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News

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Pipeline Safety Experts to Discuss Tougher Safety Regulations

Discussion will focus on damage prevention & implementation of Pipeline Safety Act

WASHINGTON – The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration’s Technical Advisory Committees (TAC) [will meet in Alexandria, Va., Dec. 11-13](#) to consider two proposed rulemakings that, if implemented, would strengthen federal pipeline safety enforcement programs. The meetings are open to the public.

The [Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011](#) toughened pipeline safety regulations and PHMSA’s ability to enforce them. The committees will discuss proposed changes to the regulations that reflect PHMSA’s new authority, including:

- Increasing the maximum civil penalty for pipeline safety violations from \$100,000 to \$200,000 per violation per day;
- The new \$2,000,000 maximum fine for a related series of violations, up from \$1,000,000. The new maximum could be applied to safety violations that occur after Jan. 3, 2012, the date President Obama signed the act into law; and
- PHMSA’s new authority to enforce oil spill response plan compliance in accordance with the [Oil Pollution Act of 1990](#).

The TACs will also discuss the April 2, 2012 [notice of proposed rulemaking](#) to strengthen state excavation damage prevention programs and increase penalties for violators. This issue is especially important because digging is a leading cause of all serious U.S. pipeline failures.

The [Technical Pipeline Safety Standards Committee](#) and the [Technical Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Safety Standards Committee](#) are each comprised of 15 subject matter experts chosen from federal and state government, industry and the public. The committees advise PHMSA on the technical feasibility, practicability and cost-effectiveness of each proposed pipeline safety standard.

PHMSA encourages public participation in the rulemaking process, and invites the public to attend and make a statement during the advisory committee meetings. For meeting location and instructions for making a statement, see the [meeting notice](#).

Submit comments on this notice through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. All comments must include the agency name and docket number PHMSA-2009-0203 at the beginning of the comment. There is no deadline for submitting comments.

Presentation materials will be available on the meeting website and posted in the eRulemaking Portal under docket number PHMSA–2009-0203 within 30 days after the meeting.

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