

Safe Pipelines

Know what's below

A Publication of the Pipeline Safety Trust

Winter 2012

Creating A Larger Public Voice For Pipeline Safety

Sometimes when there are opportunities for public involvement in pipeline safety issues, there is no public voice to be heard. With the help of a recent Community Technical Assistance Grant from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) we hope to establish a growing number of citizens and local government representatives with the knowledge and commitment to take a more active role in participating in various pipeline safety efforts. We have recruited a new group of leaders in pipeline safety advocacy, and will work with them to collectively develop a strategy to improve representation of the public in pipeline safety issues.

Many people become involved in pipeline safety issues because of pipeline incidents or pipelines planned for their communities. Individuals have learned a little - or a lot - about the particular operator or regulator or aspect of pipeline safety that affected or threatened to affect their family or their community. Sometimes when individuals get that far, the crisis of the moment passes, the relevant decision is made, the pipeline goes back in the ground or goes somewhere else, and the concerned individuals move back to other, more pressing, aspects of their own lives. But the pipeline safety risks remain, the same decision-making processes remain, public officials who can't hope to know enough about pipelines to make informed decisions remain, and pipeline safety goes off the radar until another tragedy occurs in another community.

One of our goals is to bring committed people together, let them share their various experiences and knowledge, and jointly develop a strategy for increasing and sustaining the level of communication, partnership and involvement of the public with pipeline operators and regulators. We also hope that this group will find ways to continue to share information, expertise and opportunities for involvement to make pipelines even safer. ■



New Efforts in Salt Lake City



In 2010 the Chevron pipeline in Salt Lake City leaked twice. The first leak sent over 30,000 gallons of crude oil flowing down Red Butte Creek through the city. This double whammy of spills raised the awareness of pipeline safety issues throughout the greater Salt Lake Valley.

In 2012 Salt Lake City has asked the Pipeline Safety Trust to provide a series of activities to help educate local governments and citizens about the pipelines in the valley and provide recommendations for ways they can make the pipelines there even safer.

Over the course of the spring we will be holding a number of "Pipelines 101" type workshops to help educate people about pipeline basics. We will then hold a two-day conference to cover pipeline safety issues in the Salt Lake Valley, and then produce a comprehensive report on the state-of-pipelines in the valley with recommendations for ways to increase safety. ■

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Mission of the Trust

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.

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Carl Weimer – Executive Director

Rebecca Craven – Program Director

Chris Coffin – Webmaster/Graphics

New(Ish) Hire At The Trust

Rebecca Craven joined the staff of the Pipeline Safety Trust in January 2011 as Program Director. She previously served for 3 years as a policy analyst for the Whatcom County Council (WA), working on a variety of growth and land use issues. She is an attorney, and practiced for many years in the northwest, representing Alaska Native villages and Indian tribes in matters ranging from water rights, federal land management, and cultural resource protection to taxation and child welfare. She graduated from Carleton College with a degree in geology, and obtained a J.D. from the University of Oregon School of Law with a certification of completion in the Natural Resources and Environmental Law Program. ■



New Office Location

We've moved our office.

Our new address is:

Pipeline Safety Trust

**300 N. Commercial St., Suite B,
Bellingham, WA 98225**

Our remaining contact information has not changed:

Phone 360-543-5686

Fax 306-543-0978

<http://www.pstrust.org>

PHMSA Rulemaking

The new reauthorization bill directs PHMSA to undertake numerous studies and rulemakings. Additional changes in regulations may be already underway. In 2011, PHMSA accepted comments on two major Advanced Notices of Proposed Rulemaking, one on hazardous liquid lines and one on gas lines that just closed in January 2012. The liquid line ANPRM closed last January, so we expect a new Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for liquid lines in the near future. We are hopeful that the topics will include the expansion of integrity management, leak detection criteria, valve spacing to reduce the consequences of spills, repair criteria, and corrosion control issues. ■

