### Historical Timeline

#### 1986
- July: Mounds View incident occurs.
- December: Findings and recommendations by the Minnesota Commission on Pipeline Safety initiates creation of new Office of Pipeline Safety in the Department of Public Safety.

#### 1987

#### 1988
- First MNOPS Pipeline Safety Advisory Council established, meetings held quarterly.
- MNOPS begins its first comprehensive intrastate inspections of private and municipal pipeline operators.

#### 1989
- MNOPS conducts comprehensive inspections of intrastate pipeline operators.
- First formal training conference held in spring.

#### 1990
- The first MNOPS State Fair booth is staffed primarily by GSOC, MNOPS, and the Advisory Council and pipeline operators.
- MNOPS conducts first comprehensive inspections of LP propane system operators.

#### 1991
- MNOPS expands enforcement of the Damage Prevention Program.
- July 8: MNOPS achieves interstate agent status with the USDOT. Minnesota is the third state to become an interstate agent for both natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline operators operating under a single regulatory authority.

#### 1994
- MNOPS is placed under the State Fire Marshal Division. The state fire marshal is the director of MNOPS.
- The office is reorganized to better focus on inspection and damage preventions.

#### 1995
- The Department of Public Safety moves to downtown Saint Paul, and MNOPS office is relocated to Town Square.
- MNOPS is represented on a national industry/government pipeline mapping team establishing nationwide standards.
- MNOPS obtains first federal grant to develop a pilot statewide pipeline map and computerized pipeline mapping system.

#### 1996
- April: Ground is broken for the new GSOC building operated by the GSOC Board, with One-Call Concepts as vendor.
- MNOPS reaches a complement of 10 inspectors.
- Office is reorganized with a lead for Damage Prevention program.

#### 1998
- New legislation is passed to address abandoned lines, white marking paint, and One-Call fines raised from $500 to $1,000/violation.
Historical Timeline

1999
- Minnesota’s One-Call statute amended to require calling 911 upon release of natural gas or hazardous liquid. The result is increased enforcement and adoption as a national best practice in 2004 by the Common Ground Alliance.

2000
- A full-time damage prevention staff person is added to respond to the increased One-Call complaints and investigations as well as expand the education program.
- MNOPS educational conference consolidated to once a year.

2001
- In response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the office assumes a greater role in infrastructure planning and emergency preparedness as part of the Governor’s Emergency Response Committee.

2003
- MS 216 D Rules Advisory Committee is formed with 40 industry and government representatives to develop input to legislative and rule changes.

2005
- MS 216 D changes to rules include positive response system and locating of new sewer and water laterals in public rights of ways.

2007
- MNOPS celebrates its 20th anniversary.
- A legislative initiative to increase the civil penalty amount to $100,000 per violation per day for a maximum penalty of $1 million to align with federal code.

2012
- MNOPS celebrates its 25th anniversary.

2017
- MNOPS celebrates its 30th anniversary.
Welcome to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Pipeline Safety’s 2019 Annual Report.

The Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety (MNOPS) is proud to provide you with an overview of the past year’s inspection, investigation and educational efforts regarding pipeline safety and underground utility damage prevention. Additionally, you will find information about Minnesota's extensive pipeline infrastructure and the companies that operate it. Our goal is to keep you informed in this important area of public safety.

Over the past year, over 7,000 hours of inspections were conducted with a focus on pipeline safety processes, and procedures by our 23 team members. The MNOPS staff works throughout Minnesota each year conducting inspections, which are an important safety element to ensure that Minnesota's pipeline infrastructure and investigations.

Throughout 2019, MNOPS inspectors engaged over 6,000 individuals at education events and presentations throughout Minnesota. Excavation contractors, homeowners and utility operators all learned about the steps needed to dig safely around underground utilities such as natural gas piping, communication lines and electric cables.

In addition, emergency responders throughout the state were offered training that focused on response and preparation for a pipeline incident in their areas.

As MNOPS director, I am proud to provide you with the MNOPS 2019 Annual Report. Thank you for your continued support. Please remember to call 811 or click before you dig.

