

Mission Statement

The Pipeline Safety Trust promotes fuel transportation safety through education and advocacy, by increasing access to information, and by building partnerships with residents, safety advocates, government, and industry, that result in safer communities and a healthier environment.

Vision

A Vision for Our Communities

We see:

- Communities where residents feel safe from the hazards of energy infrastructure,
- Communities where residents trust their government to protect them from hazards,
- Government authorities that are proactive and innovative in their approaches to accident prevention,
- Energy production, distribution and consumption that is consistent with sustainable development principles,
- Energy and utility industries that are partners in promoting community safety and environmental protection, and
- Washington State as a model for increased community safety through education, outreach, and partnerships among communities, governments and industry

A Vision for Our Organization

We see the Pipeline Safety Trust providing:

- Effective, innovative, long-term solutions to community safety,
- Credible and timely information on fuel transportation safety
- Independent comment and advice to communities, government and industry,
- Inclusive partnership opportunities among residents, safety advocates, government and industry, and
- Accessible and inclusive opportunities to improve public safety and environmental protection.

We see the Pipeline Safety Trust establishing a culture of best practices to ensure that the PST can achieve its mission with excellence over time and in changing conditions.

Values

The Board and staff of the Pipeline Safety Trust value:

- Public safety and public interest
- Trust and credibility,
- Fearless independence,
- Inclusiveness and accessibility,
- Proactive strategies, and

Background

The Problem

Public trust in pipeline safety evaporated in the aftermath of the June 10, 1999 Olympic Pipe Line Company disaster in Bellingham, Washington, when 225,000 gallons of gasoline spilled into Whatcom Creek in a city park and exploded, killing 10-year-olds Wade King and Stephen Tsiorvas and 18-year-old Liam Wood, and causing millions of dollars of damage to property and the environment. The severity of the explosion and subsequent investigation reports left the public with the knowledge that there are serious problems with pipeline safety management and regulation at every level. Fatalities and environmental damage are not unique to the Bellingham incident. Just over a year later, on August 19, 2000, a gas pipeline rupture near Carlsbad, New Mexico killed twelve people, including five children. These and many other tragedies have forced communities nationwide to look more closely at how fuel transportation and energy policies and practices affect their residents and their environments.

There are six primary reasons why pipeline disasters occur:

1. Pipeline (and other transportation system) operators fail to maintain adequate release prevention and response systems,
2. Regulatory agencies provide ineffective and/or inadequate regulation and enforcement,
3. Federal and state elected officials fail to pass laws strong enough to protect the environment and public safety and/or fail to give regulatory agencies the funds they need,
4. Residents and local governments aren't paying attention, or do not have access to the information that allows them to participate
5. There is inadequate liability for releases of transported and stored fuel, and
6. This country lacks a comprehensive and coherent energy conservation policy that is focused on increased conservation and renewable energy sources.

The Solution

An important way to both reverse the inadequacies of industry practice, regulation and legislation and restore public confidence in how fuels are consumed and transported is to create a mechanism that gives the public access to technical and organizational resources. Only then can those most at risk from accidents and mismanagement make important contributions to the policy process and to the implementation of environmental and safety-related changes. When the public, including local residents, are substantially involved in the policy-making process, vigilance and trust will develop that is necessary to restore confidence and safety, changing the present system from confrontation to consensus, from accident response to accident prevention.

PST History

The PST came into being based on the efforts and recommendations of SAFE Bellingham and the families of Liam Wood and Stephen Tsiorvas who were killed in the 1999 explosion. SAFE Bellingham – a grassroots watchdog group concerned with pipeline safety – and the families fought for better pipeline oversight and accident prevention measures. These Bellingham residents made it their number one priority to organize a perpetually funded oversight organization to ensure safer pipelines nationwide. Much of the inspiration for the PST is borrowed from a citizen oversight organization in Alaska that successfully changed oil tanker safety practices after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. The need for the PST gained written support from Washington Governor Gary Locke, the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission, the Washington State Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety, many local governments, and pipeline safety advocates nationwide.

