**MARINE PIPELINE DAMAGE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS**

The Greater Lafourche Port Commission, exercises jurisdiction over an area of Lafourche Parish south of the Intracoastal Waterway, including Port Fourchon. The Port Fourchon is located near the mouth of Bayou Lafourche in Lafourche Parish, and within the Barataria – Terrebonne National Estuary. The Estuary is home to over 725 species, several of which are either categorized as threatened or endangered, this area is unusually sensitive environmental damage from a hazardous liquid pipeline release. These materials have been produced to enhance marine pipeline damage prevention and public awareness about pipelines among mariners navigating in coastal Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico. The objective of the program is to educate the maritime community about pipeline locations, damage prevention and how to respond appropriately in the event of an emergency.

Port Fourchon services about 90 percent of all deepwater rigs and platforms in the Gulf of Mexico and it is also the host for the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP). Marine natural gas and oil pipelines in the Gulf of Mexico are vital to meeting the Nation’s energy needs. These products are transported through an estimated 65,000 miles of pipelines located on the OCS and within the State waters of Louisiana. Each day approximately 270 large supply vessels traverse the port’s channels and 1.15 million barrels of crude oil is transported via pipelines through the port.

On April 20, 2010 a gas release and subsequent explosion occurred on the Deepwater Horizon oil rig working on an exploration well in the Gulf of Mexico. Tragically, eleven lives were lost and others were injured in the accident. Within moments after the accident, the thirteen crewmen of the PSV Damon B. Bankston undertook a massive search and rescue effort which resulted in the recovery of 115 survivors. We commend the crew of the Bankston for their heroic actions, along with the mariners aboard 4,890 vessels who responded to the spill. Over 48,000 individuals were involved in the Deepwater Horizon response at a cost of $77 billion dollars. Recovery of the Gulf of Mexico and our communities continues today. This accident did not involve a pipeline but, it does underscore the need for emergency preplanning. Please review the safety information provided and retain onboard your vessel as reference material. Many of the recommendations in these materials were direct result of investigations into marine accidents conducted by the National Transportation Safety Board including: Fire On Board Construction Barge Athena / Report No. MBR-96/01. Fire On Board F/V Northumberland, Gulf of Mexico. Report No. M-90-66. Fire on Board the U.S.MODU Rowan Odessa, Gulf of Mexico. Report No. MBR-96/01. Natural Gas Pipeline Rupture and Fire During Dredging of Tiger Pass, LA. Report No.PAR98-01.

Please work safely to protect your crew, protect the environment, protect your vessel and protect our way of life. Pipeline safety is a shared responsibility.
Pipeline operators face a variety of challenges, from complex operating environments to tight deadlines. To meet these challenges, it’s important to understand the signs of a pipeline leak. The Marine Pipeline Hazard Avoidance Checklist can help reduce the potential for pipeline damage during your next operation.

**PREVENTING A PIPELINE INCIDENT**

- From complex operating environments to tight deadlines, today’s vessel operators face a variety of challenges. To meet these challenges, it’s important to understand the signs of a pipeline leak.
- The Marine Pipeline Hazard Avoidance Checklist can help reduce the potential for pipeline damage during your next operation.

**UNDERSTAND THE SIGNS OF A PIPELINE LEAK**

- **Understanding the Signs**
  - A blending or hazing sound, blooming water or continuous bubbling that may resemble wheel wash, a gas odor, or other unusual odor or taste being detected.

**ACT IMMEDIATELY IF YOU SUSPECT A LEAK**

- If you recognize any of the signs of a pipeline leak, act immediately on these three steps:
  1. **Contact the Pipeline Operator**
  2. **Alert the Local Emergency Responders**
  3. **Alert the Coast Guard**

**KNOW WHAT’S BELOW – 44 HOURS BEFORE YOU GO, CALL 811 AND GULF SAFE. IT’S FREE AND IT’S THE LAW.**

- **To make a location request online, call 811 or go to gulfsafe.com to submit online pipeline location ticket.**
  - Information you will need:
    - Work or facility name and address
    - Work details
    - Contact information

**WHAT IF THERE IS A SPILL OR RELEASE OF NATURAL GAS?**

- **The goal is to stop the flow of product or natural gas as quickly as possible.**
- **If you are in a bayou or marsh and there is a pipeline marker, you can contact the pipeline operator to isolate the pipeline facility prior to trying to free your vessel.**

**PIPELINE SAFETY IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

- Protecting the marine environment and the public and the pipeline systems and the resources that rely on them is everyone's responsibility.
- The National Response Center (NRC) is the U.S. Coast Guard’s National Operations Coordination Center.
- The NRC is able to quickly locate and contact pipelines to isolate pipeline systems and the resources that rely on them.
- The NRC can be contacted by calling 1-800-424-8802 or by visiting www.nrc.noaa.gov.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT FROM SPILLS**

- **Incidents and spills**
  - 100,000 barrels
  - 100 people
  - 17 injuries

**VESSELS, ANCHORS, SPUD BARGES AND JACK UP RIGS**

- **Avoid activities within 150’ of coastal and marsh pipeline platforms where coastal erosion or storms may have affected waterbottom cover.**
- **The placement of cane marker poles along the pipeline route.**
- **Natural Gas and Liquid Hydrocarbon pipelines located in the Gulf of Mexico and its Inlets in 15’ of water or less, and regulated by Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Administration, must be inspected to ensure that adequate protection measures are in place to reduce the risk of an environmental event.**
- **Recently surveyed pipelines may be identified by a mixture of protective measures are used including metal cages, 3:1 sand cement bags, concrete mats and sea domes.**