Jim Smith
Office of Pipeline Safety Director
Minnesota State Fire Marshal
History

Minnesota Office of Pipeline Safety was created in 1987 following a major pipeline release that ignited in Mounds View. The office became fully certified in 1991 to inspect both interstate and intrastate pipelines under authority of the U.S. Department of Transportation – Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

Division Overview

As a division of the Department of Public Safety, MNOPS is responsible for pipeline safety and underground utility damage prevention throughout Minnesota. This responsibility incorporates the following elements to ensure public safety:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Education
- Inspection
- Investigation

What MNOPS Does

Our 20-person staff oversees over 68,000 miles of natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines in Minnesota. The office is centrally located in St. Paul with regional field offices in Clearbrook, Sandstone, and Granite Falls. Staff members work each day to ensure pipeline companies are in compliance with regulations so products are transported safely. Field office locations aid in reducing dispatch times to incidents and help maintain a more local presence throughout the state. MNOPS inspectors conduct safety inspections, investigations and educational outreach throughout the state.

MNOPS is also responsible for investigation and enforcement of the state excavation notification system prescribed under Minnesota Statute 216D, otherwise known as Gopher State One-Call.

Interstate agent responsibilities

MNOPS conducts inspection of pipeline construction, maintenance, operations and investigates accidents/incidents as part of an interstate agent agreement with PHMSA. Minnesota is one of five states in the nation with an agreement to carry out these duties. Interstate pipeline facilities are inspected as directed by PHMSA’s Interstate Inspection Plan.

Probable violations of safety regulations noted by MNOPS inspectors and investigation results are forwarded to PHMSA, where the enforcement process takes place.

Mission statement

MNOPS protects lives, property, and the environment through the implementation of a program of gas and hazardous liquid pipeline inspections, enforcement, and accident and incident investigations.
Damage Prevention Inspection Team

The Damage Prevention Team performs investigations on damages to underground facilities and enforces the state’s One Call law when necessary. This team also works and cooperates with industry stakeholders to enhance public safety in regards to underground utilities.

What we do

Through the Minnesota Duty Officer, MNOPS receives notifications of underground utility damages due to excavation. We also receive notifications that are complaint driven via phone or email. MNOPS will dispatch to the location of the damage or complaint as required to investigate the incident. If a violation of the One Call is found, MNOPS will work with the parties involved to determine the root cause and minimize recurrence.

In an effort to promote safe excavation practices, MNOPS is involved with various UCC (utility coordinating committee) groups and the MNCGA (MN Common Ground Alliance). Our networking and cooperation with industry stakeholders (pipeline operators, utility owners, excavators, municipalities, one call center, locators, etc…) allows us to share ideas and discuss ways to improve the safety of those work around underground utilities in Minnesota, both on a professional level and as a homeowner.

Large Operator Inspection Team

The Large Pipeline Operator Team conducts natural gas pipeline inspections, enforcement, incident investigations, and education.

What we do

Inspections include an evaluation of the operator’s policies, procedures, training and qualification records, along with field observation of practices and conditions. If an incident occurs, the team investigates to determine probable violations and works to prevent recurrence. The team also conducts non-scheduled or routine inspections that include construction and integrity activities.

Small Operator & Interstate Inspection Team

The team conducts pipeline inspections on jurisdictional operators involved with natural gas, liquid propane, crude oil and other hazardous liquid transportation. Other areas of involvement include education, training, outreach and enforcement of the state’s one call laws along with incident response.

