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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 14, 1992

Dear Ms. Monahan:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter concerning pipeline safety.

The Administration shares your concern about reducing pipeline-related accidents and fatalities. Because pipelines are operated primarily underground and without human vehicle operators, they do not face many of the greatest hazards associated with surface transportation. The data collected by the U.S. Department of Transportation indicate that there were no pipeline-related fatalities in 1990 and 1991.

Nonetheless, the Department of Transportation continues to assess data on accidents and risk exposure in an effort to design programs best suited to address particular safety needs. The "Call Before You Dig" program is one such effort.

In addition, it is the policy of the Department of Transportation to increase pipeline inspection and enforcement activities directed toward those systems identified as posing a particular risk to public safety. New methods of using electronic equipment and ultrasonic sensing devices have improved the ability to detect potential problems in pipeline systems and equipment. The operators of pipeline systems have the primary responsibility for preventive maintenance and safety of operations, but Federal employees, working in conjunction with State inspectors, have a monitoring and enforcement function.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns with us.

Sincerely yours,

Michael B.G. Froman
Office of Policy Development

Ms. Gayle Monahan
24 Butterfield Road
Newtown, CT 06470

10-4-92



The Letter Hive

All communications accepted for The Letter Hive must include names and addresses of the writers, be signed, and no names will be withheld. If possible, letters should be typed and double spaced. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. Longer letters will be edited or rejected at the discretion of the editor. The editor reserves the right to reject any submission, and the writers, not The Bee Publishing Company, are responsible for all statements and opinions expressed in the letters printed in The Newtown Bee. Please include a daytime phone number (not for publication), so we may verify your letter.

Pipeline Safety Claims Unconvincing

To the Editor:

In regard to your last week's front page article on pipeline safety, I have several points to make.

1. "Experts" quoted say gas leaks and ruptures are rare and "usually far enough away from people to be contained and repaired quickly." Tell me, when a pipeline goes through a residential neighborhood, how can people be far enough away?

On March 15, 1992, a natural gas pipeline exploded in Dixon County, Tenn., creating a forest fire whose intense heat spawned tornado-like winds and caused a nearby pond to boil. Five people were injured; 300 people within a one mile radius had to be evacuated. Due to the gas company's confusion as to where to cut off the gas, the inferno was not brought under control until five hours had passed. Five hundred acres were destroyed. Fortunately, only 4 homes were burned, because this explosion occurred in farmland, not a residential neighborhood.

2. You can prove anything with selective statistical manipulation. The National Transportation Safety Board quoted a few fatalities for pipelines, but thousands for other means of transportation. The difference between pipeline and other transportation safety is that no one individual has a choice when the government lets pipeline companies take your land, whereas the other types of transportation are a matter of free choice, a known risk.

3. "The US DOT reports no pipeline fatalities for the past two years anywhere in the country." However, on April

7, 1992, six-year-old Derrick Meinen was killed when a gas pipeline exploded near his home near Brenham, Tex. His mother died a few days later of injuries sustained in the explosion. Eighteen people were injured. Were there others they don't count in their statistics?

The only reason there were no more deaths is that this occurred in farmland, not a residential neighborhood. Gas company sensors reported the leak at 6:09 am. The blast occurred at 7:08 am. There was no effort to evacuate the area until it was too late.

Those who are forced to live with more pipelines deserve better safety procedures, not vacuous promises from glib PR men. The people who lived close to these explosions had been assured of pipeline safety, just as we are being assured by Algonquin and Iroquois as they promote the increased use of non-renewable fossil fuel for their own profit.

I have news films and newspaper articles to back up my statements and will be happy to share them with those interested. Call 426-3066.

If natural gas is so safe, why do we see so many billboards advising us to run out of our homes if we smell gas?

Sincerely,
Gayle Monahan

PS: Although our home is adjacent to both the Algonquin and Iroquois pipelines, we have never received the reported newsletters with the emergency numbers.
Butterfield Road
Newtown
September 30, 1992

Dear Mr. Porter,

If the President wants to be known as "the environmental president", he should not ignore appeals to stop the needless destruction of trees for a pipeline right of ways that is not needed. Algonquin wants to put a 4th pipeline in our heavily wooded neighborhood. There is already a right of way 150 feet wide here; they could use it; but they prefer the cheaper (for them) way of destroying another 55 foot swath through our forest.

I have written the President several times; my neighbor has sent a petition with over 600 signatures; we have not even received a form note in reply. It is not wise to ignore voters completely.

These clippings demonstrate how gas corporations and US DOT manipulate facts.

We need help - not to be ignored.

