



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Jan. 5, 2011

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**U.S. Department of Transportation announces
new safety guidelines for communities near pipelines**
Austin becomes model for key recommendations

The U.S. Department of Transportation recently released new safety guidelines to better protect residential areas near gasoline, diesel fuel and other types of pipelines transporting hazardous liquids with many key provisions modeled on Austin's pipeline ordinance.

As communities have spread into areas that were once rural, these guidelines will significantly help local governments, developers and community planners reduce the safety risks of new development.

The report, "Partnering to Further Enhance Pipeline Safety in Communities through Risk-Informed Land Use Planning," offers approximately 50 recommendations to help reduce the safety risks that result from growth near pipelines.

While many of the key recommendations are already in place here, City of Austin staff may review the other guidelines to see if any of these would be helpful in improving public safety or communication with local pipeline operators.

"I'm proud of the City of Austin's contribution to this effort. These new guidelines will greatly contribute to the safety of residential areas as they develop around existing pipelines," Austin Mayor Lee Leffingwell said. "Because of work on the Longhorn Pipeline and Austin's ordinance regarding development near hazardous liquids transmission pipelines, the City of Austin is seen as a leader in how local governments address pipeline safety issues."

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In 2007, the National League of Cities (NLC) asked the City of Austin to represent it in the Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) as it began work to create these guidelines for local governments, land planners, developers, and pipeline operators. Mayor Lee Leffingwell is NLC's and Austin's representative on PIPA. (Former Mayor Pro Tem Betty Dunkerley preceded Leffingwell as representative.)

City of Austin staff from the Watershed Protection Department, Planning and Development Review Department and the Fire Marshal's Office provided technical assistance and leadership to PIPA in creating best management practices for development near hazardous liquids transmission pipelines, several of which cross Austin and Travis County.

The City's team worked with representatives from the pipeline industry, other local governments, developers and real estate interests to produce this first-of-its-kind document that provides guidance for new development near pipelines.

For more information about the report and the recommendations, visit <http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/landuseplanning.htm>

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