





According to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, these spills and ruptures released over 7 million gallons of crude. Individual leaks ranged from a few gallons to hundreds of thousands of gallons. One of the largest spills happened in North Dakota in 2013 when lightning struck a pipeline, which leaked over 840,000 gallons of crude onto a wheat field.

Much of this crude originates in the oil fields of Texas and North Dakota. But accidents frequently occur with pipelines that just transport crude through states to refineries. Thus, states not directly involved in the oil fracking boom still face substantial risks to public safety and the environment from crude transport.

Nearly half of America's crude oil pipelines are more than 50 years old, increasing the chance of corrosion and failure. Human error and failure of operators to act on potential vulnerabilities in their pipelines also contribute to accidents. So do natural phenomena like lightning and earthquakes.

Moreover, only 139 federal pipeline inspectors are responsible for examining over 2.6 million miles of pipelines. That's nearly 18,000 miles of pipeline per inspector – clearly not enough to ensure the integrity of our nation's aging pipeline infrastructure

source : High Country News



In 2015, in the federally regulated pipeline system,

- •38 companies, including 11 that transport both oil and gas, transported 217 million cubic meters (m3) of oil (1.4 billion barrels) along 21 637 kilometers of oil pipelines;
- •65 companies, including the 11 that transport both oil and gas, transported 152 billion cubic meters of natural gas (5.5 trillion cubic feet) along 56 332 kilometers of natural gas pipelines.

On June 14, a natural gas pipeline ruptured and burst into flames near Cuero, Texas, releasing an estimated 165,000 pounds of toxic volatile organic compounds into the air. Nearby residents evacuated their homes, but no one was injured. Still, the accident serves as another reminder of the dangers of transporting natural gas and other hazardous materials.

Industry insists that pipelines are safe, but ruptures and leaks are a daily occurrence. Eighty people have died and 389 have been injured in such incidents in the last five years.

Since 2010, over 3,300 incidents of crude oil and liquefied natural gas leaks or ruptures have occurred on U.S. pipelines. These incidents have killed 80 people, injured 389 more, and cost \$2.8 billion in damages. They also released toxic, polluting chemicals in local soil, waterways, and air.

Over 1,000 of these incidents occurred on pipelines carrying crude oil. High Country News, a nonprofit news organization in Colorado, mapped these spills:



