

**Relates to 49 CFR, §192.753, §192.53, and §192.143**

**OPSO PROPOSES TO MODIFY GAS PIPELINE SAFETY STANDARDS FOR CAST IRON**

**JOINT SEALANTS...**On November 7, 1975, the OPSO Acting Director issued Notice No. 75-6, Docket No. OPSO-36, in which the MTB proposes to amend Section 192.753. The proposed amendment would permit cast iron caulked bell and spigot joints subject to pressures of 25 psig or more to be sealed by any means which maintains flexibility in the joint, bonds chemically or mechanically with cast iron, and satisfies the general requirements of Sections 192.53 and 192.143 applicable to the materials and the design of pipeline components.

The proposed rule-making action responds to a petition from the Miller Pipeline Corporation to amend Section 192.753(a) to permit the use of a new method of sealing cast iron joints (Avonseal) as an alternative to mechanical leak clamps. The Ohio Public Utilities Commission (PUC) also believes that Section 192.753(a) should not restrict the use of new methods as safe as mechanical leak clamps. On June 5, 1975, acting under Section 3(e) of the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968 (49 USC 1674(e)), the Ohio PUC granted waiver from the requirements of Section 192.753(a) to three Ohio gas companies permitting them to use the Avonseal method on cast iron caulked bell and spigot mains operating below 50 psig. The record of this State waiver and the OPSO action entering no objection to it are contained in OPSO Docket No. OH-75-1.

OPSO has reviewed the tests and data supporting the safety of the Avonseal method along with information relevant to the use of other sealing methods. OPSO has developed criteria which it believes any sealing method subject to pressures of 25 psig or more should meet if the method is to provide a safe alternative to mechanical leak clamps. These criteria are: (1) maintenance of flexibility in the joint to minimize stresses at the joint that could cause pipe breakage, (2) a chemical or mechanical bond between the sealing material and the metal surfaces of both the pipe bell and spigot to provide a permanent seal, and (3) the sealing material and the bond must have a strength sufficient to withstand anticipated forces, be resistant to adverse environmental conditions, and be chemically compatible with materials to which the joint may be exposed. (The criteria in clause (3) are based on requirements now applicable to pipeline materials and components under Sections 192.53(a) and (b), and 192.143.)

Interested persons are invited to participate in this rule-making action by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Communications should identify the regulatory docket and notice numbers and be submitted in duplicate to the Director, Office of Pipeline Safety Operations, Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C. 20590. All communications received by December 29, 1975, will be considered by the

Director before taking final action on the notice. Late filed comments will be considered to the extent practicable. All comments will be available for examination by interested persons at the Office of Pipeline Safety Operations, Room 6226, 2100 Second Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590, before and after the closing date for comments. Reprints of the notice (40 Fed. Reg. 52855, November 13, 1975) are being sent to those on the appropriate OPSO mailing lists.

NTSB RECOMMENDATIONS ... CORRECTIVE ACTIONS SUBSEQUENT TO —  
PENNSYLVANIA INVESTIGATION ... October 20, 1975, the National Transportation Safety Board ... released a letter reporting its investigation of a gas utility explosion and fire which occurred on June 17, 1975, in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. The NTSB concluded that the explosion and fire which resulted in the death of a homeowner was caused by gas leaking from a corrosion hole in a 3/4-inch galvanized steel gas service line capped in the basement of the house. Other findings related to the detection of gas odorants in the house and follow-up actions of the Stroudsburg Gas Company, operator of the system.

In the letter report, the NTSB recommended that the Stroudsburg Gas Company: (1) review and revise its emergency procedures and its employee training program to insure that houses in a suspected leakage area are entered and checked for gas; and (2) review and revise its service abandonment procedures to insure that all service lines reported abandoned have been cut and capped at the main.

Single copies of the NTSB letter report (Stroudsburg Gas Company -- Safety Recommendations P-75-12 and P-75-13) may be obtained by directing a request to Publications Branch, BGM-222, National Transportation Safety Board, Washington, D.C. 20594, telephone (202) 426-8169.

OPSO EASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE MOVES TO WASHINGTON...Early this month, the Eastern Regional Office of OPSO has been relocated from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Washington, D.C. The new office is located in the Trans Point Building, 2100 Second Street, S.W., Room 6315. The new mailing

address is Office of Pipeline Safety Operations, Eastern Region, MTP-50-EA, Materials Transportation Bureau, Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C. 20590, telephone (202) 755-9435.

THE READING RACK...Technical information relating to pipeline safety appears in the following industry publications  
(Note--copies of these articles are not available from OPSO, and inclusion here does not necessarily indicate that content is consistent with current Federal regulations):

MATERIALS PERFORMANCE, August 1975, "Pipeline Telluric Current Interference as One Phase of a Wider Interdisciplinary Technological Problem," T. G. Proctor, Ministry of Works, Wellington, New Zealand.

PIPELINE & GAS JOURNAL, September 1975, "Codes, Standards and Regulations for Western Europe Oil Pipelines," Staff Report; "LNG Terminals: Existing and Proposed Systems Compared," Phillip J. Anderson and Edward J. Daniels, Institute of Gas Technology.

OIL & GAS JOURNAL, May 12, 1975, "Pipe-lay Ship to Challenge Tough Areas," Staff Report; June 2, 1975, "Alyeska Pioneering Aboveground Construction of Big-Inch Pipeline," Howard M. Wilson, West Coast Editor; "Deepwater Pipe-Laying Research Under Way," D. E. Broussard, Shell Pipeline Research and Development Laboratory.

CHILTON'S OIL & GAS ENERGY, July 1975, "Alaska Pipeline -- Energy's Laboratory," James P. Roscoe, Contributing Editor.

PIPE LINE INDUSTRY, July 1975, "New Developments for Offshore Construction," Don E. Lambert, Editor.

#### INTERPRETATION OF REGULATIONS

##### **Relates to 49 CFR, §192.241 and §192.719**

Question: Does the exception from the requirement for nondestructive testing of welds under Section 192.241(b) for pipe less than six inches in nominal diameter also apply to field girth butt welds which must be tested under Section 192.719(a)(2)?

OPSO Interpretation:..."Section 192.241(b) provides limited exceptions from the requirement that all welds on newly installed, replaced, or relocated pipe to be operated at 20 percent or more of SMYS be nondestructively tested. In contrast, Section 192.719(a)(2) specifically requires strength or nondestructive testing for field girth butt welds made in repairing a transmission line by cutting out damaged pipe as a cylinder and replacing it. This specific requirement for testing a repair weld was established without exception because of the greater need to ensure weld quality."

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