Pipeline Safety Trust Develops Landowner's Guide

With the help of a Community Technical Assistance Grant from PHMSA, we have developed and are distributing a Landowner's Guide to Pipelines, for those who live near pipelines. It outlines some technical basics, explains the rights and responsibilities involved in easy and accessible language to the layperson. Contact the Trust today if you are interested in receiving a printed copy, or download it from our website here: <http://www.pstrust.org/library/docs/landownersguide.pdf> ■



The Pipeline Safety Trust Speaks out in Reauthorization Hearings

Two sessions of Congress, several bills, many hearings and trips to D.C. later, and the federal pipeline safety program has been reauthorized. President Obama signed the reauthorization bill into law on January 3, 2012. The bill represents a series of bi-partisan compromises, relies heavily on directing PHMSA to study a broad range of safety issues, and generally shies away from directing mandatory changes in pipeline safety standards. Unfortunately, many of the safety recommendations of the NTSB following its investigation into the San Bruno disaster were not directly implemented, and were instead relegated to studies by PHMSA.

Bill highlights:

- Maximum available penalties are increased
- New standards for state one-call systems to qualify for grants
- PHMSA may require automatic or remote control valves on new or replaced lines
- PHMSA must consider expansion of integrity management beyond existing high consequence areas
- HCAs are to be included in the National Pipeline Mapping System
- PHMSA must study whether existing regulations are sufficient to regulate pipelines used for transporting diluted bitumen (oil sands crude).
- Provides for the promulgation of new regulations expanding the use of excess flow valves beyond single family homes
- Requires the reporting of exceedances of the Maximum Allowable Operating Pressure (MAOP), the documentation of the basis for MAOP, and the requirement to reverify the MAOP in high population areas if documentation is inadequate.
- Requires that standards incorporated by reference, beginning one year from the bill's enactment, be made available to the public free of charge.
- Requires a study of incidents in inland waterways to determine if depth of cover was a factor in any release.
- Authorizes an additional 10 inspection and enforcement personnel at PHMSA. ■



Carl Weimer, the Trust's Executive Director, testifies during reauthorization hearings last year.

In the Wake of the 2010 and 2011 Tragedies

San Bruno, California

In August 2011, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) completed its 11 month long investigation into the San Bruno explosion in September of 2010.

The report they released blamed the incident on years of negligence by PG&E, who operated the pipeline, as well as ineffective regulators.

They pulled no punches: "You cannot place blind trust in an operator that doesn't deserve that trust," NTSB Chairperson Deborah Hersman said. "(The explosion) is the story of flawed pipe, flawed inspection and flawed emergency response," said Hersman, "It was not a question of if the pipe would fail, but when."

She was no less critical of the regulators, saying the operator "exploited weaknesses in a lax system of oversight". The report makes nearly 40 safety recommendations to the Department of Transportation, PHMSA, the California Public Utility Commission and to PG&E.

The NTSB report echoed many of the same reforms that the Pipeline Safety Trust has advocated. The Trust continues to push for more inspections, stronger regulating authority and stricter standards for building around pipelines in hopes of preventing tragedies such as San Bruno.



San Bruno neighborhood destroyed by explosion of failing PG&E transmission pipeline.



Allentown neighborhood destroyed by explosion following cast iron distribution pipeline break.

Marshall, Michigan

As of February, 2012, the investigation into the cause of the July 2010 Enbridge spill of more than 800,000 gallons of diluted bitumen into Talmadge Creek and the Kalamazoo River is still ongoing. The NTSB announced that the report will not be available until fall 2012 due to the demands on the agency's small investigative staff. Meanwhile, clean up of the spill continues.

Allentown, PA

The NTSB is not investigating the explosion in Allentown that killed five people and leveled several houses due to demands on its small staff from the number of other failures in 2010. The Pennsylvania PUC is investigating the explosion. In 1992, another Allentown cast iron gas pipe failed, leading to an NTSB recommendation to UGI to replace the remaining cast iron pipelines in Allentown. Since 1996, UGI has replaced an average of 8 miles per year in its entire service area. Seventy nine miles of cast iron pipeline remain in Allentown. ■

