



Pipeline Safety News and Views



Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety

Name the Newsletter Contest Results...

The MNOPS newsletter idea was kicked off at the MNOPS Educational Conference this April at Breezy Point Resort. Congratulations to the winner of the "Name the MNOPS Newsletter" contest. The name chosen was *Pipeline Safety News and Views*, submitted by Dean Headlee of CenterPoint Energy. Dean wins a "Dig Safely" shirt and a free registration to the 2006 MNOPS Educational Conference next April. We had 56 creative, thought-provoking and humorous submissions. Thanks to everyone for their entries.

The runners up were:

MNOPS Connection—Joe Thill, Time Warner Cable
Piping Hot News—Carl Oko, Arby Construction
The Inside Line—Under Pressures, and
Blowing Gas—Jim Holzer, Gopher State One-Call
MNOPS dot com—Karl Swanson, Centra Pipeline
Safety Shorts—Randy Rice, Viking Gas

These submissions will be used as sub-titles throughout the newsletter, which will contain the information you told us you wanted to know. We will do our best to cover those topics on a quarterly basis. Congratulations to everyone!



July 1, 2005

Volume 1, Issue 1

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MNOPS.com	

MNOPS 2005 Educational Conference Re-Cap

Corrine Sullivan, Office Supervisor

Another successful MNOPS conference took place April 18-20 at Breezy Point Resort Conference Center. With over 250 people, including attendees, exhibitors, staff and speakers, a great educational opportunity was had by all. The evaluations consistently rate the conference from "good" to

"excellent". The agenda this year featured a diverse offering of educational sessions for folks in both Natural Gas & Hazardous Liquids areas, as well as a wide variety of offerings from the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety, GSOC, Utility industry, and new technology in the industry.

(Continued page 2...)



MNOPS Conference Re-cap, cont'd

Corrine Sullivan, Office Supervisor

MNOPS awards this year were given out to Jeff Hanson, with the MN Utility Contractor's Association, as well as to Steve Yehle, Center Point Energy, for diligence in Damage Prevention and for their support in the Rules process over the last 5 years. An award from MNOPS was also presented to Troy Dahlin, MN Municipal Utility

Association for his outstanding work in Operator Qualification training. Ben Sherman, Xcel Energy also received an award for his excellence in training over the years.

Employee recognition was presented during opening remarks by State Fire Marshal / Director Jerry Rosendahl and Deputy Commissioner Tim Leslie. MNOPS recipi-

ents were Mike McGrath, for his extensive work on the One-Call Rules, Kristine Hernandez Pierce for her legal guidance and rules expertise and Kitty Sundt who was recognized for her mentoring on the job. Congratulations to everyone!

Meet the MNOPS Staff

MNOPS was created by 1987 legislation, after a 1986 explosion in Mounds View made it clear that a separate Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety was needed. Today, a team of 18 people work to keep our citizens safe where we live, work and play.

State Fire Marshal and MNOPS Director Jerry Rosendahl oversees the office and relies on the leadership of Administrator Charles Kenow and a staff of engineers, damage prevention specialists and



administrative assistants to keep the Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety performance record one of the top three in the country.

Pictured L to R, top row: Brian Pierzina, Andrew Voyer, Sean Mangan, Darren Lemmerman, Heather Bowman, Steve Sweeney, Brad Ardner, Ken Burmeister, Pat Donovan, Boyd Haugrose, Mike McGrath. Bottom Row L to R: Dan Munthe, Lisa Kallberg, Kitty Sundt, Corrine Sullivan, Charles Kenow, Jerry Rosendahl, Ron Wiest, Vica Livshutz

The Inside Line

Mike McGrath, Chief Engineer

My job has been exciting since I took over as chief engineer late in 2004. The whole MNOPS staff has faced several challenges this year. We are monitoring a very large service-line replacement project; we finally completed a controversial rule-writing; and a government shutdown took place in the first week of July.

The newsletter kick-off is one of many projects MNOPS is engaged in right now. One major initiative we successfully completed this year is administrative rules (MR7560) for one-call enforcement. (See page 6)

There are new regulatory initiatives at the federal level, too. These are a few of

the federal initiatives MNOPS is working on, or will be working on in the near future:

Operator Qualification

Winding down on the first round of inspections.

- December 17, 2005 deadline for completing all HQ OQ inspections.

- To verify that field personnel are knowledgeable of provisions of their OQ plans, our office made Protocol 9's a priority.

