

## Kinder Morgan Accidents & Safety Violations

In 2009, the [Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration](#) (PHMSA) cited Kinder Morgan for violating safety standards regarding the distance between a natural gas pipeline and a “high consequence area” such as a school or hospital; the pipeline was too close for safe operation in case of a leak.<sup>[22]</sup>

In 2011, PHMSA cited Kinder Morgan for these safety violations:

- failing to maintain update maps showing pipeline locations,
- failing to test pipeline safety devices,
- failing to maintain proper firefighting equipment,
- failing to inspect its pipelines as required, and
- failing to adequately monitor pipes’ corrosion levels.<sup>[23]</sup>

In 2013, the headline “Wall Street Worries About Kinder Morgan’s Safety Record: BC pipeline operator slashes and defers maintenance spending” was a concern to anyone who lived or worked near a Kinder Morgan pipeline.<sup>[24]</sup>

The [Wall Street Journal](#) asked, “Is Kinder Morgan Scrimping on its Pipelines?” after an investment analyst charged the company with starving its pipelines of routine maintenance spending in order to return more cash to investors.<sup>[25]</sup> Deferred maintenance may account for the high number of Kinder Morgan pipeline accidents in the last decade.

Close examination of PHMSA's incident reports for Kinder Morgan's onshore gas transmission pipelines shows that faulty infrastructure causes 45% of onshore gas transmission pipeline significant leaks. Failure of the pipe, a cracked weld, and faulty pipeline equipment together account for 28.3% of pipeline leaks, and corrosion of the pipe causes 16.8%.<sup>[26]</sup>

### Accidents

In Texas from 2003 to 2014, Kinder Morgan experienced 36 "significant incidents", resulting in fatalities or hospitalization, fires, explosions, or spills.<sup>[27]</sup>

Throughout the U.S. since 2003, Kinder Morgan and its subsidiaries' pipelines have been responsible for at least 180 spills, evacuations, explosions, fires, and fatalities in 24 states.<sup>[28]</sup> Some notable examples (including spills in Canada):

- **2003**

In August 2003, in Caddo County, Oklahoma, a Kinder Morgan Natural Gas Pipeline of America failed in a rural farming area about just east of the town of Stecker. A 26" diameter pipe exploded, throwing a 54-foot long section of pipe 30 feet from the ditch. The cause was environmental cracking along the length of the failed section parallel to the longitudinal weld seam.<sup>[29]</sup>

- **2004**

On April 27, 2004, an underground Kinder Morgan 14" pipeline ruptured at [Suisun Marsh](#) in [Solano County, California](#), spilling over 120,000 gallons of diesel fuel directly into the marsh. The cause was pipe corrosion. The company failed to notify authorities about the spill for 18 hours, another safety violation for which it was later cited. Kinder Morgan was fined \$5.3 million for the spill, and agreed to enhance spill prevention, response and reporting practices. The company had 44 spills in 31 months, indicating "widespread failure to adequately detect and address the effects of outside force damage and corrosion," according to an order issued in August 2005 by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).<sup>[30][31]</sup>

On November 9, 2004, a Kinder Morgan pipeline in [Walnut Creek, California](#) was struck by a backhoe, causing a gasoline spill that ignited in an explosive fireball that incinerated five workers and severely injured four others. CalOSHA (California Occupational Safety and Health Administration) cited Kinder Morgan for failure to accurately mark or map the pipeline location.<sup>[32]</sup> In 2005, the California Fire Marshal fined Kinder Morgan \$500,000 for its role in the "completely preventable" tragedy. Kinder Morgan agreed to upgrade pipeline inspection methods and improve corrosion control.<sup>[33]</sup>

- **2005**

A Kinder Morgan Energy Partners petroleum products pipeline was found to be leaking gasoline into Summit Creek, near Truckee, California, on April 1. Gasoline spread into Donner Lake. About 300 gallons were spilled.<sup>[34][35]</sup>

In May 2005, a Kinder Morgan Natural Gas Pipeline of America 30" diameter pipe exploded near Marshall, Texas, sending a giant fireball into the sky and hurling a 160-foot section of pipe onto the grounds of an electric power generating plant. Two people were hurt, 40 evacuated. The cause was stress corrosion cracking.<sup>[36]</sup>

- **2006**

On July 22, 2006, near Campbellsville, Kentucky, a Kinder Morgan Tennessee Gas Pipeline exploded. A 25-foot chunk of pipe blew out of the ground and landed 200 feet away, the pipe twisted and mangled, its external coating burned off. The 24" pipeline ruptured due to external corrosion more than two feet long at the bottom of a valley in an area of wet shale, known to cause corrosion on buried pipelines in this part of Kentucky.<sup>[37]</sup>

On November 11, 2006, a subcontractor on Kinder Morgan's Rockies Express (REX) pipeline outside [Cheyenne, Wyoming](#) struck an existing pipeline, causing a rupture and explosion. Two months after this explosion, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission threatened to shut the project down if REX didn't improve its "poor compliance record" involving construction activity outside the approved work area.<sup>[38]</sup>

On November 27, 2006, the Kinder Morgan Plantation Pipeline at [Charlotte, North Carolina](#) released about 4,000 gallons of gasoline from a Plantation Pipe Line Company block valve on a delivery line into a terminal owned by a third party company.<sup>[39]</sup>

