

October 24, 1994

Dwight D. Jackson
Manager, Pipeline Services and Regulatory Compliance
Conoco Pipe Line Company
Houston, Texas 77252

Dear Mr. Jackson:

Your letter of August 19, 1994, requests further clarification of the "single public thoroughfare" interpretation discussed in the preamble of the low-stress pipeline Final Rule (59 FR 35465; July 12, 1994). The interpretation concerned plants that are divided into separate parts by a single public thoroughfare. It provides that a plant transfer line that crosses the thoroughfare may qualify for the in-plant piping exception under § 195.1(b)(6).

You asked if a single public thoroughfare includes a railroad. As stated in the preamble, the thoroughfare interpretation applies only to transfer piping that crosses a road. It does not apply to piping that crosses a railroad, whether a mainline or spur. Railroads were excluded because of the added risk that railroads pose to pipeline safety.

The thoroughfare interpretation does not mean that every plant transfer line that crosses a railroad comes under the regulations in 49 CFR Part 195. If a plant transfer line does not come under the in-plant piping exception because it crosses a railroad that divides a plant, it may still be excepted under another provision of § 195.1(b). For example, certain low-stress pipelines are excepted under § 195.1(b)(3). If a plant transfer line that crosses a railroad is subject to Part 195, the entire transfer line comes under the regulations, not just the segment of the line inside the crossing.

I hope you find this information useful. You may wish to contact James C. Thomas, Director, Southwest Region if you need any further assistance in meeting the Part 195 regulations (phone: (713) 750-1746).

Sincerely,

Cesar De Leon
Deputy Associate Administrator for
Pipeline Safety