Pipeline Safety: Corrosion Threat to Newly Constructed Gas Transmission and Hazardous Liquid Pipelines

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice; issuance of advisory bulletin.

SUMMARY: RSPA’s Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) is issuing this advisory bulletin to owners and operators of natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines to consider the threat from external corrosion during and immediately after construction of new steel pipelines or pipeline segments. Operators are strongly encouraged to determine whether new pipelines are susceptible to interference and damage from stray electrical currents. Operators should carefully monitor and take action to mitigate any detrimental effects.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Richard Huriaux, (202) 366-4565; or by e-mail, richard.huriaux@rspa.dot.gov. This document can be viewed at the OPS Home page at http://ops.dot.gov. General information about the RSPA/OPS programs may be obtained by accessing RSPA’s Home page at http://rspa.dot.gov.

I. Advisory Bulletin (ADB–03–06)

To: Owners and Operators of Gas Transmission and Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Systems.

Subject: Corrosion Threat to Newly Constructed Gas Transmission and Hazardous Liquid Pipelines.

Purpose: To advise owners and operators of natural gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines to consider external corrosion as a possible safety risk to newly constructed pipelines and to identify and remediate the detrimental effects of stray currents during and after construction.

Advisory: Each operator of a natural gas transmission or hazardous liquid pipeline should determine whether new steel pipelines are susceptible to detrimental effects from stray electrical currents. Based on this evaluation, an operator should carefully monitor and take action to mitigate detrimental effects. The operator should give special attention to a new pipeline’s physical location, particularly a location that may subject the new pipeline to stray currents from other underground facilities, including other pipelines, and induced currents from electrical transmission lines, whether aboveground or underground. Operators are strongly encouraged to review their corrosion control programs and to have qualified corrosion personnel present during construction to identify, mitigate, and monitor any detrimental stray currents that might damage new pipelines.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

II. Background

This action follows the discovery of substantial external corrosion on a newly constructed gas transmission pipeline. The pipeline had been in service a little over two years when this unexpected corrosion was revealed by a high-resolution, inline inspection tool. The pipe wall pitting was consistent with that caused by underground stray electrical current before a cathodic protection system is installed. In some isolated areas, the pipeline exhibited more than 50% wall loss. Corrosion due to stray current is most often found on pipelines that cross other underground structures (such as other pipelines) or that follow overhead electric transmission lines.

Pipelines are often routed along common use right-of-ways. This presents complicated corrosion scenarios that must be addressed by corrosion engineers. In some instances, the common right-of-way includes high voltage power lines that can induce alternating current on a new pipeline. This can result in significant corrosion damage to the pipeline in a short period. In other instances, the common right-of-way will cross or parallel foreign pipelines. This requires consideration of the effects of electrical interference from foreign pipeline cathodic protection systems, both on the new pipeline and on the existing foreign pipeline.

Corrosion control on gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines is addressed in the Federal Pipeline Safety Regulations at 49 CFR part 192, subpart I and part 195, subpart H. Although 49 CFR 192.455(a)(2) and 195.563(a) state that a cathodic protection system must be installed and placed in operation within one year after completion of construction, operators are encouraged to have qualified corrosion personnel identify, mitigate, and monitor any...
This notice is filed under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(8). If it contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34426, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Robert T. Opal, 1416 Dodge Street, Room 830, Omaha, NE 68179.

Board decisions and notices are available on the Board’s Web site at “http://www.stb.dot.gov.”


By the Board, Vernon A. Williams, Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34426]

Union Pacific Railroad Company—Temporary Trackage Rights Exemption—The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) has agreed to grant temporary overhead trackage rights to Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) over BNSF’s rail line between BNSF milepost 768.89 near Dallas (Forest Avenue), TX, and BNSF milepost 60.6 near Houston (Belt Junction), TX, a distance of approximately 247.5 miles.

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated on November 1, 2003, and the authorization is scheduled to expire on or about December 23, 2003. The purpose of the temporary trackage rights is to facilitate maintenance work on UP lines.

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the temporary trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in Norfolk and Western Ry. Co.—Trackage Rights—BN, 354 I.C.C. 605 (1978), as modified in Mendocino Coast Ry., Inc.—Lease and Operate, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980), aff’d sub nom. Railway Labor Executives’ Ass’n v. United States, 675 F.2d 1248 (D.C. Cir. 1982).

The parties state that consummation of the transaction was scheduled to occur on November 1, 2003.

The purpose of the trackage rights is to provide run through unit train service between Berea and Louisville, KY, and between Louisville and Lewisburg, KY.

As a condition to this exemption, any employees affected by the trackage rights will be protected by the conditions imposed in Mendocino Coast Ry., Inc.—Lease and Operate, 360 I.C.C. 653 (1980).

This notice is filed under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(7). If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34420, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Michael W. Blaszak, 211 South Leitch Ave., La Grange, IL 60525–2162, and Ronald A. Lane, Fletcher & Sippel LLC, 29 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 920, Chicago, IL 60606.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at http://“www.stb.dot.gov.”


By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB–33 (Sub–No. 211X)]

Union Pacific Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—In Alameda County, CA

Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon a 5.38-mile line of railroad in the Milpitas Subdivision from milepost 0.00 near Clark Drive at Niles Junction to milepost 5.38 near Washington Boulevard, in or near Fremont, Alameda County, CA.

The portion of the line extending from milepost 2.61 to the end of the proposed abandonment at milepost 5.38 was sold by UP to the Santa Clara...