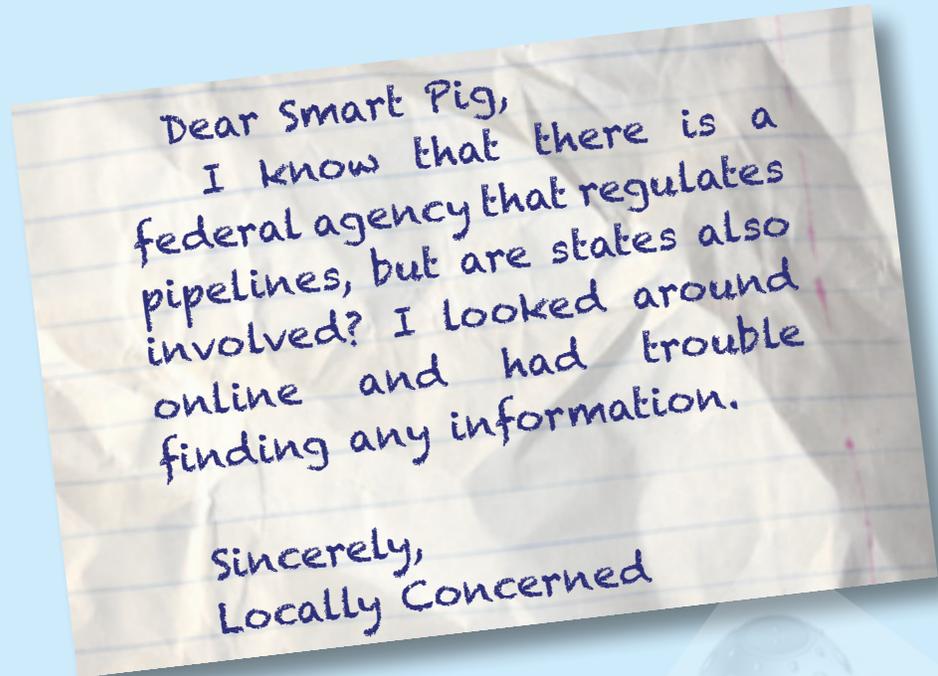


The Smart Pig smartpig@pstrust.org

In **pipeline parlance**, a smart pig is a high-tech device designed to root around inside pipelines. These intelligent little beasts inspect every square inch of the line, calling attention to any needed repairs.

I try to do the same thing for our readers. Send me a question and I'll root through the labyrinth of modern pipeline prevarications to get you the best answer piggily possible: the straight scoop, as we say back in the sty.

Editor's Note: The views and opinions expressed by this pig do not necessarily reflect those of the Pipeline Safety Trust or any human being.



Dear Locally Concerned,

Most state governments in this country regulate some aspect of pipelines within their state, but which pipelines they regulate, and how they go about it varies a good deal. Finding information about their efforts and the pipelines they regulate online can be difficult.

Last summer the Pipeline Safety Trust caused quite a kerfuffle by surveying all the different state websites and grading them based on things that interested citizens most likely would like to find. You can see how your state rated on the chart (to the right).

They compared state regulator websites, and looked for seven key pieces of information. The ratings are based on how easy it was to find the items. If they were pretty easy to locate, they got a "3", if you had to click around a bit "2", if you needed to know the specialized terminology or had to search for them quite a bit "1". If they were nowhere to be found, they got a "0".

Some states took offense with the ratings, but others, like Arkansas, West Virginia, Kentucky, Alaska and Washington, decided providing such basic information to their citizens made good sense and upgraded their websites quickly. The Trust updates the ratings as states let them know things have changed, and will update the entire rating again next summer. You can keep an eye on the results at: www.pstrust.org/resources/regs/statewebsites.htm See how your state measures up!



