Key Challenges Facing the Natural Gas Distribution Industry

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We’re Here to Discuss -

• The challenges natural gas distribution companies are facing
• Our research priorities to help meet those challenges
• Our call to action
Challenges Facing Distributors

• High and volatile gas prices
• Population growth/challenges of building new infrastructure to meet that growth
• Aging workforce
• Aging infrastructure
Challenges Facing Distributors

- Environmental need for more efficient use of natural resources
- Limited research funding and almost no funding for mid-long term research
- Increasing environmental challenges
Operational Challenges

- New/upcoming regulations (DIMP, EFVs, OQ)
- Interference with underground pipelines
- Locating underground pipes and leaks
- Excavation and site restoration
- Determining the integrity of mains/services
- Gas quality and interchangeability issues
Research Priorities to Help Address These Challenges

Technologies that will -

• Help companies adapt to aging workforce

• Proactively monitor underground pipe conditions, including potential interference and damage

• Better pinpoint underground infrastructure and leaks
Research Priorities to Help Address These Challenges

• New materials, components and construction technologies to allow companies to efficiently expand capacity to serve growing population centers

• Improved pipe repair & replacement technologies to safely and reliably extend the life of existing infrastructure
Research Priorities to Help Address These Challenges

Technologies and methods that will

- Reduce the excavation footprint
- Allow companies to assess integrity in challenging situations, such as cased road crossings
- Enable blending of methane from various alternative sources, with natural gas
Research Priorities to Help Address These Challenges

Technologies and methods that will

• Provide better joining and fitting capabilities

• Enable greater direct use of natural gas by consumers
Benefits of this Research

- Improved reliability/integrity/deliverability
- Enhanced ability to detect and assess pipeline anomalies
- Improved use of company resources
- A reduction in incidents
- Better materials, components & processes
- Improved gas quality and BTU control
Our Call to Action

• Research is critical if we are to advance this industry and adapt to the changing needs of customers and employees
• We must work together to make the most of available resources
• If you are not part of a natural gas research consortium, join if you have the resources
Thank You!