

109# P-288A



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: September 9, 1987

In reply refer to: P-87-20

Mr. Charles J. DiBona
President
American Petroleum Institute
1220 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

About 4:20 a.m. on July 8, 1986, line 2N, an 8-inch products pipeline operated by Williams Pipe Line Company (WPL) at Mounds View, Minnesota, ruptured. Unleaded gasoline under 1,434 psig spewed from a 7 1/2-foot-long opening along the longitudinal seam of the pipe. Vaporized gasoline combined with air and liquid gasoline flowed along neighborhood streets. About 20 minutes later, the gasoline vapor was ignited when an automobile entered the area. Following an explosion-like noise, fire spread rapidly along the path of the liquid gasoline. Two persons were burned severely and later died, and one person suffered serious burns. There was substantial property damage and soil and water pollution. ^{1/}

The emergency situation that existed in Mounds View was handled well and efficiently by the fire department. The Spring Lake, Blaine, Mounds View Fire Department was well prepared to respond to this accident. Its members had received prior general hazardous materials training, knew generally of the potential dangers, and had conducted drills to coordinate their response. At the accident scene, the fire department quickly established a marked command post and began an organized response to the situation. Fire department personnel identified the product involved; contacted the shipper (WPL), as well as other groups which were needed for an effective response; and took prompt actions to protect the public. In addition, WPL was able to provide some helpful, but limited, information on the characteristics and status of the pipeline through its representative once on scene. However, had this accident happened in a community where the emergency response personnel had not been as well trained, the severity of the accident would have depended on the assistance and direction given by on-scene WPL personnel.

Although WPL conducts training with local emergency response agencies, the training is limited to those agencies in which the response areas include a WPL terminal or pump station. This apparently reflects WPL's interpretation of 49 CFR 195.402c(4) and (12), which requires a pipeline company to determine areas that require an immediate response and which requires the pipeline company to maintain a liaison with

^{1/} For more detailed information, read Pipeline Accident Report—"Williams Pipe Line Company Liquid Pipeline Rupture and Fire, Mounds View, Minnesota, July 8, 1986" (NTSB/PAR-87/02).

local emergency response agencies that may respond to a hazardous liquid pipeline emergency. The Safety Board believes that WPL's interpretation is far too limited and consequently its actions for compliance with these regulations are insufficient. Also, the Safety Board is concerned that other pipeline companies may interpret 49 CFR 195.402c(4) and (12) in a similar manner.

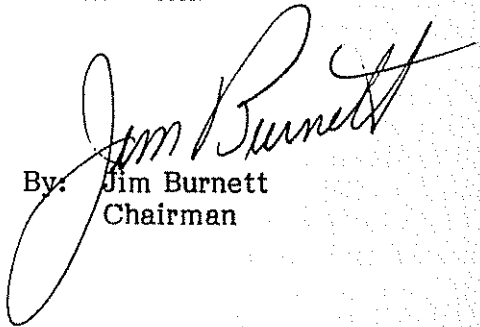
Populated areas around a pipeline, such as Mounds View, require an immediate response to protect the public. As such, pipeline companies should modify their liaison policy with the emergency response agencies in such areas. Coordinating responses to emergencies on the pipeline right-of-way will not only aid the local emergency responders in refining their response plans but will enable pipeline companies to evaluate and correct any deficiencies with its emergency procedures before an actual emergency occurs. However, not all areas would require the same degree of liaison as those areas that surround a tank farm or areas where the pipeline right-of-way is under a heavily traveled street. By working through organizations, such as State fire marshal's offices, pipeline companies could reach a wide range of emergency response agencies to develop improved emergency preparedness within each State they operate. Additionally, through cooperating with State fire marshal's offices, pipeline companies could identify the types and extent of training which should be provided for all emergency response agencies that might have to respond to hazardous liquid pipeline accidents. Certainly, such training should include information, such as the products transported, the location of the line through their community, actions to take in the event of an emergency, pipeline personnel to contact in the event of an accident involving a pipeline, and what assistance to expect from pipeline personnel to aid in resolving the emergency.

Therefore, as a result of its investigation, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the American Petroleum Institute:

In coordination with member companies, develop guidelines for preparing coordinated emergency preparedness plans with communities. (Class II, Priority Action) (P-87-20)

Also, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations P-87-13 through -19 to the Williams Pipe Line Company, P-87-21 through -27 to the Office of Pipeline Safety, and P-87-28 to the Department of Transportation. The Board reiterated Safety Recommendation P-84-26 to the Research and Special Programs Administration.

BURNETT, Chairman, GOLDMAN, Vice Chairman, and LAUBER, NALL, and KOLSTAD, Members, concurred in this recommendation.


By: Jim Burnett
Chairman