Public Transparency by State Pipeline Safety Agencies & PHMSA - website review updated 2/1/12

	Contact Info for Agency Staff	Incident Data	Enforcement Records	Inspection Records	Transmission Pipeline Maps	Excavation Damage Data	Pipeline Company Contact Info	Easy to Access Regulations	Totals (avg)
Washington	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Arkansas	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2.875
PHMSA	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	2.625
Minnesota	3	3	3	0	2	2	3	3	2.375
South Dakota	3	2	2	0	2	1	3	3	2
West Virginia	3	3	1	0	3	0	3	2	1.875
Kentucky	3	1	1	1	3	0	2	3	1.75
Texas	3	3	0	0	1	1	3	3	1.75
Michigan	3	0	2	0	3	0	3	2	1.625
New York	2	2	2	0	0	0	3	3	1.5
Utah	3	2	2	0	0	0	2	3	1.5
Idaho	2	0	0	0	3	0	3	3	1.375
Massachusetts	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	1.25
Vermont	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	1.25
Arizona	3	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	1.125
California Liquid*	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	1.125
Colorado	3	0	0	0	3	0	1	2	1.125
North Carolina	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	1.125
Rhode Island	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	1.125
South Carolina	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	1.125
Alabama	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	1
Georgia	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	1
Indiana	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	1
New Hampshire	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	1
Virginia	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	1
DC	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0.875
California Gas*	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0.75
Illinois	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	0.75
Kansas	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
Maine	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0.75
Mississippi	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0.75
Montana	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
Nebraska	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
New Mexico	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
Oklahoma	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
Oregon	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
Pennsylvania	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
Tennessee	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.75
Wisconsin	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0.75
Connecticut	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.625
Delaware	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0.625
Louisiana	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.625
Maryland	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.625
Nevada	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.625
North Dakota	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.625
Alaska**	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0.5
Florida	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.5
Iowa	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.5
Missouri	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0.375
Ohio	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0.375
Wyoming	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.375
Hawaii**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Jersey	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

0 = can't find

1 = difficult

2 = moderate

3 = easy to find

* California is the only state that has different agencies for natural gas and liquid pipelines

** Alaska and Hawaii are the only two states that do not have agencies designated for pipeline safety

State web pages scored during a review in July 2011. This survey will be redone and updated completely each July.

We also will update it throughout the year if we are alerted to changes by citizens or state regulatory agencies.

Leak Detection – State of the art or artful statements?

How much comfort should we take from 24/7 monitoring by state of the art control room leak detection systems, computational pipeline monitoring, and other remote real-time monitoring? There are no requirements in the federal regulations requiring a company to use a leak detection system, and for those who do there are no standards for how well they need to work. So maybe they're as good as it currently gets, but in many cases, leaks are discovered and reported first by neighbors who see or smell the product.

Enbridge is the operator of the liquid line that leaked over 800,000 gallons of crude oil into Talmadge Creek and the Kalamazoo River in Michigan, a leak that persisted for many hours before Enbridge responded. The leak was first noticed when numerous residents smelled and reported a gas-like odor the evening of July 25, 2010. It was not until late the following morning when a gas utility employee discovered crude on the ground near Talmadge Creek that Enbridge was notified by the gas utility and responded by shutting the pipeline down. In the meantime, the line had been shutdown and restarted more than once, and many alarms had been received by the control room indicating a volume imbalance in the section of line that ruptured.

Enbridge says this on its web site:

Enbridge uses advanced leak detection and prevention technologies. We also use proven construction practices and are committed to regular and proactive pipeline monitoring and maintenance. On very rare occasions, pipelines do leak. Enbridge has a very strong, reliable and respected process in place to respond to a leak so that it is immediately stopped.

From <http://www.enbridge.com/InYourCommunity/PipelinesInYourCommunity/FAQ.aspx>

Chevron operates a liquid pipeline that spilled in Salt Lake City twice within 6 months in 2010. The corrective action order from PHMSA for the second spill indicates: "On June 11, 2010, a failure occurred on the Number 2 Line near MP 174.5, resulting in the release of 800 barrels of crude oil. Chevron did not detect or respond to that failure for more than 10 hours." Chevron has since argued that the dramatic elevation changes and resulting pressure changes in that line make leak detection very difficult.

On May 7, 2011 a leak on Trans Canada's Keystone pipeline of nearly 17,000 gallons of crude oil was reported to have been discovered by a neighboring farmer who saw a geyser of oil coming from a pump station. TransCanada spokesman Terry Cunha stated at the time:

"The system is working as it should," said Mr. Cunha. "We built the system to the best of our ability to ensure these things don't happen, but when they do we respond immediately, and we were able to shut down the system within minutes," he said.

