



NEWS RELEASE

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MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
CENTRAL DISTRICT

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Commissioner Brent Bailey Reminds Consumers to Call Before You Dig *Understanding more about pipeline safety in Mississippi*

JACKSON— Central District Public Service Commissioner Brent Bailey reminds consumers of the need for diligence in pipeline safety.

Pipelines are the safest method for transporting vital energy products that are an essential part of our daily life. However, when pipeline incidents occur they can present significant risks to the public and the environment.

“Above ground every day, we may be near piping systems and infrastructure but not be aware of their existence or realize what type of products they may be carrying,” Commissioner Bailey said. “The products they carry may be highly flammable or combustible. Always, always, always call before you dig.”

Pipelines in Mississippi may include large-diameter lines carrying energy products to population centers, as well as small-diameter lines that may deliver natural gas to businesses and households in your neighborhood. “The energy products carried in the pipelines fuel our lives and our daily livelihoods,” Commissioner Bailey said. “They heat our homes and schools, cook our foods, in addition to providing power to our businesses and enabling our daily commutes.”

In addition to attending the Mississippi Natural Gas Association’s Annual Trade Show and providing the event’s welcoming remarks, Commissioner Bailey attended the Coordinated Response Exercise (CoRE) training hosted by Mississippi Pipeline Awareness on Thursday in Jackson to engage with pipeline operators and first responders who are important partners in communicating pipeline safety information to the public.

“This CoRE training was valuable time spent with our pipeline operators and first responders discussing improvements made to the current approach of pre-planning for pipeline emergency responses,” Commissioner Bailey said. “This training is key for our pipeline operators to advise affected stakeholders and the public on how to live and work safely near pipelines.” This includes a pipeline’s location, the use of a One-Call notification system prior to digging and how to recognize, respond to, and report pipeline emergencies.

Commissioner Bailey encourages Mississippians to learn more about pipeline safety in addition to the products they carry, the importance of calling the 811 call-before-you-dig number before starting any digging activity, pipeline operators in your area, and what to do in the urgent event of a leak.

Here are some tips to on suspecting, responding or what not to do in the event of a leak:

What to do if you suspect a leak:

- Immediately leave the area.
- If possible, turn off any equipment being used at or near the suspected leak. Abandon any equipment being used and move upwind from the suspected leak.
- From a safe location, call 911 or your local emergency response number, along with the pipeline company. Call collect, if needed, and give your name, phone number, description of the suspected leak, and its location.
- Warn others to stay away, when possible.

How to respond to a pipeline leak:

- Turn off any equipment and eliminate any ignition sources without risking injury.
- Leave the area by foot immediately. Try to direct any other bystanders to leave the area. Attempt to stay upwind.
- From a safe location, notify the pipeline company (if known) immediately and call 911 or your local emergency response number. The company will need your name, your phone number, a brief description of the incident, and the location so the proper response can be initiated.

What not to do in the event of a leak:

- **DO NOT** cause any open flame or other potential source of ignition, e.g. an electrical switch, vehicle ignition, or a lit match. Do not start motor vehicles or electrical equipment. Do not ring doorbells to notify others of the leak; knock with your hand.
- **DO NOT** come into direct contact with any escaping liquids or gas.
- **DO NOT** drive into a leak or vapor cloud while leaving the area.
- **DO NOT** attempt to operate any pipeline valves yourself. You may inadvertently route more product to the leak or cause a secondary incident.
- **DO NOT** attempt to extinguish a petroleum product or natural gas fire. Wait for local firemen and other professionals trained to deal with such emergencies.

A list of Mississippi Pipeline Operators in Mississippi can be found at http://ms.pipeline-awareness.com/pipeline_operators. Call 8-1-1 before you plan to do any digging or excavation work on your property or visit www.ms.pipeline-awareness.com/damage_prevention/. For any other consumer matters, please contact the Mississippi Public Service Commission Central District Office at 1-800-356-6430.

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