



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Pipeline and Hazardous
Material Safety
Administration**

Administrator

July 16, 2014

Dear Emergency Response Stakeholders,

Improving communication between emergency responders and pipeline operators nationwide is an important aspect of pipeline safety. Beginning in 2012, a diverse group of pipeline operators, firefighters, along with state and federal regulators came together to create the Georgia Pipeline Emergency Responders Initiative (GPERI). This groundbreaking initiative was conceived as a way to enhance communications among emergency responders, pipeline operators, and regulators. It has done that and more.

The GPERI has strengthened the relationships among the various pipeline safety stakeholders in Georgia. It has brought about a better understanding of stakeholders' shared responsibilities to help prevent and properly respond to pipeline incidents. The GPERI has also spurred the development and implementation in Georgia of new pipeline emergency response training and has had a significant impact on the understanding of pipeline hazards in the emergency responder community.

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) recognizes that each state is unique and has its own set of challenges in protecting the public and the environment from the risks associated with transporting hazardous materials in pipelines. However, we are highly encouraged by the success of the Georgia initiative and encourage other states to develop similar programs tailored to its needs.

To learn more about the GPERI, please call the PHMSA Southern Region Office at (404) 832-1147.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cynthia L. Quarterman".

Cynthia L. Quarterman