accident Report -- Sun Pipe Line Company, Rupture of 8-inch Pipeline, Romulus, Michigan, August 2, 1975." NTSB-PAR-76-7.

Reemphasize to appropriate personnel the importance of thorough and continuous inspection during construction to prevent or to report damage to pipeline facilities by outside parties. (P-76-62) (Class II, Priority Followup)

TODD, Chairman, BAILEY, Vice Chairman, McADAMS, HOGUE, and HALEY, Members, concurred in the above recommendations.



By: Webster B. Todd, Jr.
Chairman

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