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Pipeline Safety Trust Calls Attention to Pipeline Spill That Dumped 300,000 Gallons of Diesel Near the Mississippi River

BELLINGHAM, Washington [January 11, 2021] – The 16-inch Meraux Pipeline, operated by Collins Pipeline Company, a subsidiary of PBF Energy Inc., ruptured on Dec. 27, which caused 300,000 gallons of diesel to spill into the bayou outside New Orleans.

The pipeline ruptured due to extensive corrosion damage. The pipeline, constructed in 1979, runs from Collins, Miss to Chalmette, LA.

Pipeline Safety Trust Executive Director Bill Caram said this instance was extremely frustrating due to the fact that PBF Energy Inc. had known about the anomaly for over a year.

An official for PBF Energy Inc. reported to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) that the repair couldn't be completed in time because of a holdup in their permitting process.

“Delayed permit or not, it’s maddening to learn that this pipeline has been known to be severely corroded for over 14 months and yet the pipeline remained in place,” Caram said. “It’s especially maddening to learn that Collins Pipeline’s initial analysis deemed the pipe in such poor condition that it warranted an immediate repair.”

Caram said upon Collins' further reevaluation of the same information, they reclassified the Meraux Pipeline at a lower priority for repair.

The spill is adjacent to a levee and only a couple hundred feet from the Mississippi River. To date, around 50,000 gallons of diesel have been recovered.