Sincerely,
Gayle Monahan

Experts Tout Algonquin, Iroquois Pipelines As Safe

NEW TOWN BEE-9-25-92

A federal safety official and gas transmission line representatives here tout pipelines that transport natural gas to smaller gas companies as safer than the public at large might imagine.

Two of the large gas transmission companies whose lines run through Newtown say leaks or ruptures along the right-of-way are rare, and usually far enough away from people to be contained and repaired quickly.

The Iroquois Gas Transmission System runs 370 miles of pipe from Canada to Long Island, with 11 miles in Newtown. The Algonquin Pipeline Transmission Company has 1,000 miles of pipe in five New

England states, 12 miles in Newtown, and plans another 5.1 miles here and in Brookfield.

Iroquois and Algonquin pipelines pose less of a threat to the homeowner than companies which deliver gas directly to the consumer, said Iroquois right-of-way manager Hubert Harrell and Algonquin field supervisor Edward Harney. This is because the transmission companies only transport gas to the smaller companies (which include Yankee Gas, Southern Connecticut Gas, and Connecticut Natural Gas).

How Safe Is Safe?
Just how safe are these international and interstate pipeline transmission

systems? Very, says John Stoner, spokesman for the Office of Pipeline Safety in the United States Department of Transportation's (US DOT) Research and Special Programs Administration.

That office regulates everything involved with operating an estimated 1.7 million miles of gas and liquid pipeline across the country — everything from certification awarded by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to construction, gas pressures guidelines, and monitoring, Mr. Stoner said.

"Pipelines are really lifelines for the country," Mr. Stoner said. "Very, very safe, particularly with the kind of product being moved. You wouldn't want that product to be carried any other

way. Companies are very compliance conscious."

Mr. Harrell, who has over 20 years experience in the pipeline business, agreed that gasoline transport is safer than over-the-road tanker travel.

According to statistics compiled by the National Transportation Safety Board in an Algonquin brochure, US fatalities in 1988 totalled 20 for pipelines, but in the thousands for highways, pedestrians, marine, and aviation transportation, and in the hundreds for railroads.

US DOT statistics support the contention that gas leaks and ruptures are relatively rare for transmission companies that transport natural gas.

Federal Statistics

The US DOT reports no pipeline fatalities for the past two years anywhere in the country, 12 injuries in 1991 and 71 failures. Statistics from 1982 through 1991 show a steady decline in all three areas.

Fatalities hit a high of 22 in 1989, and injuries topped 41 back in 1982. Failures ranged between 520 in 1982 and 127 in 1985, but then dropped off sharply, to less than a hundred a year.

Iroquois and Algonquin boast impressive safety records. Iroquois, which just began operating in January, has had no incidents, with the exception of a small leak in Lewis County, NY, Mr. Davis said. Algonquin has had only two incidents in 39 years, said Mr. Harney.

"Neither of the failures resulted in injury or property damage," added Mr. Harney.

who has worked for the company for 32 years.

Prevention

Iroquois and Algonquin spokesmen say the companies take several preventive measures to avoid leaks or ruptures of any kind, or ignition of the gas, which could lead to an explosion.

"Our biggest problem and potential for leaks is third party or outside contractors digging near the pipeline," said Mr. Harrell.

The two companies participate in the "Call Before You Dig" program, which requires contractors and private landowners excavating anything larger than an 18-inch hole to call Asplund Services in Hamden two full working days prior to digging. The Hamden service runs a computer that can spot the exact location of the pipeline and prevent accidents, Mr. Harney and Iroquois spokesman Gary Davis said.

Accidents do happen, as US DOT statistics indicate.

"There's one thing about pipeline problems," Mr. Stoner said, "and that is, no two are alike." He described one where someone stuck a rebar's for sale sign in the ground and ruptured a pipe. One liquid gas line was disrupted by construction on a golf course in North Carolina. The Call Before You Dig program has "improved the situation" in most states, he added.

Gas transmission companies immediately notify the US DOT Office of Pipeline Safety when there is a problem, and response is typically quick. Usually a pipeline is repaired within a couple days, the federal official noted.

"Usually, when there's an

accident or situation deemed unsafe, we issue a hazardous facility order. Often we just reduce pressure [in the line]," Mr. Stoner said.

Iroquois senior engineer Richard McGregor, Mr. Davis, and Mr. Harney, the Algonquin spokesman, say Call Before You Dig 1-800 numbers, along with company emergency 1-800 numbers, are posted on vent pipes and tags along pipeline rights-of-way. The numbers also are circulated among property owners living near the rights-of-way through newsletters, they said.

