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## **Statement on TC Energy's Keystone Pipeline's Estimated 588,000 Gallon Oil Spill into Kansas Creek**

The Pipeline Has a Troubled History of Spills and Ruptures

BELLINGHAM, Washington [Dec. 8, 2022] – TC Energy has shut down the Keystone Pipeline after an oil spill into a creek near the border of Kansas and Nebraska. Initial estimates put the spill at 14,000 barrels, or 588,000 gallons, of oil. According to Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) this would be the largest crude oil spill since 2013, when a 20,000-barrel spill leaked from a Tesoro pipeline in North Dakota. This is the largest crude oil spill in Kansas since 1975.

The Keystone Pipeline carries crude oil from Canada down into the United States. This is not the first incident for the Keystone Pipeline. The young pipeline already has a long history of failures; including 12 significant incidents in the 12 years since its operation began, an average of one significant failure every year.

Prior to Dec. 7, spills on the Keystone Pipeline had amounted to 500,000 gallons of tar sands oil and over \$108 million in damages. This week's spill is estimated to have spilled more crude oil than all prior 12 incidents combined. The failure occurred on Keystone's phase 2 line which is 36 inches in diameter and travels from Nebraska to Cushing, Oklahoma.

"It is troubling to see so many failures and so much oil spilled from any pipeline, but it is especially troubling from such a relatively new pipeline. And the vast majority of these failures have been due to equipment malfunction, which doesn't instill public trust and confidence," Pipeline Safety Trust Executive Director Bill Caram said.

In fact, after two large spills in 2017 and 2019, spills that are dwarfed by this week's spill, federal lawmakers requested the [Government Accountability Office \(GAO\) produce a report](#) to

find out why such large spills occurred. The GAO concluded that preventable construction issues contributed to Keystone Pipeline spills more frequently than other pipelines. It also determined that Keystone's largest spills were "caused by issues related to the original design, manufacturing of the pipe, or construction of the pipeline".

TC Energy found the Wednesday Dec. 7 leak after being alerted by leak detection alarms and noting a drop in pressure, the system was then shut in at 8:00 p.m. Central Time. Following the incident, Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) sent investigators to the incident location.

“We look forward to learning more about TC Energy’s response such as how effective their leak detection system was, how quickly they were able to close valves, and why it took over 5 hours from shutting down the pipeline to notify the National Response Center,” Caram said. “Pipeline safety regulations require reporting to the NRC at the earliest practicable moment, but no later than 1 hour after confirmed discovery.”

At this time, cause of the spill has yet to be determined; it is also unknown when the pipeline will be restarted. The Keystone Pipeline, a 2,700-mile system, is a major pipeline that can move more than 600,000 barrels of crude every day.

“This newest failure piles on a history of failures and has now doubled the amount spilled that had already drawn the independent investigation of the GAO,” Caram said. “It may be time for PHMSA to address the potential systemic shortcomings of this pipeline.”

**A Timeline of Ruptures, Spills and Incidents on the Keystone Pipeline**

<b>July 24, 2014</b>
Location: Jefferson County, Texas Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$9,552
<b>April 2, 2016</b>
Location: Hutchinson County, South Dakota Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$9,068,339 Barrels Spilled: 400
<b>December 27, 2016</b>
Location: Carroll County, Missouri Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$45,137
<b>November 16, 2017</b>
Location: Marshall County, South Dakota Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$44,809,560 Barrels Spilled: 6,592

<b>February 20, 2018</b>
Location: Jefferson County, Nebraska Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$170,689
<b>October 20, 2018</b>
Location: Lincoln County, Oklahoma Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$1,501,008
<b>February 6, 2019</b>
Location: Saint Charles County, Missouri Cause: Incorrect Operation Damages: \$8,904,336
<b>August 16, 2019</b>
Location: Dickinson County, Kansas Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$371,086
<b>September 27, 2019</b>
Location: Chariton County, Missouri Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$32,384
<b>October 29, 2019</b>
Location: Walsh County, North Dakota Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$39,278,447 Barrels Spilled: 4,515
<b>April 3, 2020</b>
Location: Ransom County, North Dakota Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$176,758
<b>May 7, 2020</b>
Location: Jefferson County, Texas Cause: Corrosion Damages: \$3,636,378
<b>August 23, 2020</b>
Location: Seminole County, Oklahoma Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$165,552
<b>October 22, 2020</b>
Location: Nelson County, North Dakota Cause: Equipment Failure Damages: \$265,903

**October 5, 2022**

**Location: Butler County, Nebraska**

**Cause: Unknown**

**Damages: \$454,164**

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**About Pipeline Safety Trust:** The Pipeline Safety Trust is a nonprofit public watchdog promoting pipeline 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.