



Information for public officials

Facts about Pipeline Safety Public Awareness

Pipeline purpose and reliability

Pipelines play a vital role in American lives. They deliver natural gas to more than 71 million homes and businesses for heating, cooking and countless manufacturing operations. In the United States, natural gas supplies one-fourth of all our energy needs, and pipelines are essential to transport the massive volumes of gas consumed. Underground pipelines do not crowd highways and waterways, as trucks and barges would, and they do not contribute to highway congestion or traffic pollution. Natural gas pipelines are safe, silent and unseen.

Hazard awareness and prevention measures

The 2.4 million miles of U.S. natural gas pipelines rank as the country's safest form of transportation. Nevertheless, a pipeline leak or damage due to digging or a natural disaster poses a potential hazard.



A 30-inch gas transmission line is inspected as part of our integrity management program.

Natural gas is a highly flammable fuel. It can migrate through underground voids and sewer lines into nearby structures. In enclosed spaces, gas can displace oxygen and cause asphyxiation. Under certain circumstances, leaking gas can create a volatile concentration that can explode from

just a spark. To prevent such hazards, Atmos Energy and other pipeline operators conduct extensive "integrity management" programs to continually check pipelines for leaks, corrosion and damage.

Emergency preparedness

Atmos Energy's employees are highly trained to operate natural gas pipelines safely and to control emergencies promptly. They coordinate with local fire departments, other emergency-responders and state One-Call organizations to sponsor pipeline safety training. They also work closely on detailed emergency response plans. Our primary goal is to always protect the public and our employees.

Communicating with officials, the public and others

Besides informing local and state public officials, Atmos Energy is required by federal law to communicate with the general public, emergency officials and excavators to improve public awareness of pipeline safety. Atmos Energy's natural gas distribution operations have long been recognized as industry leaders in safety communication programs.



We conduct an extensive pipeline public awareness program that's designed to reach some 20 million adults across our 12-state service territory. This program has our senior management's full support, is led by a team of company experts and employs leading creative and opinion-research consultants. Atmos Energy also collaborates with other utilities and pipeline operators on more than 30 statewide efforts to expand pipeline safety public awareness.

Atmos Energy's gas pipeline safety advertising reaches approximately 20 million adults in the 1,615 cities and towns that the company serves.

Whether company-sponsored or in a collaborative effort, our safety communications with the public include thousands of radio, television and publication advertisements, safety bill inserts to our customers in English and Spanish, safety information and videos on our website and on social media sites, mailings every two years to all those along our transmission pipeline rights of way, educational programs and promotion of safety awareness at hundreds of community events.



Leak recognition and response

Our advertising and communications emphasize: SMELL for the distinctive “rotten egg” odor we add to make natural gas detectable; LISTEN for an unusual hissing sound near gas appliances or a blowing sound near pipelines; LOOK for dense fog, blowing dirt, a bubbling creek or pond, dry spots in moist areas, or dead vegetation surrounded by green, live plants near gas lines; LEAVE the area immediately and from a safe distance call Atmos Energy’s emergency number at 1-866-322-8667 or call 911.



All pipeline operators are required to post markers along rights of way to indicate the presence—but not the exact location—of buried pipelines. Markers come in various shapes and sizes, with those for natural gas always being yellow. They display the type of pipeline, the name of the pipeline operator and the operator’s emergency-contact information.

If you smell gas, don’t wait! Leave the area and call Atmos Energy’s emergency number 1-866-322-8667 or 911.

Lacking specific contact information, anyone who suspects a natural gas leak should always call 911.

One-Call notification requirements

All states now mandate calling 811 before digging. Atmos Energy publicizes the One-Call requirement



**Know what’s below.
Call before you dig.**

and displays the 811 logo on its service vehicles. It also participates in One-Call organizations in all the states where it has pipelines, underwrites training for excavators, builders and developers, and supports the Common Ground Alliance as a gold sponsor.

Right-of-way encroachment

On the cleared rights of way above pipelines, homeowners, businesses, schools and municipalities are not allowed to build, plant or place any barrier. This requirement sometimes necessitates public officials enacting additional zoning ordinances, enforcing building codes and planning for new community developments to ensure adequate pipeline buffers.

National Pipeline Mapping System

To determine if a major pipeline is located nearby, go online to the National Pipeline Mapping System at <http://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov/> and search by county name or Zip Code. The NPMS shows only *approximate* locations of pipelines. Government employees can access more detailed information that is not available to the public by applying for security access and an NPMS site password.

Additional information

Atmos Energy publishes pipeline safety information online at www.atmosenergy.com/safety. If you have a question or wish to talk to a company compliance manager or local operations supervisor, please call our regional manager of public affairs. Many state and federal pipeline safety resources also are available, such as the regional representatives in the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Office of Pipeline Safety Community Assistance & Technical Services at <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/CATS.htm>.