



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Pipeline and Hazardous  
Materials Safety  
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

JAN - 3 2014

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Stabenow:

Thank you for your letter of December 11, 2013, cosigned by your congressional colleagues, regarding Enbridge Energy Partners' (Enbridge) Line 5 pipeline.

Let me first assure you that safety is the top priority of everyone here at the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). The pipeline failures in the Great Lakes region devastated local communities and the environment. As a result, these communities demanded a comprehensive and thorough approach to safety that went beyond traditional enforcement measures. That is why PHMSA required Enbridge to apply a safety improvement plan that addressed not only the pipelines that failed in Marshall, Michigan, and Grand Marsh, Wisconsin, but their entire Lakehead pipeline system, which consists of 1,900 miles of pipeline throughout the Great Lakes region.

PHMSA's consent agreement required Enbridge to review the integrity of the Lakehead system, including Line 5. This comprehensive safety approach is producing significant safety improvements throughout the region, including corrective activities such as increased internal inspections and confirmatory hydrostatic pressure testing on the specific pipelines that have failed in the past.

Enbridge has also updated their oil spill response plan for the entire Lakehead system and has been in communication with PHMSA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the United States Coast Guard regarding spill response exercises within the Great Lakes region. Enbridge's oil spill response plan is also immediately available electronically to any on-scene spill response coordinator or emergency response agency should an incident occur. A redacted version of the plan is enclosed and is available to the public under the Freedom of Information Act. In the near future, it will also be available online in PHMSA's Electronic Reading Room along with other frequently requested oil spill response plans.

Regarding your inquiry about Enbridge's maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) records for Line 5, Section 23 of the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011 only requires owners and operators of interstate and intrastate gas transmission pipelines located within high consequence areas to verify their records for the MAOP of those lines. Since Line 5 is a hazardous liquid line, those MAOP requirements do not apply.

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We are currently compiling the information you requested about leak detection and integrity testing performed on Line 5. We will provide the additional information as soon as possible.

Updates about Enbridge's Lakehead pipeline system improvements are available on our website at [www.phmsa.dot.gov](http://www.phmsa.dot.gov). Under the PHMSA Updates heading, click on "[One Year Later: Update on Enbridge Lakehead System Improvements](#)."

I appreciate your strong interest in this issue and your concern for your constituents and the environment. If we can be of further assistance, please contact Patricia Klinger, Deputy Director of Governmental, International, and Public Affairs, at 202-366-4831 or by email at [patricia.klinger@dot.gov](mailto:patricia.klinger@dot.gov).

An identical letter has been sent to Senator Levin and Senator Durbin.

Regards,



 Cynthia L. Quarterman

Enclosure