

Public Right-To-Know Initiative

The committee worked with the UTC's pipeline safety program on improving the public right-to-know aspects of its website, including helping the program provide more information of interest to citizens. In particular, the UTC website now offers maps of major pipelines for five counties (more to follow) and more detailed information regarding its pipeline inspections and results. The committee also amended its bylaws to make it clear that all materials provided at committee meetings and all presentations made to the committee were to be provided in a manner that could be shared with the public. The committee also discussed adding a conflict of interest policy to their bylaws, but a majority of the committee decided there was no need for such a policy.

Members

In 2006/2007, the committee lost and gained members as terms expired and new members were appointed.

As of December 31, 2007, members were:

Carl Weimer, chair, Bellingham
Leo Bowman, vice-chair, Prosser
Richard Kuprewicz, Sammamish
Pete Kmet, Tumwater
Shirley Olson, Graham
Bill Rickard, Spokane
Jean Buckner, Bellevue
Bob Bandarra, Lake Stevens
Bob Archey, Seattle

Non-voting members:

Duane Henderson, Puget Sound Energy
Grant Jensen, Williams Pipeline
George Hills, McChord Pipeline
David Knoelke, BP Pipelines North America

Other members serving during this period include:

Nate Moxley
Katie Hansen
Jim Clark
David Barnes

Citizens Committee On Pipeline Safety

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
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Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety Stakeholder Report on Activities 2006-2007

What is the Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety

The citizen's committee was created by state law in 2000 to "advise the state agencies and other appropriate federal and local government agencies and officials on matters relating to hazardous liquid and gas pipeline safety, routing, construction, operation, and maintenance." (RCW 81.88.140).

In 2002, Congress referenced the importance of such state advisory committees by requiring that the federal Secretary of Transportation respond in writing within 60 days to any pipeline safety recommendations made by a state pipeline safety advisory committee. (HR 3609, Section 24)

The committee has nine voting members representing the public. Four non-voting members represent owners and operators of hazardous liquid and gas pipelines. The members are appointed by the Governor and serve three-year staggered terms. The director of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) pipeline safety program and members of staff assist the committee.





Goals & Expectations

The committee's primary goal is to maintain and improve the safety of pipelines in Washington State. In pursuing this goal, the committee expects to:

- Raise understanding and awareness of pipelines and pipeline safety;
- Review, comment and make recommendations on proposed local, state and federal pipeline laws and regulations;
- Give counsel and advice to local governments, the state pipeline safety program, the state spill prevention and response program (Department of Ecology), and the federal pipeline safety program in the U. S. Department of Transportation (Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration);

Committee Structure & Process

Leadership positions are filled by voting members of the committee. The chair serves for one or two years and is usually succeeded by the vice-chair. The committee strives for consensus decision-making. When this cannot be accomplished, a decision is made by a simple majority. No decision can be made unless a majority of the committee's voting members are in attendance. Non-voting members are encouraged to participate in all discussions. Subcommittees are formed on as needed basis. No subcommittees were formed or active in 2006 and 2007.

Meetings

In 2006 and 2007, the committee met 13 times, observed a spill drill on the Spokane River, toured the state's one-call notification center and visited several sites of interest in Bellingham, including Whatcom Falls Park. Meetings generally are conducted every other month and fill most of a business day. Agendas and minutes can be found on the committee's webpage <http://www.utc.wa.gov/pipeline/ccops> Here is a listing of the meetings and tours that occurred in 2006 and 2007.

- January 12, 2006: Tye Center, Tumwater WA
- February 9, 2006: State Investment Board, Olympia WA
- March 16, 2006: UTC, Olympia WA
- May 11, 2006: State Investment Board, Olympia WA

- July 19, 2006: Bellevue City Hall, Bellevue WA
- September 13, 2006: Spokane Fire Dept. Training Center, Spokane WA
- September 14, 2006: Plese Flats, Spill Drill, Spokane WA
- October 12, 2006: State Investment Board, Olympia WA
- November 9, 2006: State Investment Board, Olympia WA
- January 4, 2007: UTC, Olympia WA
- February 15, 2007: Conference Call, Olympia WA
- May 30 & 31, 2007: Clark Regional Wastewater District, Vancouver WA
- May 30, 2007: Tour of One-Call Center, Portland OR
- August 2, 2007: UTC, Olympia WA
- October 3, 2007: Tour of Kinder Morgan Station/ Whatcom Falls
- October 4, 2007: Whatcom County Courthouse, Bellingham WA
- November 29, 2007: State Investment Board, Olympia, WA

Major Events

The committee was actively involved in monitoring and commenting on the following events and investigations:

- Avista gas explosion in Spokane injuring two people
- UTC Small Gas Pipeline Study
- Land Use in Proximity to Major Pipelines Guidelines
- Northern Star application to build an LNG facility on the Columbia River
- Enbridge's purchase of Olympic Pipe Line
- Olympic Pipe Line's return to maximum operating pressure
- PSE expansion of natural gas service into western Kittitas County
- Williams Northwest completion of its capacity project
- Reauthorization of federal Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
- Exposure of Williams Pipeline on Toutle River
- Legislation regarding the accessibility of geographical computer data regarding specific features of major pipelines. Committee did not reach a consensus on this legislation.
- Legislation regarding the state pipeline safety program's authority.

- Development of Ecology's Oil Spill Contingency Plan Rule.
- Results of the Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's audits of the UTC pipeline safety program

Formal Presentations

The committee advanced their knowledge of the technical aspects of pipeline safety through presentations during their meetings.

- Guidelines for Land Use near Pipelines, Alan Rathbun, UTC pipeline safety director
- State's "Oil Spill Contingency Plan" by Rebecca Post, Department of Ecology
- Distribution Integrity Management Program, Richard Kuprewicz
- UTC Pipeline Inspection Process, David Lykken UTC Senior Engineer
- Olympic Pipeline's request to return to full pressure, Olympic personnel
- Damage Prevention, Utility Contractors Association of Washington
- Potential Control Room Regulations, Richard Kuprewicz
- Public Awareness Programs by Williams Northwest and Transcanada GTN

Public Involvement

The committee received public comment and participated in several legislative and rulemaking processes.

- Reviewed rules regarding application of Excess Flow Valves
- Corresponded with federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration regarding pipeline safety rule interpretation
- Testified in favor of legislation clarifying pipeline safety jurisdiction and raising penalties.
- Heard from Cowlitz County residents regarding a proposed pipeline as part of a LNG facility on the Columbia River.
- Heard from Spokane's fire marshal and city attorney and from local pipeline operators about the specific concerns of the Spokane area.
- Reviewed 2007 pipeline safety fees, along with the UTC pipeline safety strategic plan and budget.
- Reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the pipeline associated with the proposed Bradwood Landing LNG facility on the Columbia River, and submitted comments to FERC.