

PHMSA publishes ANPRM: Safety of gas transmission pipelines

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On August 25, 2011, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) in the *Federal Register* (76 Fed. Reg. 53086-53102) and is considering whether changes to pipeline security regulations (49 CFR parts 190-199) are prudent and necessary. While PHMSA is confident that integrity management requirements have raised the level of safety of gas transmission pipelines in high-consequence areas, certain recent events such as the explosion in San Bruno, California, in September 2010, and inspections of IM programs have revealed a potential need to improve and clarify some IM requirements. In the ANPRM, PHMSA seeks public comment on 14 topics within two broad categories:



Should IM requirements be revised and strengthened to bring more pipeline segments in HCAs? Topics falling with the purview of this question include:

- Modifying the definition of HCAs
- Revising the requirements for collecting, validating and integrating pipeline data
- Making requirements related to the nature and application of risk models more prescriptive
- Strengthening requirements for applying knowledge gained through the IM program
- Strengthening requirements on the selection and use of assessment methods

Should non-IM requirements be strengthened or expanded to address other issues associated with pipeline system integrity? Topics falling within the purview of this question include:



- Valve spacing and the need for remotely- or automatically controlled valves
- Corrosion control
- Pipe with longitudinal weld seams with systemic integrity issues
- Establishing requirements applicable to underground gas storage
- Management of Change
- Quality Management Systems
- Exemptions applicable to facilities installed prior to the regulations
- Gathering lines

PHMSA discusses each of these topics in detail in the ANPRM and then provides several questions under each topic that it would like to see responses to during the public comment period. Comments on the ANPRM must be submitted by December 2, 2011.

- [The ANPRM is available here via the PHMSA website](#)

LINKS

- [Vickie Buchanan's Bio](#)
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