What we do

The team conducts a variety of inspection types on small municipal natural gas and propane operators up to the large interstate operators. These inspections cover areas of procedure and records review along with filed inspections of the facilities. The team’s incident response covers the entire state and involves initial site safety oversite with follow-up investigation work regarding potential regulatory violations that may have taken place and procedures put in place to prevent future occurrence. The team also participates in the damage prevention program activities such as presenting educational and training material to various operators, excavators, locators and the general public.
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<th>Work</th>
<th>Cell</th>
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<td><strong>Damage Prevention Team</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim Smith</td>
<td>651-201-7201</td>
<td>612-240-9170</td>
<td><a href="mailto:James.g.smith@state.mn.us">James.g.smith@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jon Wolfgram</td>
<td>651-201-7234</td>
<td>651-398-6976</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Jonathan.wolfgram@state.mn.us">Jonathan.wolfgram@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Mendiola</td>
<td>651-201-7248</td>
<td>651-373-5912</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Michael.mendiola@state.mn.us">Michael.mendiola@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Chrisfield</td>
<td>651-201-7231</td>
<td>612-271-3832</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Thomas.chrisfield@state.mn.us">Thomas.chrisfield@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pat Donovan</td>
<td>651-201-7232</td>
<td>612-708-6373</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Pat.donovan@state.mn.us">Pat.donovan@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ole Engerretsen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>651-470-5435</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Olaf.engerretsen@state.mn.us">Olaf.engerretsen@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<td>Claude Anderson</td>
<td>651-201-7241</td>
<td>651-485-8031</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Claude.anderson@state.mn.us">Claude.anderson@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<td>Jeff Blackwell</td>
<td>651-201-7246</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:Jeff.blackwell@state.mn.us">Jeff.blackwell@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<td>Thomas Coffman</td>
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<td>Joe Hauger</td>
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<td>651-245-5674</td>
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<td>Todd Stansbury</td>
<td>651-201-7243</td>
<td>651-335-7501</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Todd.stansbury@state.mn.us">Todd.stansbury@state.mn.us</a></td>
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<td>Ed Boyd</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>651-587-9007</td>
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<td><strong>Administrative Team</strong></td>
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<td>Kita Nelson</td>
<td>651-201-7245</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Andrew Voyer</td>
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<td>Sean Mangan</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Skalne</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:Elizabeth.skalne@state.mn.us">Elizabeth.skalne@state.mn.us</a></td>
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The process: From the fields to your home

Natural gas and crude oil are extracted from oil and natural gas fields across North America. The products transported via Minnesota pipelines start at production wells or refineries. From the well head in the production field, natural gas and crude oil are transported via “gathering” pipelines to processing plants. (At this time, there are no production fields or gathering lines in Minnesota.) Processing plants take the raw products and separate the gases and liquids that travel through pipelines to be turned into various fuels at the refineries. Refined products (gasoline and diesel fuel, for example) leave the refinery via tank trucks or pipelines to get to their retail or storage destinations.

Natural gas enters a network of transmission pipelines for transportation to local natural gas distribution companies. Generally, transmission pipelines are larger-diameter pipelines through which natural gas is moved at high pressure by a series of compressor stations. Minnesota’s natural gas transmission system consists of 5,462 miles (4,996 miles interstate, 466 intrastate) of pipeline reaching all corners of the state.

In addition to natural gas pipelines, nearly 5,000 miles of hazardous liquid pipelines are in use in Minnesota. Crude oil is transported in 2,558 miles of these pipelines. Crude oil pipelines travel from oil processing plants to the two refineries in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. The crude oil pipeline system includes pumping stations that keep the product moving through the pipeline. Some of these lines transport product through Minnesota to refineries elsewhere. There are 137 “breakout” tanks included in Minnesota’s hazardous liquid pipeline system. These tanks differ from storage tanks in that they are used to relieve product surges in pipelines and to store products for reinjection into the pipeline for transportation.

Approximately 1,820 miles of Minnesota’s hazardous-liquid pipelines carry refined petroleum products such as gasoline and diesel fuel. Pipelines leave refineries from a variety of states, including Minnesota, and transport products across the state. These pipeline systems are similar in construction to crude oil pipelines. The remaining 573 miles of Minnesota hazardous-liquid pipelines are used to transport highly volatile liquids such as propane and anhydrous ammonia.
Keeping You Safe

Emergency response

Minnesota statute requires MNOPS to advise emergency responders during pipeline emergencies. Pipeline operators must, and local emergency responders may, call the Minnesota duty officer to give notice of pipeline emergencies. The duty officer notifies the MNOPS assigned on-call inspector. There is one on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. MNOPS has a mutual aid agreement with the State Fire Marshal Division investigators for immediate emergency response to pipeline incidents in remote areas of the state.