What To Do

When a civilian discovers a leak or rupture in a pipeline right-of-way, the first thing he or she should do is report it to the company. Iroquois number is 1-800-888-3982, which actually alerts the Tennessee pipeline, which Iroquois has contracted to respond to emergencies since it already has trained people in the field, Mr. Davis said.

Algonquin's number is 1-800-922-4455. (These numbers should not be used for routine calls.)

The individual can also call 911 in Connecticut, particularly if the gas ignites. Local emergency service personnel in Connecticut have been trained in how to handle such emergencies and are shown demonstration videos annually, Mr. Davis and Mr. Harney said.

Firemen are typically taught not to try to extinguish a gas fire unless a life is endangered, but just to protect the surrounding area. The reason is, Mr. Harney said, by trying to extinguish a gas fire, "you run the risk of re-ignition and you may have an explosion."

Leaks are easy to notice

because the gas is odorized, if not by the transmission company then by companies that deliver the gas. The odor smells something like propane, the spokesmen said.

Most failures are handled by shutting off valves between segments of pipe, then replacing the faulty or damaged segment, they explained. Iroquois can even shut the valves remotely by computer using satellite dishes, Mr. Davis said.

Although Mr. Stoner did not have specific data on Iroquois or Algonquin, he described them as "in good standing. If they weren't, we couldn't let them operate."

—PATRICIA DADDONA

U.S. Department of Transportation
Research and Special Programs Administration
Office of Policy and Program Support

Room 8410, 400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

TELECOPIER COVER SHEET

10-14-92
Date

Time

Number of pages including cover sheet: 4

TO: Nike Freeman
Office of Policy
Development

FROM: Patricia Klinger
Office of Policy &
Program Support

Phone: 456-7739

Phone: (202) 366-4831

SUBJECT/COMMENTS: Mike - Attached are the statistics
from our Annual Report on Pipeline Safety.
As you can see in the natural gas area there
were no fatalities for 1990 and 1991, however
in the liquid area, there were 3 reported for
The phone number for this fax machine is (202) 366-7431. 1990.

- Pursue ratification of Standards for Training, Certification and Watchkeeping of Seafarers, developed by International convention in 1989, and provide guidance on enforcement
- Reexamine periodically the records of merchant mariners to ensure that personnel remain competent, qualified, and able to operate vessels safely
- Continue to assess needs for improved navigational aids and marine Vessel Traffic Systems to guide and control ship movements.

Public Transit, Railroad, and Pipeline Safety

While the number of accidents and deaths in surface transportation not involving highway vehicles is small relative to traffic fatalities, safety in those other modes is an essential component of meeting national safety goals. The safety responsibility of the Department of Transportation covers railroads, public transit, and pipelines carrying gas, petroleum, chemicals, and other products. Reducing accidents and fatalities in those systems is a critical facet of the Department's overall safety program.

Rail transportation is the safest form of surface transportation for intercity passengers, and public transit has a considerably better safety record than private motor vehicles. Pipelines, because they are primarily underground and operated without vehicles and therefore without human vehicle operators, do not face many of the greatest hazards associated with surface transportation. The largest single cause of pipeline failure is damage from outside forces, including excavation and natural causes such as land subsidence around the lines. For each of those transportation systems, DOT will continue to assess data on accidents and risk exposure, giving particular emphasis in its safety programs to situations and system characteristics associated with the greatest frequency of accidents and other safety incidents.

Aside from emphasis on safety in construction and the role of human factors in safe operation, regular inspections and attention to metal corrosion and other component failures are critical to safety in railroads and rail transit, as well as product pipeline systems. Visual inspections can and must be done periodically on rail track. Underground pipelines are more difficult to inspect. New methods of using electronic equipment and ultrasonic sensing devices improve the ability to detect problems in rail and pipeline systems and equipment. Most U.S. petroleum product pipelines—representing about half the non-water pipeline mileage in the Nation—were built before 1950. The majority of gas transmission lines were built in the 1950's and 1960's. As the years go by, measures to offset the effects of time will be increasingly important, including frequent monitoring of pipeline condition, corrosion control programs, and targeted rehabilitation and replacement. The operators of rail and pipeline systems have the primary responsibility for preventive maintenance and safety of operations, but Federal employees, working in conjunction with State inspectors, have a monitoring and enforcement function.

It is Federal transportation policy to:

- Promote safety in public transportation by encouraging the development of industry safety standards, implementation of comprehensive system safety plans by providers of transit services, improved safety training, and more rigorous oversight by State authorities
- Ensure effective monitoring and safety enforcement for railroad track, equipment, and operations
- Develop regulations covering locomotive engineer qualifications, safety of employees working on railroad bridges, and maintenance of signals at railroad-highway grade crossings
- Increase pipeline inspection and enforcement activities targeted to systems identified as posing particular risks to public safety.

