Dear Fire Marshall,

Dig Safe, in cooperation with companies who operate gas and hazardous liquid pipelines, would like to reach out to Fire Marshals, Chiefs, and emergency first responders with important information about pipeline safety and the protocol for a gas release.

PHMSA, (Pipeline Hazardous Material Safety Administration), a branch of the United States Department of Transportation, now requires "any excavator who causes damage to a pipeline that results in a release of natural or other gas or hazardous liquid **shall promptly report the release to emergency responders by calling 911."**

As you may know, Dig Safe is a not-for-profit clearinghouse that notifies utility companies to mark out the location of underground facilities before a planned excavation project so that dangerous contact is avoided.

The Maine Public Utilities Commission has asked us to assist in spreading awareness of this requirement among the excavating community. All of our callers will hear a new disclaimer before they hang up the phone with us, and this disclaimer also appears on the bottom of a Dig Safe ticket confirmation that is processed online:

"You are required by law to call 911 if pipeline damage results in a gas release."

Since Dig Safe processes about 600,000 mark-out requests annually in the states of Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont, 911 operators could expect to receive more calls about pipeline accidents.

Please pass along the enclosed information from PHMSA to all Fire Chiefs/First Responders in the State of Maine.

More information about PHMSA and this requirement can be found online at

 https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/safety-awareness/pipeline

You may also contact the operator of pipelines in your community if you have questions.

We appreciate your cooperation and support in getting the word out.

Best,

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U.S. Department of Transportation | **Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration**

Pipeline incidents present some of the most dangerous situations an emergency responder may encounter. Pipelines contain flammable, hazardous and even deadly petroleum gases, liquids, and other chemical products that present emergency responders with a myriad of hazards and risks that vary depending on the topography, weather, and properties of the material involved. For the majority of pipeline incidents, you will have a limited number of options to actually stop the leak. In almost all cases, the pipeline operator will be required to resolve the incident safely. Consequently, your goal is to minimize the level of risk to other responders, the community and the environment.

Advance knowledge of where pipelines are located in your community, the products transported in them, and how to contact and work together with the pipeline operator in the event of an incident are key factors to an effective and safe response. Each pipeline operator maintains an emergency response plan that outlines the roles and responsibilities of company, contractor, and local response personnel.

What you should know before an incident:

- The names of companies operating pipelines in your community

- Emergency and non-emergency contact information for all operators

- The approximate location of the pipelines

- The type of materials or products are being transported in the pipelines

- The physical indications of an unintended release

- The possible hazards associated with an unintended release

- The maximum potential impact an unintended release may have

- The steps that should be taken to protect the public

Following standardized procedures will bring consistency to each response and will help minimize the risk of exposure to all responders.

NOTE:

Pipeline operators will report hazardous leaks and other emergency conditions that may have an adverse impact on public safety or the environment to local 911 centers. Additionally, if an excavator damages a pipeline, **they are required to call 911 if there is any release from the pipeline**.