Speaking past each other
You think probability, I think consequence

Carl Weimer, Executive Director
One foot in both worlds
or
We Speak Both Languages

Pipeline Safety Trust

Industry  The Public
“Within this climate, for the first time ever, “a person like yourself” is now as credible of a source for information about a company as a technical or academic expert.”
Talking Past Each Other

Hard to communicate and engage when we are often talking about different things using the same words
Example: when talking about pipeline failures

The industry mostly concentrates on probability.

“A total of 99.999997 percent of all gas moved safely though interstate natural gas transmission pipelines in 2014.” INGAA

“99.999% of crude oil and petroleum products delivered by pipeline reach their destination safely” API/AOPL

The public mostly concentrates on the consequences.
Better if we combine probability and consequence?

99.999997% of all gas moves safely through pipelines
Better if we combine probability and consequence?

99.999% of crude oil and petroleum products delivered by pipeline reach their destination safely.
What does “zero” or an incident mean?

- For companies operating natural gas transmission pipelines in Alberta or under NEB jurisdiction an incident in “ANY” release of gas.
- For companies in the U.S. reportable incidents do not occur until 3 million cubic feet of gas is released UNINTENTIONALLY.
What does “zero” or an incident mean?

- For companies operating natural gas transmission pipelines in Canada things like over pressurization is considered an incident, as are deaths and injuries to employees working on a pipeline but not related to releases.

- For companies in the U.S. reportable incidents do not include upset or near miss events, and only include deaths and injuries associated with releases.
What does “zero” or an incident mean?

Significant differences in definition in the U.S. between Natural Gas and Hazardous Liquid pipeline incidents

- Hazardous liquid pipelines required to include value of lost product in property damage thresholds, natural gas pipelines do not.

- Spill thresholds for reporting very different between the two types of pipelines – 3 million cubic feet for natural gas, 5 gallons for hazard liquids.
Actually, there is little consensus on what pipeline safety is.

Industry and regulator concentrate on the physical pipeline infrastructure.

The public, and increasingly the courts, take a broader view that pipeline safety includes issues before the pipe is operational, includes upstream impacts, and impacts from use of the products transported.
One major PST project for 2018 – Can we better train each other to understand each other’s language and views? Can that training lead to more meaningful engagement?

Who wants to try?

Thought Leader
One whose views on a subject are taken to be authoritative and influential.
Thank You!

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