



Repairing America's Aging Pipelines

Repairing the nation's aging natural gas pipelines has the potential to create and support quality, family-sustaining jobs and drive billions in investment. The BlueGreen Alliance's RECAP campaign was developed to accelerate the repair and replacement of this network to create hundreds of thousands additional jobs while addressing the urgent threat of climate change.



Nine percent—or about 112,000 miles—of the nation’s natural gas distribution pipelines are made from leak prone materials such as cast iron, bare steel or unprotected coated steel.



America’s natural gas pipeline system is a vast network with more than one million miles of pipe in the distribution system, pipes underneath our cities and towns which supply energy to homes and businesses. Significant portions of this network were constructed during the 1930’s or earlier, and it’s estimated up to 10 percent of these pipes are made of materials that are much more prone to leakage than coated steel and other advanced materials now available.

Leaks from these cast iron, bare steel, and older plastic pipes waste gas, and uncombusted natural gas is a powerful greenhouse gas, at least 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide over a 100 year period and identified by the EPA as the second largest contributor to climate change.

Natural gas providers have made strides fixing problems resulting from corrosion, mechanical failure, control system failure, accidental or third party disruptions and excavations, and natural forces like temperature swings, floods, hurricanes and earthquakes.

However, current efforts to upgrade all of our leak-prone pipes could take 30 years or longer—squandering the opportunity for the economic benefits of modernization (like recapturing lost gas and job creation) and averting climate change pollution.

Putting Veterans to Work

America’s military veterans are getting good, family-sustaining jobs modernizing America’s pipelines thanks to partnerships between America’s labor unions, educational institutions and businesses. These training programs—including ones run by the Utility Workers Union of America and the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States, Canada and Australia—are training hundreds of veterans to learn new skills and reapply the experience they obtained in the military, then helping place them into apprenticeships and jobs that are helping build a cleaner economy.

“We’re always looking out for ways to make sure our customers get reliable and dependable natural gas when they need it. Providing the top-tier service we’re known for means we’re meeting their daily needs, and doing what’s best over the long term. It’s common sense to invest in the future. That’s why we support efforts to speed the upgrade of our gas distribution system in addition to making needed repairs.”

Richard Passarelli
Business Manager, UWUA Local 18007, Chicago, IL

RECAP

Repairing Our Cities Aging Pipelines

Large-scale investment will allow us to modernize our natural gas pipeline network and accelerate current efforts to repair America's pipelines. This will enhance system reliability and ensure customers pay for the gas they actually use while creating and sustaining hundreds of thousands of new direct and indirect jobs, reducing the release of methane, and strengthening the economy by expanding the market for pipe manufacturing, fabrication, installation and operations.

For example, by tripling the rate of repair for leak-prone sections of our nation's natural gas distribution system, the U.S. can create more than 300,000 good, family-supporting jobs across the economy, save consumers \$1.5 billion in charges for lost gas, and prevent the emission of 81 million metric tons of climate change pollution—the equivalent of taking 17 million cars off the road for a year. The economic benefit would be Gross Domestic Product \$30 billion higher in a decade versus a business-as-usual 30 year timeline.

The BlueGreen Alliance—with its 15 union and environmental partners, along with the AFL-CIO —launched Repairing Our Cities' Aging Pipelines (RECAP), brings together the business, labor and environmental communities to jointly promote policies and innovative financing approaches needed to make necessary upgrades and "keep gas in the system."

RECAP Action

In California, the BlueGreen Alliance worked with labor unions and environmental organizations to help enact SB 1371, authored by State Senator Mark Leno and signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown, which compels the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC) to improve leak identification, repair, and avoidance, as well as better account for the climate change impact of natural gas leaks in the state's natural gas distribution systems.

Unions and BlueGreen Alliance environmental and community allies are working together to ensure the statute sets deadlines for leak discovery and repair (versus monitoring), increases inspections and sets strong workforce safety and training programs for all of the state's gas utilities.

Another victory that is currently accelerating the repair and replacement of leak-prone pipe was the passage in Illinois of the Natural Gas Consumer, Safety and Reliability Act (SB2266) and an Amendment to the Public Utilities Act (HB3104), signed into law by Governor Pat Quinn in July 2013.

“Repairing and replacing the nation's natural gas pipeline infrastructure provides a tremendous opportunity to put Americans to work improving sustainability, efficiency and dependability. These investments will create additional high-skilled manufacturing jobs and challenge America to stay on the cutting edge of innovation.”

Mike Rehwinkel
Executive Chairman, EVRAZ North America



Many portions of America's pipeline network date back more than 100 years.

What You Can Do

The challenges to America's natural gas pipeline are not limited to any specific area or community. While some communities have more replacement needs, investments need to be made in communities across the country. Here's what you can do to help repair and upgrade natural gas pipelines in your community:

1. **Contact your utility commissioner, utility company and/or mayor** and tell them that reliable and efficient natural gas distribution is worth the investment.
2. **Visit www.bluegreenalliance.org** to learn more about how accelerating large-scale investments, innovative financing approaches, and supportive policies to modernize the natural gas pipeline network can benefit your community.
3. **Visit www.bluegreenalliance.org/join** to receive emails, which will keep you up-to-date on the RECAP campaign and the BlueGreen Alliance's other activities.

“Currently, the United States loses at least 2 to 3 percent of its total natural gas production each year when gas is leaked or vented to the atmosphere. This is a waste of a valuable fuel resource as well as a source of local pollution and climate change.”

Leaking Profits: The U.S. Oil and Gas Industry Can Reduce Pollution, Conserve Resources, and Make Money by Preventing Methane Waste,
Natural Resources Defense Council, March 2012.



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