

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: October 25, 1978

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Forwarded to:

Mr. F. N. Ikard  
President  
American Petroleum Institute  
2101 L Street, N. W.  
Washington, D.C. 20037  
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SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

P-78-64

In its Special Study "Safe Service Life for Liquid Petroleum Pipelines" (NTSB-PSS-78-1), the National Transportation Safety Board learned that most pipeline carriers regard ruptures of their pipelines by outside excavation equipment used in construction as their biggest current problem. These ruptures caused the most accidents in 1974 and 1976 and caused the most liquid loss from pipelines. They also caused the most casualties.

The frequency of these ruptures has remained relatively constant since 1970 while the number of corrosion-caused ruptures has declined significantly. This reduction is apparently due to the effectiveness of corrosion-prevention measures and suggests that liquid pipeline operators should make a greater effort to participate in and encourage development of damage-prevention programs.

Among the many aspects of an effective damage-prevention program is a "one-call" system -- a communication system established by two or more agencies or companies to provide excavation contractors, utilities, public agencies, and private citizens with one telephone number to call and notify operators of underground facilities of their intent to use equipment adjacent to these facilities for the purpose of excavating, tunneling, demolition, boring, blasting, etc. Placing this telephone call provides notification to all participating members of the system and allows them an opportunity to locate and mark their facilities near the proposed work or to post a construction watch if necessary.

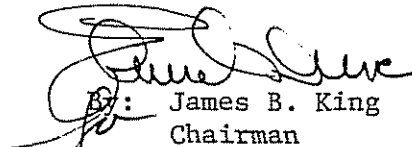
There are currently 106 "one-call" systems in 40 States, and additional systems are planned. Many of the systems are statewide. A survey of "one-call" systems conducted in 1977 claims a markedly downward trend in measured damages in the areas covered by 88 percent of the systems contacted.

The Safety Board, in its report (NTSB-PAR-76-8) of the gasoline pipeline accident in Los Angeles, California, in June 1976, in which nine persons died, noted "... one-call systems are more effective and less costly when all underground facilities operators participate."

While many liquid pipeline operators participate in "one-call" systems where they are available, there are some companies who do not participate. Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the American Petroleum Institute:

Urge its member companies to participate in and encourage improvement in any "one-call" system in areas where their pipelines operate, and help organize systems where they do not exist.  
(Class II, Priority Action) (P-78-64)

KING, Chairman, DRIVER, Vice Chairman, McADAMS and HOGUE, Members concurred in the above recommendation.

  
By: James B. King  
Chairman