

Upholding the Safety and Reliability of Natural Gas Pipelines

BY LAURIE F. MARKOE, INGAA FOUNDATION CHAIR

The Interstate Natural Gas Association of America (INGAA) is a trade organization that advocates regulatory and legislative positions on behalf of the natural gas pipeline industry in North America. INGAA is comprised of 27 member companies who operate approximately 200,000 miles of interstate transmission pipelines, delivering one-quarter of the nation's energy and serving as an indispensable link between natural gas producers and consumers.

The INGAA Foundation was formed in 1990 to advance the use of natural gas for the benefit of the environment and the consuming public. The Foundation's 161 member companies represent the entire value chain for the design, construction, maintenance and operation of interstate natural gas pipeline and storage systems. Together, they are dedicated to creating and maintaining a safe and reliable natural gas pipeline system to serve the energy needs of North America.

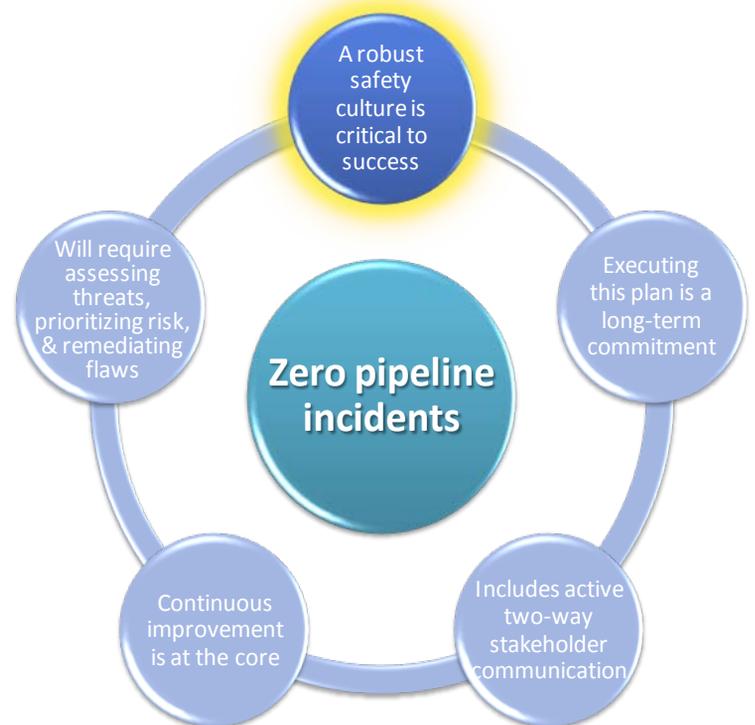
Energy Dependency on Interstate Pipelines

Energy from natural gas is essential to all facets of our daily lives. It heats and cools our homes, schools, offices and shops, cooks our food, generates our electricity and is even used as a raw material in such everyday products as paint, medicine, dyes, plastics and fertilizer.

The United States pipeline infrastructure provides the primary means of transporting natural gas and oil. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), two-thirds of the lower 48 states are almost totally dependent on the interstate pipeline system for their supply of natural gas, making pipelines the irreplaceable core of our energy transportation system.

Safety is the First Priority

The public justifiably demands safe, reliable, secure, and environmentally responsible pipeline operations, and they expect continued improvement in each of these areas. This is just one of the reasons why INGAA and the INGAA Foundation



rank safety as one of its foremost guiding principles. Through advocacy, education, continuous improvement and by building partnerships with landowners, environmental advocates, government and industry, INGAA encourages a robust safety culture at its member facilities and overall confidence in pipeline safety with its stakeholders. INGAA's primary goal is a perfect record of safety and reliability for the nation's onshore natural gas transmission pipelines.

While a number of high-profile pipeline incidents have captured negative media attention in the past years, pipeline safety has actually improved consistently over the last few decades through the application, continuous refinement and evolution of consensus standards, technology, law and regulation. Still, no safety incident is deemed acceptable, and INGAA and its members recognize that more can be done to improve the safety of natural gas transmission pipelines and to regain public confidence in the safety of their pipeline infrastructure.

The INGAA Foundation has been actively addressing construction quality and safety issues that were identified in its own workshops in the past few years or by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). The Foundation has teams developing various construction quality assurance/quality control plans and safety guidelines to address a number of specific issues across the industry, including personal protective equipment, safety around overhead power lines and excavations, to name a few. These guidelines will benefit the entire industry.

Action Plan Focuses on Integrity Management

INGAA also supports recent congressional efforts to improve pipeline infrastructure through legislation. The Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011 creates new statutory requirements in areas such as integrity management, verification of maximum allowable operating pressure, improvements to damage prevention efforts, and the continuation of efforts in pipeline safety research and development.

In advance of this law, INGAA members developed the Integrity Management Continuous Improvement (IMCI) Action Plan, which consists of nine commitments:

1. Apply risk management beyond high consequence areas to other places where people live.
2. Raise and harmonize the standards for corrosion anomaly management.
3. Demonstrate “fitness for service” of pre-regulation (pre-1970) pipelines.
4. Shorten pipeline isolation and response time to one hour in populated areas.
5. Improve integrity management communication and transparency of performance.
6. Implement the Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance guidance (PIPA).
7. Evaluate, refine and improve threat assessment and mitigation.
8. Implement management systems across INGAA members.
9. Provide forums for engaging stakeholders and emergency officials.

The IMCI Action Plan also includes solid proposals that work to address many of the legal requirements. Implementing the plan will improve pipeline safety immediately. In addition, it will provide practical lessons learned that will benefit all parties—INGAA members, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, as well as other stakeholders—for many years to come.

The Road Ahead

INGAA and its members are confident that the IMCI Action Plan provides the right path toward enhancing pipeline safety and assuring public confidence in what already is the country’s safest mode of transporting energy. The INGAA member companies are committed to helping to improve the safety, supply reliability, integrity, environmental performance, security and efficiency of natural gas pipelines. They will continue to be at the forefront in communicating to the public exactly how the natural gas pipeline industry provides jobs and benefits our economy as it serves a critical link in moving crucial energy supplies to market.

INGAA Member Companies

Alliance Pipeline Ltd.
 Boardwalk Pipeline Partners
 Carolina Gas Transmission Corp.
 CenterPoint Energy
 Cheniere Energy, Inc
 Dominion
 DTE Pipeline Company
 El Paso Corporation
 Enbridge Energy Company, Inc.
 EQT Corporation
 Iroquois Pipeline Operating Company
 Kinder Morgan
 National Fuel Gas Company
 National Grid
 New Jersey Resources
 NiSource Gas Transmission & Storage
 ONEOK Partners
 Panhandle Energy
 PG&E Utility
 Questar Pipeline Company
 Southern California Gas Company
 (Sempra Pipelines and Storage)
 Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline
 Spectra Energy
 TransCanada Corporation
 Transwestern Pipeline Company LLC
 Williams Gas Pipeline Company
 Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline Company



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Laurie F. Markoe is President/CEO of Contract Land Staff, a land management and right of way consulting firm that services the energy, pipeline, power, transportation and rail industries. Laurie has served on the INGAA Foundation's board of directors since 2007, as a member of the executive committee since 2008 and as vice chair of the board from 2010 to 2011.