Inspections and investigations

Minnesota State Statute 299J provides MNOPS with authority for inspection and investigation of interstate pipelines. MNOPS carries out its safety role by conducting routine pipeline inspections and investigations of pipeline accidents. The following table illustrates the quantity and type of inspections and investigations:

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One-Call Inquiry/Complaint: Investigation of probable noncompliances of state damage prevention laws.
Pipeline Inquiry/Complaint: Addressing public concerns regarding pipelines and land owner complaints.
Pipeline Inspection: Inspection of pipeline facilities and operators for compliance with regulations.
Educational Presentation: Training designed for pipeline companies on topics related to damage prevention and/or emergency response.
Keeping You Safe

MNOPS inspectors routinely review pipeline operator procedures, training, records and field inspections to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations. Companies transporting natural gas, oil and refined petroleum products are required to comply with Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 192 – Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline: Minimum Federal Safety Standards; Part 195 – Transportation of Hazardous Liquids by Pipeline; and Part 199 – Drug and Alcohol Testing. Minnesota State Statute 299F adopts these regulations for Intrastate pipeline companies and provides MNOPS with statutory authority for inspection and investigation.

MNOPS inspectors visit every natural gas, hazardous liquid and jurisdictional propane operator in the state to determine their compliance with the pipeline safety regulations. These inspections include reviews of the operators’ plans, procedures, records and inspection field facilities. Each MNOPS inspector serves as a lead inspector for one or more operators. With over 68,000 miles of natural gas and liquid pipelines in Minnesota, this method of inspecting has led to excellent relationships with the operators and exceptional compliance results.

There are eight different types of natural gas pipeline operators in Minnesota. Distribution is the most common category of pipeline operators; they transport the gas from the transmission pipeline to the end user, such as residences, hotels, restaurants, and other businesses. Private pipelines are companies that distribute to their customers. Municipal pipelines are operated by the city. Master meters are pipeline operators that have defined areas to which they transport natural gas; an example of this in Minnesota is the Mall of America. Liquefied Propane Gas (LPG) systems are typically small groups of buildings where gas is supplied by an on-site propane storage tank. Transmission pipelines transport natural gas from a storage or gathering fields to a distribution center, storage field or large volume customer.

Many different types of inspections are required for pipeline operators. These are dependent on the type of operator and the type of facilities. Standard inspections are the most common. They include field and records inspection and reviews of plans for many of the other categories. Design, testing and construction inspections are also very common; these inspections are important because they allow direct inspection of pipe and procedures while it is being put into the ground. Integrity management involves inspection and surveying the pipeline to identify risks to the pipeline and taking actions and measures to prevent leaks.

The inspection process includes attention to pipeline operator data (PHMSA Annual Reports), review of procedures and records, and observations in the field. PHMSA prioritizes annual interstate inspections by risk elements pertaining to each pipeline operator. Risk elements include date of installation, installation methods, location, accidents and leaks. PHMSA creates an annual interstate inspection plan, and MNOPS carries it out as an interstate agent.
Enforcement

Pipeline operators’ compliance with regulations are verified by inspections or investigations. In the event of noncompliance on an Intrastate pipeline, an enforcement action is issued by MNOPS. PHMSA officials decide the appropriate course of action with regard to noncompliance on interstate lines.

Generally, enforcement elements include:

- A citation of the applicable regulation
- Evidence regarding the non-compliance
- A compliance order designed to ensure future compliance
- A proposed monetary civil penalty, if applicable

Federal regulations govern penalty amounts for interstate pipelines. PHMSA penalty amounts may not exceed $200,000 for each violation or $2 million for a series of related violations.

InTRAstate pipeline violation penalty amounts are covered by Minnesota state statute. Penalty amounts may not exceed $100,000 for each violation and not exceed $1,000,000 for a series of related violations.