Source : <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703730804576313432899153672.html>

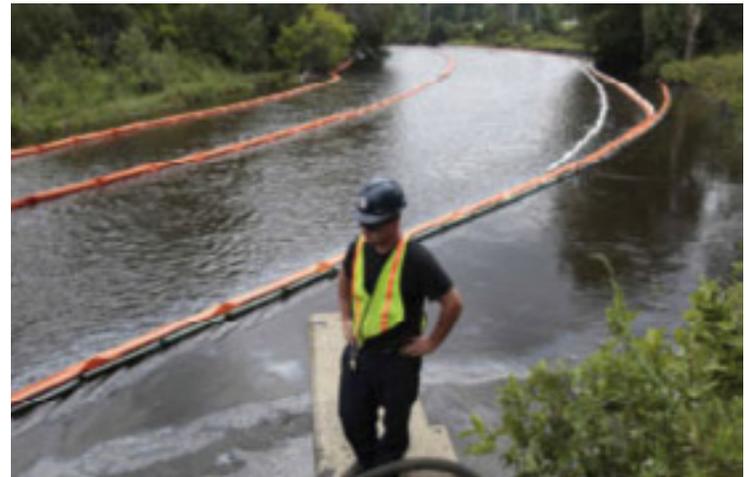
The neighboring farmer disagreed:

Mr. Bob Banderet remains convinced that TransCanada did not know about the leak until he called the 800 number to report it, and that the company didn't believe his description at first. He said the geyser continued for about 30 minutes before it began to abate, and that it was almost 5 hours before the first cleanup trailer arrived to begin to deal with the nearly 17,000 gallons of oil that spilled.

Source: http://journalstar.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska/article_a47b0250-b942-519d-a100-566d33c77f7f.html

The actual record of what happened is a little less than clear since the original PHMSA Corrective Action Order dated June 3 said:

"After being notified of the Ludden Pump Station leak on May 7 by a local citizen, Respondent initiated shut-down of the pipeline and isolation of the area." After some "informal discussions" with TransCanada the



Cleanup continues in the Kalamazoo River.

original Corrective Action Order was amended on June 28 and now reads:

"Respondent reports that on May 7, 2011, its Oil Control Center detected a change in flow rates and began investigating the suspected leak condition and a call came in to the manned notification center from a local citizen who reported seeing an oil release."

Large liquid pipeline operators tell us that their leak detection systems are state of the art and meet or exceed federal regulatory standards, and that they stop leaks "immediately," or "promptly." While that is true sometimes, in a single year their systems suffered multiple leaks, some quite large, and more than one was detected by neighbors well before the leak detection systems reacted. What is the take-away lesson? Are the regulations inadequate? Is current technology inadequate? What will motivate improvement? ■

Planning Near Pipelines

The final report of the Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) ([Partnering to Further Enhance Pipeline Safety In Communities Through Risk-Informed Land Use Planning, Final Report of Recommended Practices, November 2010](#)) was issued in November 2010, after more than three years of hard work on the part of PIPA members to identify and agree on nearly 50 recommended practices for operators, local governments, developers and regulators to improve land use decisions and developments near existing pipelines. The report recommends that local governments obtain and use accurate pipeline mapping data, implement a consultation zone ordinance, provide flexibility in the use of lands near pipeline rights of way, and otherwise improve land use decisions affecting pipelines by remaining cognizant of their locations and inherent risks.

After the report's much-heralded release, there has been a bit of a lull in PIPA discussions. PHMSA has convened a Communications Team, and Carl Weimer and Rebecca Craven of the Trust are among them. The team met in Washington D.C. in February of last year, but since then, progress has been limited to further discussions of how best to proceed. PHMSA has very little budget and no staff to assist local governments in implementing the recommendations of the report. INGAA (a natural gas trade organization) has begun to explore how to encourage the broader implementation of PIPA recommendations as part of its recently adopted pipeline safety "guiding principles," but thus far is focusing on increasing awareness among its members. Local governments, still reeling from the fall in revenues associated with the recession, continue to lay off planning staff in droves. They can little imagine taking on a new planning task that, while important, will not bring in any revenues and is not mandated by any regulatory agency.