Safety in Hazardous Materials Transportation

The transportation of hazardous materials is a subject of considerable concern in American communities, because of the real and perceived threats these materials can pose to public safety and health, as well as to the environment. The Department of Transportation is responsible for collecting hazardous materials safety data and identifying potential safety risks and problems. Based on identified risks, DOT also develops rules and standards for the safe transportation of hazardous materials in all modes highways, rail, air, water, and pipelines.

State and local governments also have a major role, both in enforcing hazardous materials regulations and in responding to hazardous materials accidents and spills. For highway movements of hazardous materials, the Federal Government has concurrent responsibility with State and local governments in the area of routing, with the State and local governments making the actual routing decisions, based on standards set by the Department. The Department works extensively with other Federal agencies and State and local groups to prevent hazardous materials accidents in all modes and to improve accident prevention, preparedness planning for hazardous materials accidents and response capabilities at State and local levels. Federal rules are aimed at ensuring that hazardous materials are properly identified, packaged, and handled, and that incidents involving release of hazardous materials are held to a minimum. Additional steps are needed particularly to improve the system of handling highway movements of hazardous materials and ensuring domestic standards that are effective and do not conflict with international standards in a way that unduly impedes U.S. companies in marketing and shipping products.

**SUMMARY OF GAS PIPELINE INCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES
REPORTED FROM 1982-1991 AS REQUIRED BY 49 CFR PART 191**

DISTRIBUTION

<u>Report Year</u>	<u>Failures</u>	<u>Fatalities</u>	<u>Injuries</u>
1982	1,191	20	225
1983	1,127	10	220
1984	747	26	189
1985	204	20	94
1986	136	19	86
1987	161	9	88
1988	170	15	76
1989	159	14	59
1990	111	5	50
1991	162	14	77

TRANSMISSION AND GATHERING

<u>Report Year</u>	<u>Failures</u>	<u>Fatalities</u>	<u>Injuries</u>
1982	520	11	41
1983	453	2	25
1984	255	9	40
1985	127	6	12
1986	83	4	20
1987	68	0	13
1988	88	3	11
1989	98	22	19
* 1990	88	0	17
* 1991	71	0	12

NOTE: Amendment 191-5, 49 FR 18961, May 3, 1984, changed the definition of "incident" as follows:

- Eliminated the requirement to report when taking any segment of a transmission pipeline out of service.
- Eliminated the requirement to report if gas ignited.
- Increased the level of estimated property damage from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

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SUMMARY OF LIQUID PIPELINE ACCIDENTS AND CASUALTIES
REPORTED FROM 1982-1991

<u>Report Year</u>	<u>Failures</u>	<u>Fatalities</u>	<u>Injuries</u>
1982	200	1	6
1983	161	6	9
1984	203	0	19
1985	183	5	18
1986	203	3	32
1987	237	3	20
1988	196	2	19
1989	161	3	38
X 1990	177	3	7
X 1991	210	0	8

January 28, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR ROGER B. PORTER

FROM: BETSY ANDERSON

SUBJECT: Annual Report on Hazardous Materials
Transportation -- 1990

Enclosed are my comments on DoT's Annual Report on Hazardous Materials Transportation -- 1990. Comments were due yesterday at 5:00 p.m.

I have a few comments, none of which are controversial. A draft memorandum to Phil Brady from you conveying those comments is enclosed.

Recommendation: That you sign the attached memorandum to Phillip D. Brady.

Encl.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 27, 1992

MEMORANDUM FOR PHILLIP D. BRADY

FROM: ROGER B. PORTER

SUBJECT: Annual Report on Hazardous Materials
Transportation -- 1990

We have reviewed the enclosed Annual Report on Hazardous Materials Transportation for 1990 and have the following suggestions:

- Page 37, first paragraph: The second sentence states that highway incidents accounted for all but one of the fatalities noted in Exhibit 3. Exhibit 3, however, shows two non-highway fatalities - one occurring in 1984 and the other in 1986.
- Page 61, last paragraph, third line: What is the meaning of the phrase "..., in a train consist,"? Is this a typographical error?
- Page 75, carryover paragraph, last two lines: Should the last phrase be reordered as follows: "...and 45 competent authority approvals for relief from international packaging requirements."?
- Page 79, first full paragraph, ninth line: We would suggest changing the first three words from "evaluate the results" to "evaluate its conclusions."