



Attachment D

TO: Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
The Frause Group

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RE: **Overview of Findings from Pipeline Safety Research**

Research Goals

The research conducted for the UTC set out to answer four fundamental questions:

1. What do residents know about pipelines and basic pipeline safety?
2. What do residents want to know about basic pipeline safety?
3. What communication mediums are most effective to communicate the information?
4. Who do residents trust to relay the information?

Overview of Findings

- 1. For most residents, issues relating to pipelines are not a major concern when deciding where to live, and most residents say they do not pay much attention to pipeline issues in their daily life. Even a strong majority of those residents who are aware they live within a quarter mile of a major pipeline say they do not pay much attention to pipeline issues in their daily lives. Most, however, agree that pipelines are an essential part of our nation's energy supply, and that pipelines are safer than any of the current alternatives for transporting fuels.**

Residents are unsure, however, where to get basic information about pipeline safety and feel the information that is out there is being poorly communicated. Those who are aware they live near a major pipeline are slightly more likely to say they know where to

get pipeline information, but even in this “aware” group, many do not believe that the information is being effectively communicated.

- From a list of seven potential concerns when choosing a place to live, living “near major natural gas or liquid pipelines” ranks third among residents statewide (3.20 mean on a 5-point scale, 1 means “not at all a concern and 5 means “a major concern”), and sixth among residents who are aware they live near a pipeline (2.98 mean).
- A strong majority of (87% or more) statewide residents, residents near pipelines, and residents who are aware they are near pipelines – agree that “pipelines are an essential element in our nation’s energy supply,” and that “pipelines are safer than current alternatives for transporting fuels” (64% or more).

2. So what do residents want to know about pipeline safety? The most important piece of information residents want, regardless of proximity to pipelines, is emergency evacuation plans. Beyond this, both residents statewide and residents near pipelines want to know what the potential dangers are, how to detect them (if possible), where the dangers are (i.e. location of the pipelines), and who to call if a perceived emergency arises. Residents are also interested in what rights property owners who live near major pipelines have. The general theme here is that residents want practical information they can act upon.

- While the numbers themselves do not differ significantly from the statewide sample in terms of intensity, residents who are aware they live within a quarter mile of a major pipeline rate the types of information with slightly different priority. “Aware” residents put more importance on the location/proximity of pipelines, and statewide residents put more importance on potential dangers from pipeline damage or failure.

3. Local television news is seen as the most effective way to communicate the desired information about pipeline safety. This does not come as much of a surprise as this is often the most popular communication medium among respondents in surveys, and is likely a result of frequency of television viewing. The second choice of communication mediums is direct mail. In fact, residents who live near pipelines and residents who are aware they live within a quarter mile of a major pipeline select this mode of communication with more intensity than any other given medium. Newspapers and

radio news are also popular choices, but with far less intensity than television or direct mail.

- While residents statewide see local television news as the most effective communication medium (56% very effective), residents who are aware they live within a quarter mile of a major pipeline are more likely to think direct mail is the most effective (58% very effective). Both, however, are seen as the top two choices for these groups.

4. Whom do residents trust to deliver this information? By a convincing margin, “local fire, police, other emergency responders” and the UTC are trusted most by residents to deliver basic pipeline safety information. This reveals the possibility of an effective relationship between local emergency responders and the UTC. Among the different possible messengers tested, pipeline companies are trusted the least. In addition, half of residents in all groups do not agree that they can trust the pipeline companies to provide reliable information about the overall condition and potential risks to the public from pipelines they operate.

How much would you trust each of the following sources to provide reliable information about pipeline safety? Use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you would not trust that source at all and 5 means you would trust that source a great deal.

Rank	Mean	“Aware”
1. Local fire, police and other emergency responders	4.09	3.99 (1)
2. the state pipeline safety program at the WUTC	3.64	3.46 (2)
3. the Federal Government’s Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS)	3.31	3.11 (4)
4. City and county governments	3.28	3.29 (3)
5. Citizen groups	3.24	3.10 (5)
6. Pipeline Companies	2.84	2.95 (6)

Suggestions for Moving Forward

The UTC should focus their outreach efforts on providing residents with safety information such as the potential threats and evacuation plans in case of an emergency. When possible, television news should be used to distribute this information. However, the most effective way to communicate with residents who have the greatest risk of a potential hazard is through direct mail. The UTC should partner up with local fire, police, and emergency responders to craft a direct mail piece outlining the specific potential threats, including the location of the pipelines, how to detect a pipeline related emergency, and a clear plan on how to execute an emergency evacuation. This is what residents want to know, how they want to receive the information, and whom they want to hear the messages from.