

# Q&A: Emergency Response

## Frequently Asked Questions about El Paso Pipeline Group's Safety Program

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### **What does the El Paso Pipeline Group do in case of an emergency?**

We first determine necessary steps to protect life and property, and we call 911. Our immediate next step is to isolate the affected section of pipe, shut off the flow of gas, and allow the remaining gas, which is lighter than air, to dissipate. Concurrently, we assemble a team of experts from various areas of our company to address the emergency. Our primary concern is the safety of the community and our response team. Once all safety issues are addressed, we begin assessing any property damage resulting from the incident. Further, we preserve the integrity of the site and work closely with local, state, and federal agencies to determine the cause of the incident and appropriate remedial measures.

### **What do the El Paso Pipeline Group's emergency response plans cover?**

The plans outline the steps to be taken in the event of a fire, rupture, major leak, or serious incident occurring at or near one of our facilities. The plans are developed to prepare our employees and local emergency response personnel to handle emergency situations involving our facilities and to protect the public. The plans outline the roles and responsibilities of all company, contractor, and local response personnel. Communication and cooperation with local organizations are key components of the emergency response plans, and the feedback from these interactions is used to develop and revise these plans.

### **What does the El Paso Pipeline Group do to prepare for an emergency?**

El Paso Pipeline Group employees train for the roles they will fulfill in the event of an emergency. Training includes crisis response workshops and emergency drills. The company also holds ongoing public awareness and community education meetings to inform the public of the proper response to an emergency. In addition, the El Paso Pipeline Group meets with emergency responders on a regular basis, so company employees and emergency personnel may work as a team when responding to an emergency situation.

### **How often is the El Paso Pipeline Group's system monitored?**

The pipeline is monitored from our gas control centers 24 hours a day, seven days a week, using computer and telecommunications equipment located across the system. These centers continuously monitor flow, pressure, and other data concerning the pipeline system. Readings are taken periodically at receipt locations, compressor stations, and delivery locations all over the system to monitor the flow of gas. Where the gas entering the system is known to be capable of exceeding the El Paso Pipeline Group's tariff limits, gas quality data is recorded and transmitted to the gas control facility. The El Paso Pipeline Group can refuse to accept gas from operators if it does not meet our tariff requirements. If there is a significant potential for the receipt of poor quality gas, local gas control monitoring equipment is installed to block flow automatically from the receipt point in the event that poor quality gas is tendered. Locations

where the potential for quality violations is small or where the nature of the potential quality violation is less severe are monitored on a less frequent basis.

### **How does the El Paso Pipeline Group prepare its pipelines for installation?**

We use only high-strength steel pipe that meets or exceeds standards set by the natural gas industry and the federal government. Our pipe is coated with a special material that helps prevent external corrosion. During new construction, we x-ray pipe welds to ensure they meet exacting industry and government standards. After installation and prior to initial operation, we perform hydrostatic testing, which involves filling the pipe with water and pressurizing it well beyond the pipe's normal operating pressure to identify weaknesses in the pipe.

### **Does the El Paso Pipeline Group inspect its pipelines?**

Yes. The El Paso Pipeline Group follows an extensive safety program to inspect and test its pipeline systems on an ongoing basis.

- Aboveground pipes are inspected visually for damage.
- The pipeline rights of way are inspected for unusual changes in vegetation that might indicate a gas leak.
- The pipeline is inspected aerially to identify activity such as digging that might endanger the pipeline.
- Our gas control facilities continuously monitor pipeline status.
- The pipeline is tested to maintain proper cathodic protection. We use cathodic protection to prevent external corrosion, and we test, inspect, and monitor the protection system.
- In areas of the pipeline where small amounts of liquids could form, the El Paso Pipeline Group uses cleaning pigs and separators to remove liquids and impurities.
- Direct assessment of the pipeline using technologies such as x-ray and ultrasonic technology has been used in areas to ensure the integrity of the pipeline.
- Valves are inspected, lubricated, and tested.
- When pipe is dug up for any reason, its condition and the condition of the anti-corrosive coating is inspected, recorded, and repaired if necessary.

### **How does the El Paso Pipeline Group's safety record compare to others in the natural gas pipeline business?**

The El Paso Pipeline Group is a leader in safety and compliance. The company's efforts include continuous computer monitoring, ongoing visual surveillance, corrosion protection, and public awareness education. In fact, El Paso Natural Gas was one of two pipeline systems throughout the country chosen to participate in a new public-private partnership pilot program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Special Programs Administration, to improve pipeline safety. The program will aid the Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) in improving regulatory programs to achieve greater levels of safety, environmental protection, and system reliability. Criteria for program participation included a proven history of regulatory compliance; a history of cooperation and open communication with OPS and interstate agents; an existing, ongoing, system-wide process that evaluates system integrity and operational reliability; and an effective, two-way communication between corporate units and field operations regarding system integrity issues. The El Paso Pipeline Group is proud to be participating in an initiative that will enhance the safety and integrity of our system and the industry.