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NTSB Report on Fatal South Jordan, UT Explosion Reveals Crack in Notoriously Problematic Pipe Material as its Root Cause

The explosion rattled a suburban Utah neighborhood and tragically took the life of 15-year-old Logan Hansen. For the second time this year, the NTSB identified Aldyl-A pipe as the source of a fatal failure, it was also at the center of the 2023 pipeline failure in West Reading, PA that killed 7.

Bellingham, WASHINGTON - [April 10, 2026] – In addition to the failed plastic piping, a few more critical areas contributed to Hansen's death: state and federal regulators have not mandated natural gas alarms, Enbridge's integrity management program failed, and the occupants of the house were unaware of the multi-day presence of gas because of a lack of odorant.

According to National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommendations to the federal pipeline regulator, Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) that date as far back as 1998, plastic pipe manufactured in the 1960s to 1980s for use in gas pipeline systems has been known to be susceptible to failures.

Despite PHMSA issuing voluntary guidance on how operators should manage plastic piping, over the last three decades fatal failures have persisted. Recently, PHMSA announced yet another new bulletin that directs pipeline operators on how to address plastic piping materials in their inventories. But again, this bulletin is voluntary and pipeline operators are not required to adhere to it.

When it comes to the lack of natural gas alarms, sadly, this instance is nothing new. At the federal level, there is no current mandate requiring their installation. In fact, this is the third time in a year that the NTSB has issued a recommendation about them. In both its April 2025

report on the West Reading, PA failure and a March 2026 report on a slew of Atmos Energy explosions in Jackson, MS, the NTSB recommended natural gas alarms be either installed or distributed. NTSB has also issued a "Safety Alert" recommending that natural gas alarms be required.

Natural gas alarms work much like a smoke alarm does, but with natural gas (methane) being the trigger; when the level of the gas in a building is high enough to indicate a potential leak, the detector will activate the alarm system alerting the structure's occupants.

According to the NTSB report, a crack in a gas main 150 feet away from the home caused methane to leak into the soil and migrate into the home's basement. Days before the incident, occupants of the house had come down with flu-like symptoms, their water heater had shutoff, and members of the household noticed an unusually high flame when lighting a candle. All of these signs were indicative of the presence of natural gas building up within the Hansen's home. However, because the gas did not give off an odor, they were unaware that was happening.

When natural gas migrates through soil and into a home, as was this case here, mercaptan, an added artificial odorant that gives gas its distinctive smell, can be stripped away, leaving residents with no warning before gas accumulates to dangerous levels. This is precisely why natural gas alarms are so critical as these alarms can still sense the presence of gas despite a lack of odorant.

The report also stated that it took Enbridge 21 hours after the explosion to locate and stop the leak, which is more than concerning. According to the NTSB, during that time, natural gas continued to leak into the ground, which increased the risk of harm to the neighborhood, first responders, and others in the area.

Enbridge has taken several measures since the accident. These include updating their risk protocols for Aldyl-A piping, performing leakage surveys using advanced mobile leak detection technologies, and increasing its budget for replacing high-risk pipe such as Aldyl-A. Enbridge was also reported to have helped distribute 300 in-home methane detectors at a recent event.

"These lessons have already been learned from other fatal accidents with Aldyl-A and other leak-prone piping installed in our communities. Despite risk-based rules requiring otherwise, it is frustrating that operators wait until a serious accident occurs on their system before taking prudent and proactive steps to prevent accidents like this," Pipeline Safety Trust Technical Director Clayton Bodell said. "The risks of Aldyl-A and other leak-prone pipe have been known for decades. Distribution pipeline operators must proactively protect their customers from these high-risk pipes through replacement or at the very least by providing in-home natural gas detectors and alarms, especially where Aldyl-A and other leak-prone pipe is installed," Bodell said.

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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.