On June 18, 2003, U.S. District Judge Barbara Rothstein ordered that four million dollars of the criminal fines imposed as a result of the Bellingham tragedy be awarded as an endowment to fund the Pipeline Safety Trust. Judge Rothstein noted that the Trust, with only 4 million dollars, was like "Bambi taking on Godzilla," but she chided the pipeline industry to listen to and work with the PST so tragedies like Bellingham do not happen again.

Goals and Strategies

Goal #1				
Long-term partnership of local communities, government, academia, and industry to promote pipeline safety				
Context Whenever possible, the use of a collaborative approach to problem analysis will help the PST resolve policy disputes between key stakeholders, thereby enhancing the ability of the PST to contribute to policy change.				
Strategy	Outcome	Deliverables	Completion	Related goals
1.1 Survey key industry, government and activist reps. to discover common pipeline safety goals and objectives	Increased understanding of opportunities to partner with key stakeholders	“Common Ground” paper outlining goals and objectives common to PST and other stakeholders.		2, 3, 5
		Proposal to partner with one or more survey respondents toward specific pipeline safety outcomes		
		<u>X</u> number of completed industry, government and activist questionnaires		
1.2 Implement initiatives identified in Strategy #1 (above)	Common understanding and increased trust among stakeholders	Initiative/project prospectus and signed agreement (e.g., develop a joint communication plan with WUTC and WA Cities/Counties PS consortium)		3, 7
1.3 Develop and implement agreements with industry and government organizations for communication, rulemaking participation, and data/info. disclosure protocols	Improved and predictable communication and participation in policymaking	Signed memoranda of understanding/agreement		3, 5

<p>Goal #2 Nationwide network of engaged, strategic allies (organizations and individuals)</p>				
<p>Context Local pipeline safety organizations and their leaders become more effective through regular and sustained communication and peer consulting. The PST will be a leader in connecting and building this network.</p>				
Strategy	Outcome	Deliverables	Completion	Related goals
2.1 Organize and host regular pipeline safety conference	Organized network of pipeline safety advocates	Well-attended conference		1, 3, 5
	Common understanding of pipeline safety issues	Published proceedings		
		Legislative, standard setting, and rulemaking and public right-to-know agenda		
2.2 Develop and implement local community awareness and response plans – tools that will allow community residents to organize a response to pipeline accidents, sitings, or other safety-related issues	Accessible technical assistance to local communities	Community awareness and response plan(s)		1, 3
		Training program(s)		
		Expert/consultant database		
		K-12 school curricula		

Goal #3

PST is recognized by the government, industry, and communities as a “go-to” place for independent, credible pipeline safety advice, information and technical assistance

Context

In the past, government and industry have made pipeline safety decisions without the benefit of independent public review and participation. The lack of public participation in these matters is due largely to the absence of both a means to organize diverse public stakeholder views and the resources to access, interpret and disseminate technical information. The PST will provide an efficient conduit of diverse stakeholder comments and knowledge to industry and government.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Completion</i>	<i>Related goals</i>
3.1 Produce new, and compile existing publications for wide dissemination	Increased public knowledge of pipeline safety issues and solutions	“Myth vs Fact” paper(s)		5
		Pipeline safety history paper		
		Newsletter on current and upcoming events		
		International/national best practices report		
		Legislative priorities position paper(s)		
3.2 Develop and maintain interactive web site	Increased public knowledge of pipeline safety issues and solutions	Web site		All
		Links to resources		
		All PST materials are posted		
		Access to interactive network forum (e.g., <i>safepipelines</i> listserv)		
		Action alerts		
3.3 Evaluate PST performance with respect to the strategic plan	Increased PST effectiveness and efficiency	Regular self-evaluation report that includes feedback from stakeholders		

