

Construction, Operation, and Maintenance of Large Diameter Rural Gas Gathering Lines

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Introduction

This recommended practice is intended to address the emergence of larger diameter, higher pressure gas gathering lines in shale plays.

The provisions in this recommended practice are intended to work together and should not be considered in isolation. The provisions for the design, construction, testing, operation, and maintenance of rural gas gathering lines are not necessarily appropriate under different definitions.

Background

In August 2011, The Department of Transportation (DOT) published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) asking for public comment on the need to change the federal pipeline safety standards for gas gathering lines in 49 C.F.R. Part 192. (Docket No. PHMSA-2011–0023; 76 Fed. Reg. 53,086). If a pipeline is an onshore gas gathering line, DOT's regulations require operators to determine if the pipeline meets the definition of a "regulated onshore gas gathering line". Under the March 2006 final rule, regulated onshore gas gathering lines are limited to pipelines in more populated, class 2, 3, or 4 locations. Onshore gas gathering lines in less populated, class 1 locations are exempt from regulatory requirements.

In April 2016, DOT issued a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) with potential changes to the regulations for onshore gas gathering lines (Docket No. PHMSA-2011–0023; 81 Fed. Reg. 20,721). The proposed changes included new definitions for onshore production and gathering operations and new safety standards for certain gas gathering lines in class 1 locations. After submitting comments in response to the NPRM, the American Petroleum Institute (API) formed a working group to consider whether to develop a new recommended practice for the safe operation of large diameter onshore gas gathering lines in rural areas.

Construction, Operation, and Maintenance of Large Diameter Rural Gas Gathering Lines

1 Scope

1.1 General

This recommended practice (RP) contains provisions relating to the design, construction, testing, corrosion control, operation, and maintenance of onshore gas gathering lines as defined in API RP 80. The requirements in the RP are applicable to pipelines > 12.75 in. outside diameter in class 1 locations (3.1.4) or class 2 locations (3.1.5) that are not regulated onshore gas gathering lines as defined in 49 CFR 192.8.

NOTE As of the time of publication of this document, API RP 80, 1st Edition was incorporated by reference into U.S. Federal Regulation (49 CFR 192). The 2nd Edition of API RP 80 has not been incorporated by reference into U.S. Federal Regulation (49 CFR 192). Users of this document may also need to reference the 1st Edition of API RP 80.

1.2 Applicability

Annex A describes the sections of this RP and their applications.

1.2.1 New Pipelines

Except where otherwise noted, the provisions of this recommended practice apply to new pipelines.

1.2.2 Existing Pipelines

The design, construction, and testing provisions in Section 5 do not apply to existing pipelines. Except where otherwise noted, all other provisions in this RP apply to existing pipelines.

2 Normative References

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the reference document (including any amendment) applies.

API Recommended Practice 80, *Guidelines for the Definition of Onshore Gas Gathering Lines*

3 Terms, Definitions, Acronyms, and Abbreviations

3.1 Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions apply.

3.1.1

active corrosion

Continuing corrosion, which, unless controlled, could result in a condition that is detrimental to public safety or the environment.

3.1.2

building intended for human occupancy

A residential, commercial, or industrial building that is intended to be regularly occupied by people, such as a house, apartment, store, or office, but not including a building intended to be used intermittently and solely for pipeline operations and maintenance activities.