



United Communities of Westchester

• [HOME](#) | • [PRESS](#) | • [CONTACT INFORMATION](#) | • [ACTION](#) | • [OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS](#) | •
[REGISTER](#) | • [CONTACT US](#)

NUMB-in-NY.org

JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE MILLENIUM PIPELINE

FERC mulls plan in case of attack on US pipelines
REUTERS NEWS SERVICE
USA: April 4, 2002

WASHINGTON - The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission said this week it was seeking ways to help U.S. industry quickly rebuild interstate oil and natural gas pipelines if any were damaged by terrorist attacks.

Since the deadly Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, some U.S. lawmakers have urged additional steps to protect key U.S. pipelines, oil refineries and nuclear power plants.

The risk to pipelines became clear on Oct. 4 when the huge Trans-Alaska pipeline was closed for three days after being pierced by a bullet, in what was described as an act of drunken mischief. The 800-mile pipeline carries 1 million barrels of oil each day.

FERC, which regulates interstate pipelines, said it would hold an April 22 public meeting with the Transportation Department to discuss how the federal government could help a damaged pipeline return to service as quickly as possible. Typically, construction of a new pipeline requires years to obtain federal and local approvals for such things as environmental impact and design safety.

The purpose of the meeting will be "to begin discussions with interested parties on whether and how to clarify, expedite and streamline permitting and approvals for interstate pipeline reconstruction in the event of disaster, whether natural or otherwise," the agency said.

On the following day, FERC will hold a similar public meeting to analyze how natural gas supplies could be quickly reallocated among shippers, pipelines and local distribution companies in the event of an emergency.

FERC asked the oil and gas industry to present information at the meetings about the following issues:

- What industry practices exist to respond to incidents of intentional or accidental pipeline damage, and for emergency reallocations of natural gas?
- What are the antitrust implications of pipeline companies, or natural gas companies, coordinating construction or operations to restore service?
- In an emergency, are waivers of regulatory requirements needed?
- How can compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act be met and expedited with pipeline reconstruction?
- Can a generic national security finding be made that avoids case-specific environmental assessment in order to permit a pipeline company to begin immediate construction?
- What are the roles of other agencies, state governments, and regulatory authorities in Canada and Mexico?
- Should FERC have the authority to compel construction in certain emergency circumstances?
- Should pipelines be compelled to construct redundant facilities for certain high-risk or high-profile targets?
- How could natural gas requirements be prioritized during an emergency?
- How should compensation for emergency supplies of natural gas be addressed?

[RETURN TO TOP]