

Pipeline Safety: Planning for a Safer Future

MAKING THE PIPELINE SYSTEM SAFER



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Why State Oversight Of Pipeline Safety?

- **Knowledge of local conditions**
- **Consideration of local concerns & risks**
- **Relationship with first responders**
- **Ability to provide quick feedback to public**
- **Odorized gas + local distribution facilities = frequent contacts between operator with customers, public and inspectors = more frequent inspections of system than mandated by federal regulations + possible more stringent regulations**

What Do the States Need?

- **To increase safety oversight, state programs need added resources**
- **Federal help needed: added grant \$ + easier access via waiver (NAPSR talking to Congress)**
- **Potential in-state impediment: Due to spending cuts, some State programs may not be allowed to spend added the federal grant funds they receive**

Question: *How does your commission or oversight agency deal with the potential problem of its pipeline safety program being barred by state legislation or governor's edict from spending the federal funds granted to the program?*

What are possible federal roles?

Three scenarios:

1. Support added resources via grant funding for up to 80% authorized by law;
2. Take oversight away for the state authority; or
3. Station federal oversight agents in state program offices to augment the state workforce.

Question: *If your state pipeline safety program is not allowed to use the added federal grant funds, but enhancements in safety are needed, would you consider greater federal involvement at the state level ?*

Are More Inspectors Needed?

On average, each

- State inspector has 5,000 miles, and
- Federal inspector has 1,900 miles to inspect.

PHMSA-NAPSR task group is re-examining staffing criteria.

Question: *If revised staffing criteria show added staff is needed and if PHMSA is willing to pay for it, what other considerations would you have to address to decide on the staff size in your pipeline safety program ?*

How can we make the system safer?

Enforce excavation damage prevention

Replace inferior, aging pipe

- Risks of failure: external stresses, inferior materials or construction, soil movement, pressure cycles, coating degradation, corrosion
- Urban areas: higher risks, harder to replace pipe

Question: *If needed to increase pipeline safety in your state, what would you be willing to do in order to promote accelerated piping replacement in today's economic climate in your state?*

What can enforcement do?

- **Strengthen excavation damage prevention**
- **Serve as a tool to promote greater pipeline safety** (available: graduated enforcement, fines, rate base cost allowance, rate-of-return control)
- **Public perception: not enough fines**
- **Currently available metrics: damages/ 1000 tickets, leak data, integrity repairs, enforcement actions**

Question: *What should be done to alter the public perception of weak safety oversight in the states?*