Accidents and incidents

MNOPS investigates pipeline accidents and incidents. In the event of a pipeline accident/incident, inspectors work with pipeline companies and emergency responders to minimize damage to lives, property and the environment. An assigned MNOPS inspector begins the investigation by contacting the operator regarding the incident to obtain additional details. Of immediate concern is action the pipeline operator is taking to make the area safe. These measures include stopping the flow of product to the area by isolating the damaged section with designated emergency valves. This would also include shutting down applicable gas compressors or pumps. The investigation continues with inquiry into the cause of the release and a plan of action for repair and startup of the line. Pipeline operators are required by regulations to investigate the cause of the release and minimize the possibility of recurrence. In the case of an interstate pipeline accident, MNOPS conducts investigations on behalf of PHMSA. Regarding both interstate and Intrastate accidents, PHMSA and MNOPS communicate throughout incident responses and investigations.

Complaints

Excavators, One-Call locators, underground utility operators and the public may call MNOPS with One-Call complaints and questions. These calls range from wanting to know why someone is putting colored paint and flags on their lawn to charges that a utility operator is late in locating its underground facilities. MNOPS speaks to the caller and determines whether a violation of the One-Call Law has taken place. MNOPS attempts to educate the parties involved regarding the purpose and importance of the One-Call Law that have been enacted in every state plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to enhance public safety during excavations. If the violations are repeated or egregious, MNOPS will write a notice of probable violation (NPV) and may impose a fine of up to $1,000 per day per violation.
Keeping You Safe

Damage prevention program

MNOPS is the education and enforcement authority for the “Call Before You Dig law”, Minnesota’s excavation safety law. The law requires any individual or company to call the Gopher State One-Call center before digging so that pipeline and utility operators can be notified to mark underground utilities. This process saves lives and minimizes excavation damage to pipelines.

Excavation damage is a threat to pipelines throughout Minnesota. When excavation equipment operators strike pipelines, the impact can cause dents, gouges or ruptures on the line. Damage can be potentially devastating. Minnesota statutes currently define “excavation” as a mechanical method of digging. Even though hand digging is exempt from current law, instances occur where digging with a shovel or driving stakes into the ground damages pipeline facilities.

Damage prevention investigations

Each natural gas or hazardous liquid operator is required to create and implement a damage prevention plan that details the steps the operator takes to reduce damages from excavation activities near the pipeline.

MNOPS inspectors review the operators’ programs to ensure they comply with the damage prevention regulations in 49 CFR Part 192 (gas) or 195 (hazardous liquid). The operators must register with the Gopher State One-Call Center to ensure they are notified in the event of an excavation near their facilities. When notified, all operators must work with excavators planning to dig near their lines to locate all underground facilities.

For high-pressure pipelines or those in high-population areas, the operator may provide a “watchdog,” or overseer, to ensure that the excavator stays well away from its pipeline during activities. Part of the operator’s damage prevention plan should include trending and statistical analysis of excavation damages over time. In Minnesota we have seen a drop in excavation damages from 5.18 per thousand GSOC tickets in 2002 to 1.54 per thousand in 2018.

In spite of everyone’s best efforts, sometimes excavation damage to an underground gas or hazardous liquid line occurs. When that happens the Minnesota duty officer will call the MNOPS on-call inspector, who starts an investigation. The inspector will want to know first whether the site has been made safe, whether the product has been shut off, and if the public is being kept away from the incident area. The inspector often visits the site to determine whether the involved parties have done their required tasks: Did the excavator call Gopher State One-Call to request locate marks? Did the operator comply with that request in a timely fashion? Were the locate marks accurate? Did the excavator take necessary precautions while digging?

A more detailed breakdown of damages can be found on our website at ops.dps.mn.gov.
2019 By the Numbers
### 2019 By The Numbers

#### MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
OFFICE OF PIPELINE SAFETY

**PIPELINE SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS & INSPECTIONS**

**2019**

#### Inspection Type

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2019 By The Numbers

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
OFFICE OF PIPELINE SAFETY
PIPELINE SAFETY AND DAMAGE PREVENTION PRESENTATIONS
2019

Prepared by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Pipeline Safety, Feb. 14, 2020