

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**National Small Business Development Center Advisory Board**

AGENCY: Small Business Administration.

ACTION: Notice of open Federal Advisory Committee meeting.

SUMMARY: The SBA is issuing this notice to announce the date, time and agenda for a meeting of the National Small Business Development Center Advisory Board. The meeting will be open to the public; however, advance notice of attendance is required.

DATES: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. EDT.

ADDRESSES: Meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rachel Karton, Office of Small Business Development Centers, U.S. Small Business Administration, 409 Third Street SW, Washington, DC 20416; *Rachel.newman-karton@sba.gov*; 202-619-1816.

If anyone wishes to be a listening participant or would like to request accommodations, please contact Rachel Karton at the information above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to section 10(a) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2), the SBA announces the meetings of the National SBDC Advisory Board. This Board provides advice and counsel to the SBA Administrator and Associate Administrator for Small Business Development Centers.

Purpose

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the following issues pertaining to the SBDC Program:

- Cybersecurity
- Outreach to underserved communities
- Strategies for getting Small Business back to normal

Andrienne Johnson,

Committee Management Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration**

[Docket No. PHMSA-2021-0050]

Pipeline Safety: Statutory Mandate To Update Inspection and Maintenance Plans To Address Eliminating Hazardous Leaks and Minimizing Releases of Natural Gas From Pipeline Facilities

AGENCY: Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA); DOT.

ACTION: Notice; issuance of advisory bulletin.

SUMMARY: PHMSA is issuing this advisory bulletin to remind each owner and operator of a pipeline facility that the “Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act of 2020” (PIPES Act of 2020) contains a self-executing mandate requiring operators to update their inspection and maintenance plans to address eliminating hazardous leaks and minimizing releases of natural gas (including intentional venting during normal operations) from their pipeline facilities. Operators must also revise their plans to address the replacement or remediation of pipeline facilities that are known to leak based on their material, design, or past operating and maintenance history. The statute requires pipeline operators to complete these updates by December 27, 2021.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sayler Palabrica, by phone at 202-366-0559 or by email at *Sayler.Palabrica@dot.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Natural gas is composed primarily of methane, therefore leaks and other releases of natural gas emit methane gas into the atmosphere. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), methane is a potent greenhouse gas with a global warming potential (GWP) of 28–36 over 100 years.¹ Compared to carbon dioxide, methane gas has a stronger warming effect, but a shorter lifespan in the atmosphere. Due to the high GWP and short lifespan of methane gas in the atmosphere, minimizing releases of natural gas (both fugitive and vented emissions) has relatively near-term benefits to mitigating the consequences of climate change. Likewise, remediation or replacement of pipeline facilities that

are known to leak based on material, design or past operating and maintenance history can result in enhanced public safety, environmental protection, and economic benefits.

The “Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act of 2020” (Pub. L. 116–260, Division R; “PIPES Act of 2020”) was signed into law on December 27, 2020. This law contains several provisions that specifically address the elimination of hazardous leaks and minimization of releases of natural gas from pipeline facilities. Section 114(b) of the PIPES Act of 2020 contains self-executing provisions that apply directly to pipeline operators. This section requires each pipeline operator to update its inspection and maintenance plan required under 49 U.S.C. 60108(a) no later than one year after the date of enactment of the PIPES Act of 2020 (*i.e.*, by December 27, 2021) to address the elimination of hazardous leaks and minimization of releases of natural gas (including, and not limited to, intentional venting during normal operations) from the operators’ pipeline facilities (49 U.S.C. 60108(a)(2)(D)). The PIPES Act of 2020 also requires those plans to address the replacement or remediation of pipelines that are known to leak due to their material (including cast iron, unprotected steel, wrought iron, and historic plastics with known issues), design, or past operating and maintenance history (49 U.S.C. 60108(a)(2)(E)). In addition, 49 U.S.C. 60108(a)(2) requires that operators continue updating these plans to meet the requirements of any future regulations related to leak detection and repair that are promulgated under 49 U.S.C. 60102(q).

Advisory Bulletin (ADB-2021-01)

To: Owners and Operators of Gas and Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Facilities.

Subject: Statutory Mandate to Update Inspection and Maintenance Plans to Address Eliminating Hazardous Leaks and Minimizing Releases of Natural Gas from Pipeline Facilities.

Advisory: The PIPES Act of 2020 contains self-executing provisions requiring pipeline facility operators to update their inspection and maintenance plans to address the elimination of hazardous leaks and minimization of releases of natural gas (including, and not limited to, intentional venting during normal operations) from their systems before December 27, 2021. PHMSA expects that operators will comply with the inspection and maintenance plan revisions required in the PIPES Act of 2020 by revising their operations and

¹ “Understanding Global Warming Potentials,” U.S. EPA, available at <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/understanding-global-warming-potentials>.