Hazardous Liquid Integrity Management Plan (IMP)

- We are into our second round of inspections on interstate operators.

Natural Gas Transmission IMP

- We are scheduled to participate in several interstate inspections this year.

- Intrastate operators can expect a first round of inspections later this year.

Public Education (API 1162) §192.616.

- Operators must have written plans in place by June 20, 2006.

Distribution Integrity Management Programs (IMP)

- Federal OPS is presently working on a report for Congress.

Excess Flow Valves

- There have been discussions recently about mandating the use of excess flow valves.

This newsletter is intended to keep all Minnesota pipeline companies up-to-date on MNOPS projects as well as other hot topics. We welcome your feedback. Have a good summer and fall.

Hit & Miss ... Damage Prevention

Dan Munthe, Damage Prevention Leader

As a pedestrian when I am in the crosswalk, I have the right-of-way. If a car hits me when I am in the crosswalk the driver is in trouble, big time! So why worry? Why even bother to look both ways? The answer is blatantly obvious - Because it might hurt if I don't.

Unfortunately, many excavators have this same type of "I have the right-of-way" mentality when they generate their utility locate requests through Gopher State One Call. The excavator who neglects to look both ways might call in a utility locate request for twice as much area as they need (just to make

sure they are covered) and update their request every week (just so they have a current request) and leave it up to the locate technician to figure out how far, how often, where, and when. You utility folks reading this don't go getting too ahead yourself thinking this is just an excavator problem; utility excavation accounts for a big share of this issue.

If we had locate technicians devoting their time to locating facilities that actually needed to be located rather than spending time chasing down excavators trying to get better instructions (or marking facilities not actually in con-

flict) we would have fewer damages. If all the excavators provided good marking instruction they would experience fewer damages, downtime, and they would have a safer work site! How about that for looking both ways?

Perhaps with locate technicians performing only necessary work they might be able to devote some time to providing excavation oversight. But maybe I am getting too far ahead of myself?



RIGHT NOW I WANT YOU TO
MARK BOTH SIDES OF THE
ROAD IN ALL DIRECTIONS
INCLUDING BEHIND THE
HOUSES TO THE REAR LOT
LINE WITH ALL INTER-
CONNECTED CUL DE SACS
AND ANY AREAS I DIDN'T
ALREADY MENTION. IF
YOU THINK I MISSED ANYTHING
MARK THE MISSING SPOTS
AS WELL.

Piping Hot News

Charles Kenow, Administrator

What's cooking? Probably the hottest thing is this newsletter. We hope you enjoy it, and we appreciate your input on the title and topic selections. Thanks also to those outstanding individuals, companies and associations recognized at our spring conference.

As we finalize our newsletter, we are returning from a partial state shutdown, which impeded our ability to respond to One-Call hits, follow up on the CenterPoint Energy service line replacement project and complete other planned field inspections. Had the shut down continued, we would have delayed several federal interstate

inspections and placed our federal funding in jeopardy. Needless to say, we are all glad to be back at work!

Despite problems with a state budget this year, the legislature did pass one bill that will reduce the cost of operating our office. HF 1, the Omnibus Public Safety Bill, includes a provision to move challenges of lesser One-Call fines from the state Administrative Hearing Office to Conciliation Court in the district where the offense occurred. This will reduce legal costs for both parties and expedite processing. Our inspector will appear before the conciliation court judge along with the

excavator involved. No attorneys will be required, as the parties will present their own cases. The judge's decision and determination of payment will take place immediately following presentations. We average about nine of these challenges per year, and this process will be much more cost efficient for all parties.

That's what's hot and what's not. Be sure to check out our staff columns on our new One-Call Rules and RP 1162 requirements. Stay cool!

Safety Shorts: Better Locate Requests & Better Locates

Ken Burmeister, Engineering Specialist

Rather than just calling for locates, an **Excavator** should use white markings to delineate the area of proposed excavation; give complete information, including the precise location of the area of proposed excavation; wait until the legal start date/time; check on the response of each facility operator who was notified; pothole well ahead of using power equipment; preserve the marks; minimize the chance of damage to underground facilities; and minimize the risk to the Excavator's Crew, the Public, Locators, Facility Operators and Emergency Responders.

Tell them where, when, why and how you are going to dig.

