



# EXCAVATING AND DIGGING SAFELY AROUND PIPELINES

**SOUTHERN STAR EMERGENCY NUMBER: 1-800-324-9696**

NON EMERGENCY INQUIRIES: 1-888-885-6008



**PUBLIC AWARENESS DEPARTMENT: 1-888-885-6008**

**E-MAIL US AT:** [publicawareness@southernstar.com](mailto:publicawareness@southernstar.com)

**WEBSITE:** [www.southernstar.com](http://www.southernstar.com)

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Versi en espal disponible. Vea la Tarjeta de Respuesta Comercial.  
<https://www.southernstar.com/safety/pipeline-safety/#pl-safety-brochures>



**You received this brochure because you have been identified as someone who excavates near where Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline, Inc. ("Southern Star") pipelines exist.**

This brochure contains information about safe excavating, including:

- Information about 811 and damage prevention
- Recognizing a right-of-way and pipeline marker
- Damaging or disturbing a pipeline
- Recognizing a pipeline leak
- Responding to a pipeline leak
- Potential hazards of a natural gas pipeline release
- Southern Star's response to a leak
- General information about Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline operations

## EXCAVATING AND DIGGING SAFELY AROUND PIPELINES

Using the information contained in this brochure as a part of your excavating and digging projects will help keep your company running efficiently and keep you safe.

For more information about excavating and digging safely around our pipelines you can contact us at:

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## RECOGNIZING A RIGHT-OF-WAY AND PIPELINE MARKER

A pipeline right-of-way is a strip of land over and around a pipeline where some of the property owner's legal rights have been granted to a pipeline company. Pipeline rights-of-way must be kept free from structures and other obstructions for your safety and to provide access for maintenance and in the event of an emergency. If a pipeline crosses your property, do not plant trees, high shrubs, or any vegetation that would impede access to the right-of-way. Likewise, do not dig, excavate, operate heavy equipment, build, store, or place anything on the right-of-way.

Pipeline markers are found within the pipeline right-of-way.

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## PIPELINE MARKERS

- Indicate approximate location, cannot be used to determine exact location or depth
- Can be found where lines meet at public access points, above ground facilities, streets, highways, waterways, and railway intersections
- Display the pipeline operator name, emergency number, and product transported

## RECOGNIZING A PIPELINE LEAK



### SIGHT

Natural gas is colorless, but vapor and "ground frosting" may be visible at high pressures. A gas leak may also be indicated by bubbles in wet or flooded areas, distinct patches of dead vegetation, dust blowing from a hole in the ground or flames if the leak is ignited.



### SOUND

Volume can range from a quiet hissing to a loud roar depending on the size of the leak and pipeline system.



### SMELL

An unusual smell or gaseous odor will sometimes accompany pipeline leaks. Natural gas is colorless, tasteless, and odorless unless commercial odorants or Mercaptan (a rotten-egg odor) is added. Gas transmission/gas gathering pipelines are odorless, but may contain a hydrocarbon smell.

## POTENTIAL HAZARDS OF A NATURAL GAS PIPELINE RELEASE

The products we transport are flammable commodities. Therefore, a potential exists for a release to escalate into a fire or an explosion that could affect people and property in the vicinity of the pipeline. A gas release could cause negative impacts to personal health and the environment. It could also cause a loss of services, expensive repairs, and fines related to damaging a pipeline. A product release from a high-pressure natural gas pipeline could even create noise levels that are harmful to human hearing.

PRODUCT	LEAK TYPE	VAPORS	HEALTH HAZARDS	FIRE HAZARDS
Natural Gas	Gas	Lighter than air	Extremely high concentrations may cause irritation or asphyxiation	Extremely flammable and easily ignited by heat, sparks, or flames



## RESPONDING TO A PIPELINE LEAK

Follow these basic Do's and Don'ts to remain safe during a pipeline leak:

# DO

1. Leave the immediate area on foot! Move in a cross wind direction away from the leak or vapor cloud and maintain a safe distance. Abandon any equipment being used in or near the area.
2. Go directly to a safe location, and then call 911 and Southern Star's emergency number.
3. Warn others to stay away from the leak.

# DO NOT

1. Cause any open flame or other potential source of ignition such as an electrical switch, vehicle ignition, lighting a match, ringing a doorbell, etc.
2. Come into direct contact with any escaping liquids or gas.
3. Drive into a leak or vapor cloud while leaving the area.
4. Attempt to operate any pipeline valves yourself. You may inadvertently route more product to the leak or cause a secondary incident.
5. Attempt to extinguish a natural gas fire.
6. Use telephones (including cell phones) or anything that could cause a spark.
7. Use e-mail, text, or the Internet to contact the company about a leak.
8. Never assume someone else has reported the leak.

## CALL 811

Unsafe excavation around pipelines is dangerous. Excavating includes: construction of homes, roads, fences, drives, ditches, or other facilities; or operation of heavy equipment or vehicles – any activity which requires moving dirt.

You are required by law to contact 811, "Call Before You Dig," at least 48 hours prior to excavating. This will connect to your state's One Call Center. The One Call Center notifies Southern Star and other pipeline utility operators in the area of your planned excavation. A representative will be sent free of charge to locate and mark the buried facilities before you dig, as necessary.

Please visit <https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State> for state specific one call information.



