

May 6, 2010

The Honorable Cynthia L. Quarterman
Administrator
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Quarterman:

Thank you for your August 10, 2009, and March 22, 2010, letters regarding Safety Recommendation P-04-1, stated below. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued this recommendation to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on July 1, 2004, as a result of the NTSB's investigation of the Enbridge pipeline rupture and crude oil release near Cohasset, Minnesota, on July 4, 2002.

P-04-1

Remove the exemption in 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] 192.65(b) that permits pipe to be placed in natural gas service after pressure testing when the pipe cannot be verified to have been transported in accordance with the American Petroleum Institute's recommended practice RP 5L1.

The NTSB reviewed PHMSA's July 6, 2009, report, *PHMSA Review of Transportation Related Damage and Fatigue Issues with Natural Gas Transmission Line Pipe* and noted the report's conclusion that there is no known inventory of vintage thin-walled pipe. We agree with the assessment in PHMSA's March 22 letter that, although the results of the survey are a promising indicator of the absence of vintage pipe in inventory, it is possible that some vintage pipe may still exist. The NTSB is pleased that PHMSA plans to remove the exemption in 49 CFR 192.65(b) in an upcoming *Miscellaneous Rulemaking* expected to be published for public comment by October 2010 and adopted in 2011. Pending completion of this effort, Safety Recommendation P-04-1 is classified "Open—Acceptable Response."

Thank you for your commitment to pipeline safety.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Deborah A.P. Hersman
Chairman

cc: Ms. Linda Lawson, Director
Office of Safety, Energy, and Environment
Office of Transportation Policy