Goal #4

Residents in communities nationwide are aware of their local energy transportation risks and opportunities to reduce them

Context

Residents are largely unaware of the existence and hazardous nature of fuel pipelines in their communities until tragedy strikes. The PST believes that full disclosure and dissemination of information related to transmission pipeline location, condition, and operating history is necessary to help local communities increase safety and environmental protection.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Completion</i>	<i>Related goals</i>
4.1 Develop and implement comprehensive communications plan	Increased public knowledge of pipeline safety issues and solutions	Communications plan including specified audiences, messages, media strategy, and policies		All
4.2 Develop and pursue a public right-to-know agenda	Increased public knowledge of local pipeline operator performance through public information	Web-based federal and state information collection from pipeline operators and public dissemination		
4.3 Produce reports that provide operators an incentive for improved performance through public scrutiny of comparative operator performance	Better individual pipeline operator performance over time	Annual report on the “state of pipeline safety”		
		Pipeline operator “report card”		

Goal #5

Fuel transportation safety regulation and industry practices are focused primarily on community safety and environmental protection

Context

Industry, regulators and legislators have made efforts to improve pipeline safety since 1999; however, there continues to be a limit to the ability or willingness of each to maximize public safety and environmental protection. Industry has shown through the egregiousness of the Bellingham tragedy, subsequent pipeline disasters, and its history of choosing short-term profits over good stewardship that prevention is not yet strongly championed by many pipeline operators. The federal Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS), a tiny federal agency contained within the U.S. Department of Transportation, continues to fall short of its legislative and enforcement mandates according to recent reports by the U.S. General Accounting Office and the DOT Inspector General. And recent federal legislation, while containing some hard-won improvements, does not include many needed safety provisions.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Completion</i>	<i>Related goals</i>
5.1 Develop and pursue a legislative, rulemaking and standard setting agenda	Improved oversight and enforcement of pipeline safety practices	Legislative, rulemaking and standard setting agenda		1, 2, 3
		PST advocacy policy (including, for example, legislator education and lobbying guidelines)		
		Comments on proposed legislation, regulations and standards		
5.2 Develop a rationale and identify key allies for each legislative, rulemaking, and standard setting priority	Increased power in negotiations	Policy position papers with rationale for key allies' concurrence		1, 2, 3

Goal #6				
Fuel transportation safety regulation is based on current, state-of-the-art technology and best management practices				
<i>Context</i>				
Existing and developing pipeline safety technologies promise to reduce the frequency and severity of accidents; however, some industry and government regulators and legislators have resisted investing in and requiring their use. The PST will build awareness of and promote the development and use of such technologies.				
<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Completion</i>	<i>Related goals</i>
6.1 Produce and disseminate information on state-of-the-art technologies	Increased awareness and support for new, promising safety practices	National/International pipeline safety best practices report		
		Report on the status of pipeline safety research and development, including detailed descriptions of promising emerging technology		
6.2 Coordinate pipeline safety research and development demonstration project(s) in WA State	Increased acceptance of new ways of preventing accidents	Multi-party agreement to engage in demonstration project		
		Report of project findings		
6.3 Provide comments on federal, state, and industry research and development agendas	Research and development initiatives that are responsive to community concerns	PST position paper on R&D		

Goal #7

The Pipeline Safety Trust has the resources it needs to be successful

Context

Adequate resources – money, human resources, and access to information – are necessary to participate effectively in the policymaking process at federal, state and local levels. Furthermore, federal regulations require tax-exempt public charities to demonstrate a high degree of public support to maintain the status as a public charity and the right to engage in activities related to influencing legislation. The PST will implement a diverse fund development plan to ensure success and maintain status as a public charity.

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Deliverables</i>	<i>Completion</i>	<i>Related goals</i>
7.1 Develop and implement detailed fund development plan	Increased stability of operating revenue and public charity status	Comprehensive fund development plan		All