- **2007**

On July 24, 2007, the Trans Mountain Pipeline, operated by Kinder Morgan Canada, released over 250,000 litres of crude oil (70,000 of which flowed into Burrard Inlet, requiring a [C\\$15-million](#) cleanup) after a backhoe broke the improperly-marked line in Burnaby.<sup>[40][41]</sup>

- **2008**

On September 23, 2008, a Kinder Morgan pipeline exploded and burned for more than ten hours at Pasadena, Texas. One person died; another was injured.<sup>[42]</sup> The cause of this “significant event” was corrosion. The Pasadena pipeline experienced at least 18 "significant incidents" 2004 to 2013.<sup>[43]</sup>

- **2009**

In May 2009, near Palm City, Florida, a Kinder Morgan Florida Gas Transmission Company 18" diameter natural gas pipeline ruptured in a sparsely populated rural area of Martin Co. and "displaced" about 106 feet of buried pipe onto the right-of-way between Interstate 95 and the Florida Turnpike (SR-91). About 106 feet of pipe weighing about 5,000 pounds was blown out of the ground. The rupture was near a high school that was within the 366-foot potential impact radius (PIR). Injuries included two people in a car that ran off the road and a Sheriff's deputy treated for inhaling gas.<sup>[44]</sup>

On July 15, 2009, a pipeline accident at [Sylvarena, Mississippi](#) involved [Boardwalk Pipeline Partners](#), [Southern Natural Gas](#) and Kinder Morgan in an explosion that killed one person and injured three.<sup>[45]</sup>

- **2010**

On November 30, 2010, a 30" diameter Kinder Morgan / [Tennessee Gas Pipeline](#) failed in a semi-rural area between Highway 1 and State Road 3191, two miles NW of [Natchitoches, Louisiana](#), 1/4 mile NE of a country club, and 200' south of a residential subdivision. Louisiana state police evacuated 100 homes. Pipe cracked: 52.5 inches long & about 0.5 inches in maximum width. The failure site is near where TGP had a previous failure in 1965, with multiple fatalities. That failure was attributed to stress corrosion cracking.<sup>[46]</sup>

- **2011**

The Carteret, New Jersey, KMLT had a leak and fire during maintenance work on March 14, 2011. On April 4, 2013, the PHMSA Office of Pipeline Safety issued a Notice of Probable Violation, Proposed Civil Penalty and Proposed Compliance Order (NOPV) after an inspection.

In 2013, KMLT paid a penalty of \$63,100 and was required to complete pipeline integrity testing and other corrective measures by May 2015.<sup>[47]</sup>

On August 17, 2011, Kinder Morgan's [Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America](#) had a flash fire and explosion south of Herscher, Illinois. Five employees went to the hospital. Kinder Morgan was cited for pipeline and workplace safety violations.<sup>[48]</sup>

On November 16, 2011, near Glouster, Ohio, a weld failed on a Kinder Morgan Tennessee Gas Pipeline 36" diameter pipe; the leak exploded, leaving a blast crater 30 feet across and 15 feet deep. Three homes were destroyed by the fire.<sup>[49]</sup> The leak was caused by "displacement produced by a landslide and an inadequate understanding by (TGP) of the influence of the geotechnical threats on the pipeline in this location."<sup>[50]</sup> A girth weld failed due to earth movement, inadequate design, materials or workmanship, exceeding operational limits & gaps in integrity management.<sup>[51]</sup>

- **2012**

In May 2012, at Arvin, California, a Kinder Morgan El Paso Natural Gas pipeline's relief valves and pipe supports failed, causing an explosion that damaged the Mojave facility and a surrounding cherry orchard, causing "the complete structural failure of the overpressure protection support system."<sup>[52]</sup>

In June 2012, in Gray County, Texas, a Kinder Morgan Natural Gas Pipeline of America 26" diameter pipe failed at Compressor Station 154, Mile Post 52, 4 mi. east of Laketon. The gas ignited, blowing a crater 30 feet in diameter and burning 2 acres of agricultural land as well as two 500-gallon plastic tanks used to store liquid fertilizer plus two telephone poles and transformers. State Highway 152 was closed for several hours. The cause was a 50-foot-long longitudinal rupture in the pipe.<sup>[53]</sup>

On December 26, 2012, in West Melbourne, Florida, a Kinder Morgan Florida Gas Transmission Company pipeline exploded in a pasture.<sup>[54]</sup> The blast ejected a 20-foot section of 20" diameter pipe which landed about 15 feet from the rupture.<sup>[55]</sup>

- **2013**

On May 8, 2013, a Kinder Morgan Tejas pipeline compressor station near [Crockett, Texas](#), had a fire that caused \$7,502,188 in property damage.<sup>[56]</sup>

On June 18, 2013, in Louisiana, a Kinder Morgan Florida Gas Transmission Company 30" diameter pipeline ruptured and exploded before dawn, jolting residents out of their beds in a rural, wooded area of Washington Parish. No one was seriously hurt but 55 homes were evacuated. The blast knocked down trees in an area about 200 yards across and the fire burned those within another 300 yards. "The ground around the crater is completely bare. The dirt around it is just like it had been cooked in a kiln," and an 80-foot section of pipe was destroyed.<sup>[57]</sup>

- 2014

On June 26, 2014 near East Bernard, Texas, a gas pipeline next to the Kinder Morgan compressor plant blew out, destroying the road and setting a truck on fire at FM 1164 just south of Highway 59. Flames shot as high as 150 feet.<sup>[58]</sup>

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