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**EnLink Midstream's Chickadee Pipeline Ruptured and Spilled 402,486 Gallons of Crude Oil Just South of Midland, Texas**

**Faulty operating procedures led to the March 29, 2023 oil spill that resulted in an estimated \$1.3 million in property damages. Despite a functional leak detection system, EnLink allowed the pipeline to continue to leak crude for nearly 3 hours after being notified of the rupture. The spill is the Lone Star State's fourth largest crude oil spill in the last 12 years.**

**BELLINGHAM, Washington** [May 19, 2023] – On March 29, EnLink's Chickadee pipeline suffered an enormous rupture which, according to an incident report submitted to the federal pipeline regulator, Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), was not only caused by EnLink control room operators, but also exacerbated by EnLink personnel leading to 402,486 gallons or 9,583 barrels of crude oil being released from the pipeline only 11 miles south of Midland, Texas.

The 12-inch wide and 6-inch-long rupture on the cast iron transmission pipeline occurred when one of EnLink's operators attempted a procedure against company protocol and training. At 8:36 p.m., the employee switched flows from its Grey Oak delivery point and diverted them to the El Dorado Crude Station. The operator attempted this "on the fly" procedure without lowering operating pressure or flowrates on the pipelines. According to EnLink procedures, pipeline controllers are told they must lower both pressure and flowrate before moving product to a different delivery point. This mistake proved disastrous as it caused the over-pressurization event on the Chickadee pipeline upstream of the El Dorado Crude station, which led to Chickadee's failure. When the pipeline failed it was operating at a pressure of 300 pounds per square inch gauge (psig) when its maximum operating pressure (MOP) is 285 psig.

EnLink states in its incident report dated April 17, 2023 that it did have valves in place on their system that reacted to the over-pressurization event, however, they did not close in time to effectively mitigate such a great spike in pressure on the system.

Following Chickadee's rupture, EnLink's leak detection system effectively identified the leak, however, it was then ignored and improperly addressed by EnLink control room personnel; this mishap led to the majority of the crude being spilled. Just 14 minutes after the pipeline rupture, instead of further investigating why the leak detection system may have gone off, EnLink employees resumed crude oil flows through the broken pipeline, allowing oil to flow unabated onto the ground until 11:26 p.m.

"All too often pipeline operators seem to get complacent in their operations and continue to hit the snooze button on leak detection alarms, all the while dumping hazardous products into the local ecosystem, breaking the public's trust," Pipeline Safety Trust Executive Director Bill Caram said.

Of the 9,583 barrels of crude oil spilled, only 720 were recovered. The incident report states both soil and vegetation remediation must be conducted, it also mentions that no wildlife or water was impacted by the release.

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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.