



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Pipeline and Hazardous
Material Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 0590

February 12, 2014

HMEP Grant Applicants,

PHMSA's mission is to protect people and the environment from the risks of hazardous materials transportation. One of our highest priorities is reducing the risks associated with the bulk transport of crude oil throughout the United States.

Beginning in 2008, the number of crude oil shipments by rail has significantly increased, directly impacting the rate of exposure during the transport of crude. Recent derailments in North Dakota and Alabama in the United States; and New Brunswick, Ontario, and Lac-Mégantic in Quebec, Canada reveals the catastrophic consequences of derailments of crude oil trains. These incidents have raised concerns about the safety risks associated with transporting crude oil—specifically the shale crude oil originating from the Bakken region. PHMSA's goal is to ensure emergency responders are prepared and trained to effectively respond to and mitigate, the situation if an incident does occur.

For the 2014-2015 grant cycle, and subsequent cycles moving forward grantees are encouraged to allocate funding towards emergency preparedness activities. These activities include, but not limited to, developing or revising emergency plans to account for bulk rail shipments of crude, developing commodity flow studies to determine the frequency and quantity of crude shipments being transported through local communities, and training emergency responders to respond appropriately to incidents involving bulk shipments of crude.

PHMSA is committed to working with each HMEP grantee ensuring the necessary tools and information is available to maximize the use of the HMEP grant award. PHMSA understands the importance of emergency preparedness and the safety impact of the surrounding communities. PHMSA appreciates the hard work and steadfast commitment to the HMEP Grant Program, as we embark upon another successful HMEP program year.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Magdy El-Sibaie'.

Dr. Magdy El-Sibaie
Associate Administrator
Office of Hazardous Materials Safety