Rather than just mark and run, a **Locator** should assess the potential for damage. When it appears that

RP 1162 Update

Lisa Kallberg, Engineering Specialist

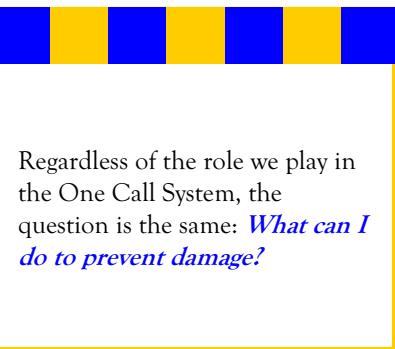
It's Here! API 1162

As a result of The Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002, API RP 1162 was developed and the final rule was published in the Federal Register on May 19, 2005 with an effective date of June 20, 2005. Specific code sections affected are 192.616 and 195.440.

The rule requires that each pipeline operator must develop and implement a written continuing education program that follow API 1162. The plan must be conducted in English and other languages commonly understood by a significant number of non-English speaking populations in the operator area.

an Excavator has an area of proposed excavation where there is a higher risk of damaging underground facilities, do a little extra to help reduce the risk. For example: better markings, ample scheduling of daily or weekly stops, prompt response to requests for re-marks, offer standby.

Tell them what's down there.



Regardless of the role we play in the One Call System, the question is the same: *What can I do to prevent damage?*

Operators in existence on June 20, 2005, must have completed their written programs no later than June 20, 2006. As an exception, operators of small propane distribution systems having less than 25 customers and master meter operators having less than 25 customers must have completed development and documentation of their programs no later than June 20, 2007.

Please contact your various industry associations if you have any questions. The American Public Gas Association web site is www.apga.org. The American Petroleum Institute web site is www.api.org.

Each of these sites provides models for developing your plans. Our Office will continue to monitor the implementation of the rule and notify you of any future inspection format changes.

Worst Case Scenario, This is Not a Drill

Darren Lemmerman, Senior Engineering Specialist

On December 28, 2004, the calls were coming in fast. The cellular networks were jammed. Emergency responders of all types were converging on a building explosion site in Ramsey, Minnesota. They found one person seriously injured and three others unaccounted for. A leak survey showed that a natural gas plume nearly 100 feet in diameter extended underground up to the building wall. The gas line was exposed and pinched off. The three persons unaccounted for were found deceased. The emergency responders dispersed and the area was made safe.

Now, put yourself in this scenario. What's your first thought? What would cause such an event? Are my people adequately trained to handle this?

Through comprehensive group plan-

ning, a testing protocol was developed. The line was pressure tested, and flow rates through the leaking pipeline were recorded. A fitting was identified as the source of the leak. X-rays and direct examination revealed that an improperly assembled Dresser 90 coupler was the cause of the incident. Specifically, an undersized and incorrectly designed, solid internal stiffener was used to join plastic pipe.

Now you're wondering: Could there be more of these in the distribution system? Exploratory digs and a comprehensive failure analysis program review, confirmed it: this was not an isolated fitting. So: Where are they? Poor records from a previously purchased distribution operator revealed little about where those couplings existed. After

researchers discovered that the joining procedures were changed in the early 1980's, a timeline was established to determine when and where these fittings were installed.

As a result, around 25,000 plastic service lines installed between 1959 and the early 1980's will be replaced in 37 northwest metro communities before year's end.

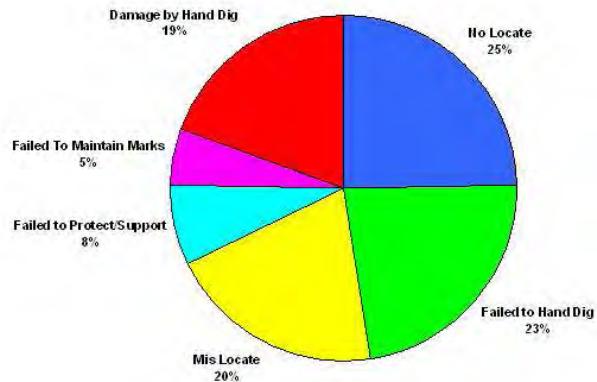
And now, back to the original issue: lessons learned.

Is your training adequate? Does your training include tabletop scenarios? Are your OQ AOC's adequate? What about recordkeeping? Could you find the right information in your system in the event of an incident? Is your 192.617 failure-analysis program adequate? No one can ever be completely prepared for something like the Ramsey incident, but have you done your best to assure that your staff could respond quickly and effectively? Think about it.

