

pipeline connection

FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS

Pipeline Safety During Storm Response

It's fall. The season for football, tailgates, and hurricanes. Temperatures are beginning to drop, but changes in temperatures can lead to unstable atmospheric events, like storms. Whether it's a squall line of thunderstorms or a Category 4 hurricane making landfall, storms can create unique pipeline safety challenges.

Natural gas pipelines are buried underground and are not typically affected by heavy rains, but downed trees can compromise distribution mains and services, resulting in pipe damage and leaks. In 1989, Hurricane Hugo caused extensive damage to inland portions of South Carolina, including York County. The Authority had numerous incidents of damage to gas mains and services due to uprooted trees.

Another pipeline safety consideration is electrical outage restoration. During post-storm response, priority is justifiably placed on restoring power. In the past, there have been instances where gas mains and even natural gas transmission pipelines have been damaged during the replacement of power poles. As in all cases, utility damage prevention and the use of 811 locating services are paramount.

Major flooding can also impact pipeline operations. In cases where pipelines may be exposed at creek crossings, damage can occur due to rushing waters and debris.



REGISTER NOW

PIPELINE SAFETY SEMINARS

YCNGA will be conducting a Pipeline Safety seminar and training opportunity for emergency responders in November. These seminars are intended for all response agencies and advocates including police, fire, EMS, emergency management, rescue and public officials. The program includes a safety presentation followed by realistic **tabletop exercises**. Register online, or call (803) 323-5359.



MEALS & DOOR PRIZES WILL BE PROVIDED

PLAN TO ATTEND **ONE** OF THE FOLLOWING:

ROCK HILL
NOVEMBER 9
6:00pm - 8:00pm
YCNGA
965 West Main Street

FORT MILL
NOVEMBER 14
6:00pm - 8:00pm
LOOM Event Space
120 Academy Street



Trencher Damage to Natural Gas Line Results in Fire

On April 21, 2023, a contractor installing water lines at a property on India Hook Road struck a one-inch natural gas service line resulting in a release. Soon after, the escaping natural gas ignited and caught the walk-behind trencher on fire. Thankfully, there were no injuries resulting from the incident. Units from Rock Hill Fire Department responded and quickly extinguished the fire, while crews from York County Natural Gas Authority safely eliminated the gas flow.

While this incident had a positive outcome, it could have easily turned tragic. The Authority has an average of 250 gas line hits per year. In the majority of cases, these damages occur to service lines with no resulting ignition of the gas. However, as this incident shows, it can happen at any time.

Takeaways or lessons learned from this incident:

- **Be an advocate for pipeline safety and damage prevention**
Support the use of the 811 system. It is required by law! Be aware of excavation activities within your jurisdiction. If you observe a construction crew excavating and don't see any utility flags or markings, stop and ask if the crew has a dig ticket. Further, if you see excavation activity in proximity to pipeline markers stop the contractor and ensure that the pipeline operator is aware of the work.
- **Conduct a thorough scene size-up upon arrival at a pipeline incident**
Avoid the traps of tunnel vision. Isolate the area and eliminate ignition sources. Make sure that the pipeline operator has been notified and requested to respond. Be aware of the potential for underground natural gas migration. Do not operate any valves upstream from a single meter set.
- **Don't assume or become complacent**
As demonstrated in this incident, a natural gas release from a service line can be dangerous. Always wear appropriate PPE and implement your agency's standard operating procedures for response to a pipeline emergency.



O U T S I D E F O R C E D A M A G E



Leaking Natural Gas

— O F F E N S I V E R E S P O N S E —

Outside force damage is one of the leading causes of incidents involving natural gas pipelines. While we strongly advocate the use of 811 to locate underground utilities prior to excavation activities, damages still occur. In most cases, our operations personnel have the ability to remotely isolate leaking natural gas lines by operating valves or remotely squeezing off the damaged line.

When all options to remotely isolate a pipeline have been exhausted, we may make the decision to work the incident "live."

When doing so, our Operations personnel will don protective flash suits, self-contained breathing apparatus, plus fire-resistant hoods and gloves to

protect themselves in the event of an ignition. Our Operations employees undergo extensive training on how to use personal protective equipment and the procedures for quickly and safely eliminating the release of natural gas. When the decision is made to work an incident live, we will request responding fire units to pull and charge a hose line for standby during the operation. We will maintain constant contact with the Incident Commander or Operations Section Chief while we conduct leak isolation procedures. We will also have a company safety representative on site to monitor the operation.

Working live gas leak incidents are not frequent, but they do occur. We take every step possible to ensure the safety of our employees, responders, and the public when they are implemented. We greatly appreciate the support of our local responders in enhancing safety!

York Road Compressor Station Update

The Patriots Energy Group Compressor Station, located in Blacksburg, SC is nearing completion! The facility, which will be operated by York County Natural Gas Authority, will provide enhanced pipeline pressures on the PEG transmission system to help meet growth and demand.