The Communications Team is exploring development of a PIPA white paper by the American Planning Association to be made available to its members, and is also exploring how to integrate pipeline awareness into hazard mitigation and emergency planning documents required of most jurisdictions by FEMA.

In Washington State, the Trust has been working with the Association of Washington Cities (AWC), the Municipal Research Services Center and the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to assist several local governments in adopting pipeline safety ordinances, providing technical assistance and a limited number of mini-grants to help cover the staff costs in preparing an ordinance. The mini grants were provided through use of a PHMSA Community Technical Assistance Grant awarded to the AWC last year. We have assisted 6 jurisdictions in the course of the last year, and to date 11 cities or counties have drafted ordinances. Our experience thus far is that assistance to communities needs to be structured to overcome the financial and informational obstacles they face in taking on PIPA implementation.

All of the members of PIPA thought it was important to take part in the report's production, but implementation faces a number of major hurdles. Scaling up the type of consortium developed over several years in Washington

state to a level capable of implementing PIPA on a larger scale will require significant financial and policy level commitment on the part of PHMSA, state regulators and industry. And one could question the true commitment of industry and the benefits of implementing requirements for consultation when, for example:

- A PIPA participant who owns a transmission line adjacent to a proposed new 4 story, 60 unit condominium building in an urban setting first refuses to attend local planning board meetings for months and then at the eleventh hour appears, only to state that construction of the building within 20 feet of a 36" high pressure transmission line poses "no threat to the pipeline," so long as a temporary fence is built during construction.
- A proposed residential development is reviewed by an engineer for another PIPA participant gas transmission operator, and plan modifications are only suggested where driveways cross the easement or houses are shown to encroach onto the easement. More than a dozen multi-story multi-unit townhouses are proposed within 50 feet of a large high-pressure transmission line, the new roads crossed the pipeline in ways that would isolate an entire neighborhood from access by emergency response. Emergency responders in the community raised concerns, but not the operator.

In these instances, "consultation" happened. And yet, the industry's apparent inability or unwillingness to admit that sometimes San Bruno happens and that poorly planned development next to transmission lines is a bad idea, plagues PIPA consultation efforts and perhaps dooms much of the effort entirely. ■

Want to know more? Here is some great reporting on pipelines!

San Francisco Chronicle's great coverage of the San Bruno tragedy

San Bruno Gas Explosion and Investigation
<http://www.sfgate.com/san-bruno-fire/>

Great series of articles about pipelines in Pennsylvania from the Philadelphia Inquirer

Battles Lines

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/special_packages/inquirer/marcellus-shale/134705168.html

The Vancouver Sun's informative nine part series on Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline

<http://www.pstrust.org/NorthernGateway.htm>

Another successful PST conference in New Orleans

Despite some external challenges with thunderstorms and hotel construction, the annual Pipeline Safety Trust conference once again succeeded in bringing together pipeline safety advocates, state and federal regulators, and industry representatives to learn about pipeline safety efforts across the country and hear from a variety of perspectives about personal



tragedies and lessons learned from the rash of incidents in the past 2 years. The NTSB report on the San Bruno explosion acted as a touchstone for many of the discussions, ranging from provisions of the reauthorization bill to discussions of leak detection, emergency response planning, and land use planning near pipelines. Other incidents, including those in Michigan and Salt Lake City, raised discussions of community environmental and economic effects, individual health effects, and, again, leak detection and response. The Allentown explosion raised continuing concerns about aging infrastructure, cast iron pipes, corrosion prevention, and, again leak detection and repairs.

The day before the Trust's conference in New Orleans we worked with the liquid pipeline industry to provide a full day tour of the impressive pipeline and storage facilities at St. James, Louisiana.

The tone for the conference was set by the NTSB Vice Chairman, Christopher Hart, encouraging the establishment of trust among the parties to build a system with fewer errors, allow for collaborative rule making and fair enforcement. ■

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Trust?



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Pipeline-Safety-Trust/273169844517](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Pipeline-Safety-Trust/273169844517)

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