

# Transmission Pipeline Right-of-Way

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The transmission pipeline right-of-way must be maintained in order to facilitate the identification of surface conditions such as:

- Unauthorized activities on or near the right-of way
- Heavy equipment on the right-of-way without authorization
- Urban encroachment
- Construction activities on or near the right-of-way
- Soil defects
- Erosion at water crossings, flooding on the right-of-way or sedimentation in streams
- Damage to company property
- Missing or moved aerial markers, pipeline line markers or identification signs
- Evidence of leaking gas or liquid

A transmission pipeline ROW that is adequately maintained free of obstructions is an important visual indicator of the existence of transmission pipeline facilities for anyone performing construction or other work near the pipeline. Third-party incidents are a leading cause of damage to transmission pipelines and often occur when excavation or other construction activity occurs near the pipeline and the pipe is accidentally struck.

If pipeline damage occurs, the pipeline operator may need direct and immediate access to the pipeline and this will be facilitated by an adequately maintained ROW. In the event of an emergency, a clear ROW is necessary to facilitate access by both the pipeline operator and emergency response personnel. Obstructions on the ROW can prohibit their ability to respond.

A clear ROW makes conducting inspections, often performed via aerial patrol, more efficient and effective. Other methods of inspecting transmission pipelines, such as vehicle and foot patrols, also require a clear ROW.

A clear ROW enables the transmission pipeline operator to conduct inspections and testing to verify pipeline integrity and to perform general maintenance and repairs as needed. According to pipeline safety regulations, transmission pipeline operators must have a patrol program to inspect and observe surface conditions on and adjacent to the transmission line right-of-way for indications of leaks, construction activity, and other factors affecting safety and operation. While an operator may choose to perform inspections more frequently, hazardous liquid transmission pipeline operators must inspect 26 times a year at an interval that does not exceed 21 days. Natural gas transmission pipeline operators must inspect 1 to 4 times a year at an interval that does not exceed 4.5 to 15 months, depending on the population density near the pipeline.

## Fixed-Wing Patrols

Utilizing our fleet of small single-engine airplanes, Persistent Surveillance Systems provides a cost-effective and efficient service. Fixed-wing patrols are quick, safe, and efficient. Our pilots are trained to detect leaks and encroachments on the ROW that may jeopardize the integrity of the pipe.

### **195.412 Inspection of rights-of-way and crossings under navigable waters.**

(a) Each operator shall, at intervals not exceeding 3 weeks, but at least 26 times each calendar year, inspect the surface conditions on or adjacent to each pipeline right-of-way. Methods of inspection include walking, driving, flying or other appropriate means of traversing the right-of-way.

(b) Except for offshore pipelines, each operator shall, at intervals not exceeding 5 years, inspect each crossing under a navigable waterway to determine the condition of the crossing.