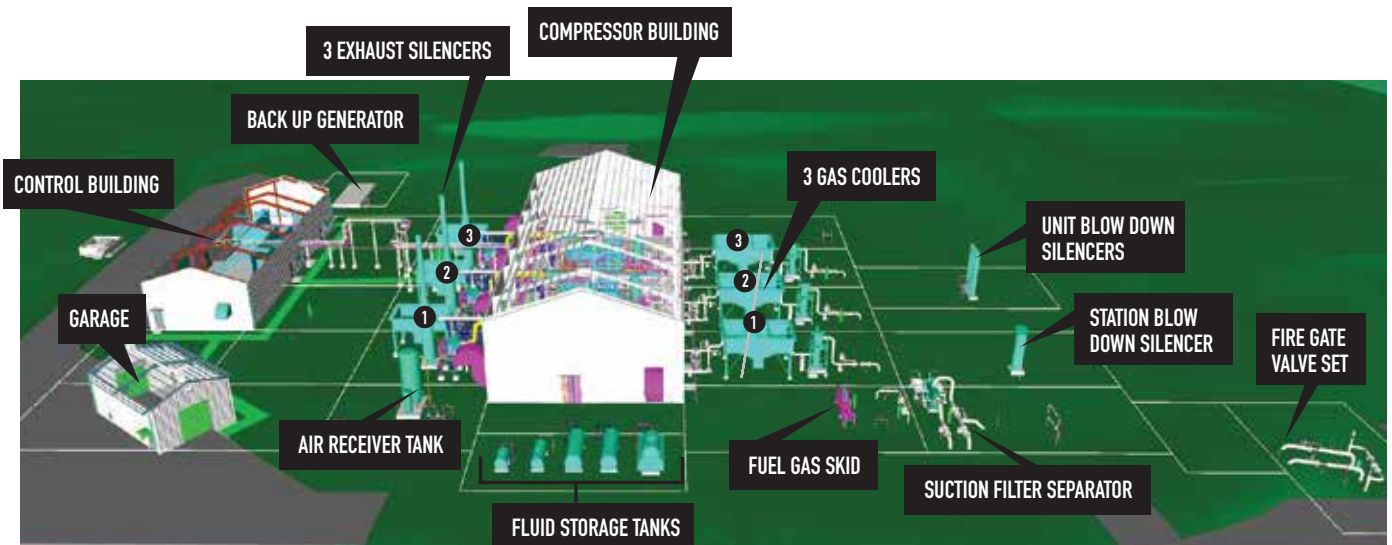
Three natural gas-fueled, 2,500 horse-powered Caterpillar engines will drive Aerial compressors that will increase the pressure of the gas as needed. The compressors will be remotely operated and monitored 24/7 by our Gas Control located at our corporate campus in Rock Hill. A full-time compressor technician will be on site at the station during the week performing maintenance operations.



THE COMPRESSORS WILL BE REMOTELY OPERATED AND MONITORED 24/7 BY GAS CONTROL LOCATED AT OUR CORPORATE CAMPUS IN ROCK HILL.

The compressor station incorporates safety devices including remote cameras, natural gas and fire detection equipment, water mist fire suppression systems, and motion detection systems. The compressor station is monitored 24/7 using sophisticated computer and telecommunications equipment.

Construction of the station is almost complete with a Ribbon Cutting planned in November. The next step in bringing the station online will be to conduct a comprehensive commissioning process during which all systems will be functionally checked. Following the commissioning phase, the station will be ready for operation this winter.



Schedule a Pipeline Emergency Training Session & Tabletop Exercise



Training and practice are key methods for developing a capable incident response team. Pipeline incident tabletop exercises are a quick and effective way to test strategic and tactical decision making, communication, and execution of response procedures. Tabletop exercises supplement class-based and online training programs and can easily be incorporated into regular department safety meetings. York County Natural Gas Authority can deliver department-specific training and tabletop exercises upon request of area response agencies.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO PLANNING A PIPELINE EMERGENCY TABLETOP EXERCISE:

STEP 1

Determine the objective of the exercise. Is the objective to identify and work through potential communication issues? Is it to remind responders of the proper incident response protocols? The incident scenario and the roles you assign may differ depending on the overall objective of the exercise.

STEP 2

Review your department's response protocols with responders prior to conducting the exercise.

STEP 3

Provide participants with a realistic scenario, complete with graphic visual aids customized for your coverage area. Conduct the exercise by providing a series of chronological inputs that increase in complexity as it progresses.

STEP 4

Take detailed notes after completing the exercise, evaluate the team's response as a group and invite discussion about differing approaches. Allow time for participants to communicate openly about their questions and concerns.

STEP 5

Record lessons learned. Update procedures, if needed, then apply and test them during future tabletop exercises and mock emergency drills.

CONTACT:

Contact York County Natural Gas Authority if you are interested in having us assist you with a pipeline emergency exercise.



York County Natural Gas Authority

Emergency (866) 201-1001
 Non-Emergency (803) 323-5304
 Website ycnga.com

Patriots Energy Group

Emergency (888) 609-9858
 Website patriotsenergy.com

Chester County Natural Gas Authority

All Calls (803) 385-3157
 Website chestergas.com

Lancaster County Natural Gas Authority

All Calls (803) 285-2045
 Website lcngasc.com

SC811

Toll-free (888) 721-7877
 Website SC811.com

National Pipeline Mapping System

npms.phmsa.dot.gov

SC Office of Regulatory Staff (SCORS)

ors.sc.gov

USDOT Pipeline Safety

primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/EmergencyOfficials.htm

Training Opportunities for Your Department

York County Natural Gas Authority personnel are available to provide training to local emergency responders on how to safely handle a pipeline emergency. Please feel free to contact us for more information or to schedule a training session.

Glen Boatwright
 Vice President of Operations, Engineering, Regulatory Compliance & Safety



York County Natural Gas Authority

C (803) 323-5439
 M (803) 360-9890
 E glen.boatwright@ycnga.com