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PST Requests BP Make a Permanent Fix on Olympic Pipeline

In the last 13 years, Olympic Pipeline has had 26 reportable incidents and spilled over 28,000 gallons of product.

Bellingham, WASHINGTON - [Feb. 4, 2026] – On Feb. 2, Pipeline Safety Trust (PST) sent a letter to the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) asking the agencies to require that BP conduct a permanent repair on a section of the Olympic Pipeline that failed on Nov. 11, 2025 in Snohomish County, Washington.

The failure, Olympic's fourth in the last nine years, required the pipeline to be shut down for a two-week period. To get the pipeline back up and running, Olympic installed a temporary clamp – not a permanent solution. According to Olympic's own internal procedures, the operator can have the temporary clamp installed for up to one year.

While the clamp secured the source of the leak, a 1.5-inch crack in the pipeline, it prevents further investigation from being conducted. To determine why the pipeline failed, a root cause analysis must be performed, and for that to occur, a permanent repair must first be made. Without a root cause analysis, both the operator and regulator are prevented from knowing what caused the failure and understanding whether the same issue could occur on a different section of the pipeline.

"A temporary clamp stops the leak, but it doesn't answer many questions. Until the pipe is cut out and examined, no one knows whether this same failure could happen elsewhere on the pipeline," PST State Policy Advisor Amanda McKay said. "That's why we're asking regulators to require a permanent repair by April 1, so we can get answers."

In 2024, a year before the incident, Olympic conducted an in-line inspection (ILI) that identified the location where the Nov. 2025 leak occurred as potentially problematic. But, instead of

digging up that section of pipeline and investigating further, it appears the operator took no action.

“Olympic knew this part of the pipeline had the potential to fail, and instead of addressing it proactively, they allowed it to go unchecked, and eventually it failed,” McKay said. “Then, continuing a troubling pattern, the leak was reported by a member of the public instead of being found by Olympic. This is concerning behavior for an operator that touts its leak detection technology as working effectively; too often the public serves as the leak detection system for the Olympic pipeline and not the operator itself.”

This is not the first time Olympic has put Washington communities at risk. In 1999, BP's Olympic Pipeline exploded in Bellingham, WA and killed 10-year-olds Wade King and Stephen Tsiorvas, and 18-year-old Liam Wood. In the aftermath of that tragedy, Pipeline Safety Trust was created by a federal court order. Nearly 27 years later, PST is still pushing for accountability on the same pipeline.

According to PHMSA data, if, as expected, the Nov. 11, 2025 incident meets PHMSA's threshold for a significant incident, Olympic will have had four significant incidents in the last two years.

PST is asking both UTC and PHMSA to require that BP have a permanent repair on this section of the Olympic Pipeline completed by April 1, 2026.

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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.