**Know what's below.  
Call before you dig.**

## DAMAGING OR DISTURBING A PIPELINE

Southern Star maintains a Damage Prevention Program in accordance with state and federal guidelines. If you cause or witness even minor damage to a pipeline or its protective coating, please immediately notify Southern Star. Even a small disturbance to a pipeline may cause a future leak. A gouge, scrape, dent, or crease is cause enough for Southern Star to inspect the damage and make repairs. Do not cover a pipeline that has been disturbed. It makes it more difficult to find the damaged area.

## SOUTHERN STAR'S RESPONSE TO A LEAK

In order to prepare for the event of a leak, Southern Star regularly communicates, plans, and trains with local emergency personnel such as fire and police departments. Upon the notification of an incident or leak, Southern Star will immediately dispatch trained personnel to assist public safety officials in our response to the emergency. Southern Star will also take steps to minimize the amount of product that leaks out and to isolate the pipeline. For more information about our emergency response plans, visit [www.southernstar.com](http://www.southernstar.com).



## PIPELINE PURPOSE AND RELIABILITY

Pipelines are the safest and most efficient means of transporting natural gas, according to National Transportation Safety Board statistics. These pipelines transport the natural gas which provides about 24 percent of all the energy used in the United States.

Southern Star owns and operates approximately 5,800 miles of high-strength steel natural gas pipelines in Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wyoming, including eight underground natural gas storage fields located in Kansas and Oklahoma. Underground storage facilities connect to the pipeline system and safely store natural gas. The ability to store gas helps to ensure we have an adequate and reliable supply of natural gas for our customers during times of high demand, such as cold winter days. You may be aware that much of our pipeline system and storage facilities are buried underground, but other facilities related to our business are above ground (e.g. compressor stations, meter stations, valves, etc.).

## MAINTAINING SAFETY AND INTEGRITY OF PIPELINES AND STORAGE FACILITIES

Southern Star monitors the operation of our pipeline system 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Routine inspections, computer monitoring systems, corrosion protection, maintenance, and regular employee training events are just a few of the ways we ensure the safe and reliable operations of our pipeline and storage facilities. Our pipelines and storage wells are designed, tested, installed, operated, and maintained in accordance with all applicable federal and state requirements.

Gas transmission pipeline operators have developed hazard and assessment programs known as Integrity Management Programs (IMPs). IMPs have been implemented for areas designated as "high consequence areas" in accordance with federal regulations. Specific information about Southern Star's program may be found on our website, or by contacting us directly.

High Consequence Areas (HCA) have been identified and a plan has been implemented for environmentally sensitive areas, urbanized and populated areas, and navigable waterways. This plan provides elevated protection for those occupying an open structure such as playgrounds or stadiums, facilities occupied by persons with limited mobility or who would be difficult to evacuate such as hospitals or schools, and highly populated areas. These are called identified sites. If you know of any identified sites in your jurisdiction, please contact Southern Star at 1-888-885-6008.



## SOUTHERN STAR CENTRAL GAS PIPELINE REPRESENTATIVE MUST BE ON SITE PRIOR TO EXCAVATING

After contacting 811 and submitting your request, 811 will issue a locate request to member utilities, such as Southern Star. Southern Star and other member utilities will mark their underground facilities with paint and/or flags as pictured. You must contact 811 at least two business days before performing any excavation work.

In Oklahoma, you must contact 811 no less than 48 hours before performing excavation work, excluding the date of notification, Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays. This will ensure sufficient time for operators of underground facilities to mark their lines to protect excavators, the public, and preserve the reliability of any underground facilities.




Once Southern Star has marked their facilities with paint and/or flags, a Southern Star representative must be on site prior to excavation. This will ensure that the encroaching party meets Southern Star's standards. In the event of noncompliance with Southern Star's standards, a Southern Star representative has the responsibility and authority to stop any work that jeopardizes Southern Star facilities.



## NATIONAL PIPELINE MAPPING SYSTEM (NPMS)

The location of Southern Star transmission pipelines can be found on the National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) website at [www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov](http://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov).

This color code chart will help determine which utilities have marked their underground utility lines.

	WHITE - Proposed excavation
	PINK - Temporary survey markings
	RED - Electric power lines, cables, conduit, and lighting cables
	YELLOW - Gas, oil, steam, petroleum, or gaseous materials
	ORANGE - Communications, alarm or signal lines, cables, or conduit
	BLUE - Potable water lines
	PURPLE - Reclaimed water, irrigation, and slurry lines
	GREEN - Sewer lines

STATE	NOTICE REQUIRED
Colorado	<a href="https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Colorado">https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Colorado</a>
Kansas	<a href="https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Kansas">https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Kansas</a>
Missouri	<a href="https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Missouri">https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Missouri</a>
Nebraska	<a href="https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Nebraska">https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Nebraska</a>
Oklahoma	<a href="https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Oklahoma">https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Oklahoma</a>
Texas	<a href="https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Texas">https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Texas</a>
Wyoming	<a href="https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Wyoming">https://call811.com/811-In-Your-State/Map/State/Wyoming</a>







## FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:

### **Pipeline Resources and Information**

811 - [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com)

Pipeline 101 - [www.pipeline101.com](http://www.pipeline101.com)

Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) - [www.phmsa.dot.gov](http://www.phmsa.dot.gov)

National Pipeline Mapping System (NPMS) - [www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov](http://www.npms.phmsa.dot.gov)

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## SOUTHERN STAR NON-EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

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