Statistics

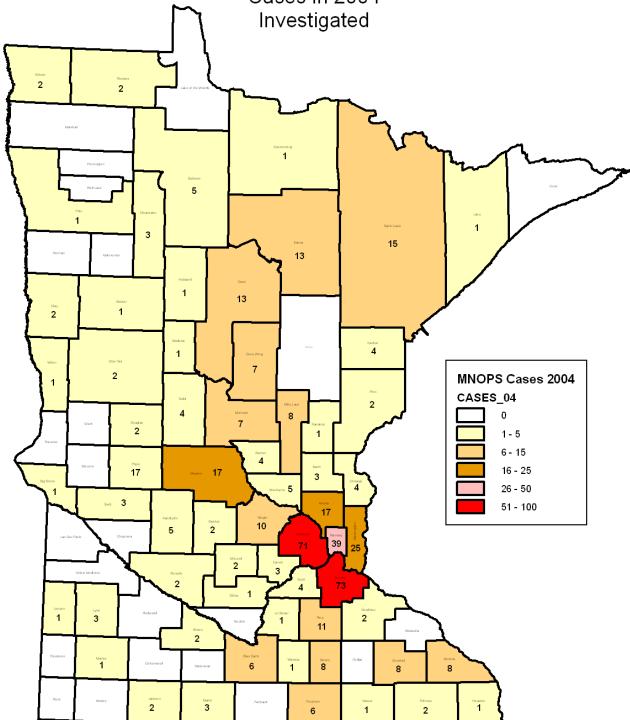
Sean Mangan, Research Specialist Intermediate

2004 Gas Damages by Cause



30% of the investigated complaints and incidents involved an on site meeting between the excavator and the locate technician.

Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety
Cases in 2004
Investigated



Rules Update

Mike McGrath, Chief Engineer

As many of you are aware this office has been working on Administrative Rules for governing MS 216D, for almost 3 years now. On February 1, 2005 an all day hearing on the proposed rules was held in St. Cloud. On March 31, 2005, Richard Luis, Administrative Law judge, approved the proposed rules. The rules were published in the State Register June 6, 2005 and became effective June 13.

Those of you that participated in that process know how time consuming that was. I would like to personally thank those of you who provided support throughout the entire process and for submitting last minute comments to Administrative Law Judge Richard Luis. Judge Luis's report had 103 points (36 pages) and MNOPS prevailed on every point!

Here is a summary of the proposed rules:

- Mapping/locatable: Starting January 1, 2006, facility operators must maintain maps, diagrams, drawings on the location of new facilities installed within the public right-of-way. Facilities installed after this date must also be installed so that they are locatable in the future.
- Marking Standards. In addition to marking the location of a buried facility an operator/locator must include the name of the operator if more than one operator listed on the notice will be using the same color code. They must also provide the size (if greater than 8-inches) and the number of facilities if more than one.
- No Conflict. Starting January 1, 2006, when a facility operator determines it does not have facilities in conflict with an excavation they must:
 - Mark the area "NO" followed by the operators name or logo;
 - Place a clear plastic flag at the area that states "N/C" or "NO CONFLICT" along with the operator's name or logo, the date, a phone number, and ticket number; or
 - Contact the notification center and indicate there are no facilities in conflict and that no markings or flags were left at the site.

The notification center will make the information available by internet, fax, etc.

- Emergency Excavations: When providing emergency excavation notices an excavator must give a description of the situation warranting the emergency excavation and at least one continuously staffed phone number where the excavator can be reached.
 - If the need for excavation is immediate the facility operator must contact the excavator within one hour at the phone number provided and unless otherwise agreed and locate the facilities within 3 hours.
 - If the need for excavation is not immediate (less than 3 hours), unless otherwise agreed the operator must locate the facilities by the start date and time on the excavation notice.
- Meets: Excavators requesting meets must give at least 48-hours notice for the meet, but facility operators have at least an additional 24-hour period to mark out the facilities. The extra 24-hours does not apply if there is written agreement between all affected parties. The rule also requires an excavator to maintain written documentation of all meets for the duration of the excavation that includes:
 - The date and time of each meet;
 - The names, company affiliations, and contact information of the attendees of each meet;

- Locating service laterals:
 - Natural gas, propane, and electric operators must locate up to the meter or connection to customers piping whichever is closer to the end use customer. If the meter is located in the public right-of-way the operator must locate to the point where the lateral first leaves the right-of-way.
 - Telecommunications operators must locate lateral to the building wall.
 - After December 31, 2005 an operator of a sewage or water facility must locate the lateral up to a point where it first leaves the public right-of-way. The operator must either locate or provide information on laterals installed before January 1, 2006.

Compliance Q & A

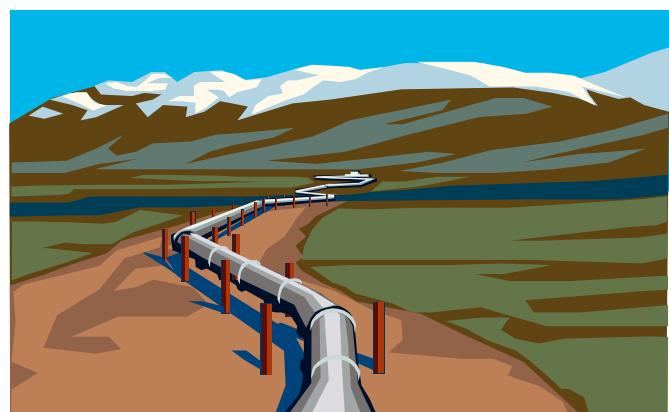
Steve Sweeney, Sr. Engineering Specialist

Natural gas in its natural state has little or no distinct smell. In nature, natural gas or methane, can be found in the upper portions of crude oil reservoirs deep within the earth. When natural gas is produced from gas wells, it is essentially odorless. That distinct odor that we are all familiar with, which is required by law in many locations, per title 49 CFR, Part 192.625 (odorization of gas) must be added. At a Las Vegas hotel where natural gas is used to simulate a volcano, that distinct smell is different than usual; it is actually a "pleasant" smell so that any safe, low levels of uncombusted natural gas does not unduly concern the passing volcano observers.

Odorant that is added to natural gas is very important. When using odorant, natural gas pipeline operators must be very careful to assure that the gas stream is properly odorized. An underground gas leak that migrates through the soil will usually result in diminished odorant levels at the surface or inside an adjacent structure. Odorant levels which are too low or too high could indicate a problem at the city gate station or elsewhere, and could result in undue risks to customers and the public along the pipeline.


"When using odorant, natural gas pipeline operators must be very careful to assure that the gas stream is properly odorized."

Pipeline operators must always assure that all personnel entrusted to perform odorant injection and testing are doing their jobs extremely well. Test results provided by the field should be reviewed by a competent person in the office as a double or triple check. Any trouble reports or questionable readings provided by the field must be addressed quickly and effectively. Odorant technicians must be trained and re-trained as necessary to properly perform their duties at all times. Odorant technicians are some of the most important people in your organization. Treat them as such and you will have greatly improved the odds that your gas is properly odorized for the safety of your customers and the public near your pipeline.



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If you have questions, comments,
additions or suggestions please
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Gopher State One Call Information

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Dig Safely.

MNOPS.com (Upcoming events), Steve Sweeney, Sr. Engineering Specialist

No Public Safety Building at the State Fair this year!

There will be no MNOPS-sponsored pipeline safety or damage prevention display booth this year at the state fair. Many of you have contributed in the past by promoting safe excavation practices and pipeline safety, and helping us hand out thousands of our famous yard sticks!

Funding constraints contributed to the closing of the Public Safety building this year. Efforts to acquire and fund other exhibit space were unsuccessful. We hope to see the return of our safety booth, but only time will tell.

2006 MNOPS Conference

The next MNOPS Educational Conference is already in the planning process. Although the dates and location have not yet been determined, it is our hope to offer a two- or three-day conference in April, 2006, at a central Minnesota location. We have invited the US DOT Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) in Oklahoma City to provide a seminar for the hazardous-liquid pipeline industry. We are planning sessions for the natural gas industry as usual, and in 2007, TSI will be invited back to provide a natural gas seminar.

MNOPS is obligated by federal certification and grant require-

ments to provide federal training opportunities to both regulated liquid and gas pipeline operators, each on a three-year basis. For many years, MNOPS has gone a step further and offered conference sessions for both types of operators on an annual basis.

Please let us know if you have a special topic or speaker in mind for the next conference. As always, we want the 2006 MNOPS Educational Conference to be a valuable opportunity for people at all levels within your organization. Your input can help us succeed. Please contact Steve Sweeney at steve.sweeney@state.mn.us or 651/296-9639