



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

JAN 06 2020

Overnight Express Mail

Ms. Alice Velázquez, Esq.
Executive Director
Department of Transportation and Public Works
Centro Gubernamental Roberto Sánchez Vilella, Torre Sur
P.O. 41269
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00940-1269

Dear Executive Director Velázquez:

On November 25, 2019, a representative of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) conducted an evaluation of Puerto Rico's enforcement of its excavation damage prevention law. PHMSA conducted this evaluation pursuant to 49 United States Code § 60114 and 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 198, Subpart D -- State Damage Prevention Enforcement Programs. Based on this evaluation, PHMSA has determined that the enforcement of Puerto Rico's excavation damage prevention law is "adequate."

As you may be aware, excavation damage continues to be a leading cause of pipeline failures, some of which have resulted in fatalities, serious injuries, and environmental damage. Nationwide statistics show that effective enforcement of state damage prevention laws reduces excavation damage and pipeline incidents, resulting in enhanced public safety.

In closing, PHMSA appreciates your dedication to safety and encourages the Departamento de Transportación y Obras Públicas to continue to support damage prevention outreach initiatives that promote 811 and safe digging practices. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Dr. Christie Murray, our Director of Outreach and Engagement, at (202) 366-4996 or by email at Christie.Murray@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

Massoud Tahamtani
Deputy Associate Administrator, Policy and Programs
Office of Pipeline Safety