

Chenango, Otsego, Delaware, Madison Regional Natural Gas Collaborative
May 26, 2011 @ 2:00 p.m.
Chenango County Office Building- Board of Supervisors Chambers

Ms. Jones welcomed everyone to the Regional Natural Gas meeting at 2:08 p.m.

Mr. Palmatier asked for introductions around the room from the approximate 35 attendees prior to introducing the guest speaker.

Presentation:

Mr. Palmatier introduced the guest speaker: **Kevin Speicher - New York State Public Service Commission Gas Safety Division.**

Mr. Speicher provided a power point presentation on pipeline regulations. He added the NYSPSC does not deal with gas/oil wells, pipeline only.

Summary of Presentation and Comments in conjunction with the power point presentation:

- Basis of Public Service Law is Article 4, Section 66(2) adopted September 21, 1951
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regulates interstate pipelines; NYSPSC regulates intrastate pipelines. NYSPSC regulations must meet or exceed FERC regulations. Interstate pipeline inspections are contracted to state agencies generally a 5-year agreement. NYSPSC has a \$ 2.6 million contract with FERC to conduct pipeline inspections which expires December 2011.
- NYSPSC Law Part 255 focuses on Gas Safety.
- NYSPSC Safety Division has a staff of 30, with 27 natural gas field staff assigned to different regions in the state: NYC, Albany, Syracuse and Buffalo regions.
- Responsible for record and field audits:
 - Ensure code is followed
 - Construction inspections
 - Operation & Maintenance procedures to meet code.
 - Investigate Incidents and Complaints
- Enforcement of “Dig Safely NY” membership program
- Inspection of areas specified as High Consequence Areas (HCA) for example schools, hospitals, high density population, are dependent on industry standards.
- Gathering Lines (Slide 19 & 20 power point) rule generally apply in sparsely populated areas
 - Actively farmed land in last 5 years bury lines 40” depth, normal depth 24”
 - Cover line with conductive locating wire and tape
 - Patrol lines for damage etc., 2years
 - Leakage surveys 5 years.
 - Article VII of PSC regulations lines 125 or >psi within 150 ft. of building must be designed, constructed, tested and operated as a steel transmission line.
 - Lines <125psi refer to section 255.9 Article VII

Questions/Comments:

- Supervisor Bays asked about the Town of Smyrna pipelines. Mr. Speicher stated his staff is in the area frequently. Any problems/issues with the pipeline must be reported to NYSPSC by the company within 48 hours. PSC has staff members living close to this area to address issue as soon as possible. The pipeline companies are aware of regulations and no specific training by PSC, situation dependant.
- Mr. DeClue questioned if 150ft. from building requirement includes barns? Mr. Speicher stated any building can hold gas and there is a possibility individuals may be inside a barn.
- Inspection time table? High pressure lines yearly, medium every 2 years and Low pressure 3 years. Regardless of design pressure lines are inspected during construction through routine unscheduled visits. Low pressure plastic lines inspected every 5 years, steel every 3 years. Number of visits may be governed by history of any problems. Inspection for leaks is performed by a flame ionization unit. NYSPSC does monitoring for inspectors- “field audits” for accuracy.
- Mr. Hudiberg questioned mapping. Mr. Speicher stated PSC does not require release of mapping information. County Emergency management has copies of maps which are updated annually.
- Supervisor Flanagan commented there have been instances when gathering lines <125psi were not required to notify “Dig Safely NY”. Mr. Speicher confirmed NYSPSC encourages all companies to join “Dig Safely NY”. If not an Article VII situation, exempt from the law.
- Location of pipelines determined by company after negotiation with landowner. Mr. Speicher commented the Environmental section provides input. Road crossing markers, for high pressure transmission /gathering lines are required. In some cases delivery lines.

- Question relating to “disclosure” when property is sold. If a right of way or easement this should be disclosed as part of the property search. If a property owner considers constructing a new building it is important to communicate location and distancing from an existing pipeline.
- Supervisor Flanagan commented if NYSPSC does not address specifics and oversight of the low pressure “gathering lines” maybe every town should consider enacting a law to address gathering lines.
- Mr. Keyes, Norse Energy, Inc. commented on the required NYSPSC Safety Requirements during installation of the natural gas gathering lines. Appendix 7G requires a Notice of Intent (NOI) describing the facility design, buildings, valving, and fusing of plastic lines based on manufacturer’s design. Welders must be compliant with training and manufacturer’s requirements. NYSPSC inspects installation of steel pipes near buildings. Maximum allowable pressure determined by pipeline quality. Notice of Intent (NOI) to NYSPSC is required within 48 hours of any required inspection, problem, etc. regardless of size of the pipeline.
- Supervisor Bays commented on the burial depth of the pipeline ranging from 2-4 ft. NYSPSC is advocating for additional safety requirements. Many companies mark pipeline as line of sight, no notification requirements required for bedrock areas, generally 12" depth. Concern that depth changes overtime through natural movement. Highway standards are more stringent requiring 48" depth.
- Discussion continued relating to Right of Way along property lines: 60ft. State Right of Way; 2" diameter pipeline 30 ft.; and 24" pipeline 70ft.
- Maintenance along pipeline and right of way corridors is through cutting grass/shrub no herbicides. Maintaining vegetation holds soil and can serve as an indicator if there is leakage vegetation will die in the specific area.
- NYSPSC has a joint relationship with the Environmental Division of NYSDEC and the Army Corp of Engineers on oversight of small diameter pipelines in wetland and streams.

Where We Stand:

- Legislative Action: There have been numerous bills introduced to the NYS Legislation relating to natural gas issues, some appear to be valid and some are not.
- SGEIS status: The revised draft of the Supplemental GEIS may possibly be approved sometime in 2012 after review, comments and training.

Education and Training:

- Mr. Haugli, DCMO BOCES stated there have been no major changes to the current programs at this time. The Welding and Conservation/Equipment programs are working with the natural gas industry to coordinate training programs for rough terrain forklifts and the CDL license program. These programs are on-going and are also available through Adult education. The Welding Technology program is currently housed at the Masonville BOCES campus. There is discussion to move this program to the Norwich BOCES campus.
- The next 4-County Regional meeting is scheduled for June 16th at 1:00 p.m. to avoid conflicts. Mr. Hudiburg expressed concern about the invitation of Mr. Thomas Shepstone, Consultant for “Energy in Depth”, to speak at the next meeting. Mr. Palmatier stated that Mr. Shepstone has a strong background in Planning and he felt he could provide beneficial information for consideration by the local municipalities.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.