

# PIPELINE ISSUES SERIES: EMERGENCY RESPONSE



## Bottom Line:

While the primary goal is preventing incidents before they occur, pipeline operators are ready to respond in partnership with first responders and government authorities to protect local communities and the environment.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How Do Pipeline Operators Prepare in Advance for an Incident?

**Planning** – Pipeline operators prepare extensive emergency response plans reviewed by regulators and shared with local first responders and officials so that if an incident does occur, everyone knows in advance who to call, what to bring and what to do.

**Training and Drills** – Pipeline operators hold drills simulating an incident and practicing their response. Operators invite emergency responders, as well as state and federal authorities to participate in the drills. Operators will even practice deploying containment and cleanup equipment to make sure everything is ready to go if needed. The pipeline industry is also funding free, online training for first responders to gain pipeline specific response training.

**Equipment** – Operators station emergency response equipment in advance at points along the pipeline to be available in case of an emergency. Operators also arrange in advance for support personnel and equipment they can call on if needed.

### Who Are the Partners in a Pipeline Emergency Response?

Pipeline Operators	Local First Responders	Local, State & Federal Authorities	Oil Spill Removal Organizations
Develop response plan, coordinate resources & equipment and fund response activities	Many times first at scene, isolate site, protect public, develop initial incident action plans	Participate in unified command of response efforts, fulfills safety, environmental, and natural resources roles	Provide additional manpower and equipment to support cleanup efforts

Pipeline operators partner with first responders to protect the public and environment during pipeline incidents



Operators and first responders train on potential pipeline scenarios



Any incident will have a unified command to coordinate response activities



Response equipment includes boom to contain oil and protect waterbodies and shoreline

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What Happens During a Pipeline Incident Response?

Pipeline operators, first responders, government authorities, and cleanup resources all spring into action upon notification of an emergency. With the primary goal of safety first for the local community and first responders, cleanup efforts get underway under the direction of unified commander, usually an official from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or U.S. Coast Guard.



**Safety First** – Protecting the surrounding community, first responders and cleanup workers is the first priority in any incident. First steps include establishing a perimeter, considering whether there is a need for evacuation or shelter in place, and setting up air and water monitors.



**Environment & Wildlife** – Action to contain an incident will limit environmental impact. Equipment such as booms, diversion dams and berms prevent further damage. Affected wildlife receives care.



**Cleanup** – The site is cleaned with equipment such as skimmers, vacuum trucks and steam washers. Contaminated soil is removed for safe disposal. The site is prepared for restoration to the original condition.



**Rehabilitation & Monitoring** – The affected area is brought back as close as possible to pre-incident condition. Continued monitoring assesses and addresses any long-term impacts. Fair compensation is provided to landowners and community members and costs of cleanup, first responders and agencies are paid. Insurance and industry-funded government cleanup funds ensure there is no cost to the public in the event of an incident.

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**Early Priorities for First Responders Managing a Pipeline Incident**

- 1** Safety for the Public & Workers First
- 2** Isolate the Area & Size-Up Incident
- 3** Identify Operator & Product
- 4** Contact the Operator
- 5** Establish a Unified Command

### How is the Public Made Aware of Pipelines In Their Area?

Public awareness programs are required in regulation by PHMSA. API's Public Awareness Group and member companies support industry-wide action, coalitions such as the Common Ground Alliance and state 811-Call Before You Dig programs. Federal regulations require communication with landowners adjacent to pipelines. Standard industry practice is a 660' notification radius with the distance expanding or contracting depending on the facility, its potential impact, type of product in the pipeline and the surrounding area.

### How Would a Pipeline Operator Respond to a Pipeline Incident During the Winter?

Pipeline operators plan for incidents in all seasons and circumstances. Plans even include what to do and how to respond to a potential incident under frozen water crossings. Operators will conduct drills and practice their winter response, such as the full-scale exercise at St. Ignace, MI in 2012.