Living and working near pipelines

In many locations around the world, fuel and gas products are transported by pipeline. Pipelines are an efficient and environmentally friendly way to safely transport fuel and gas products and can be located above ground or underground.

If you live or work near a pipeline, it is important to take special precautions when carrying out any activities that could impact on the pipeline’s safe operation.

ExxonMobil Australia is responsible for pipelines that transport crude oil, liquid fuels (including diesel, unleaded petrol, liquid petroleum gas and aviation fuel) and natural gas.

Our pipelines run within established pipeline easements or pipeline Right of Way. Some of these may have multiple pipelines and the pipeline can be anywhere within the easement or pipeline Right of Way, not necessarily only in the centre.

Dial Before You Dig
Before ground-breaking activities can commence, it is important to utilise the Dial Before You Dig service. Dial Before You Dig is a free national referral service designed to assist in preventing damage and disruption to Australia’s vast infrastructure networks.

For more information or to lodge an enquiry, visit www.1100.com.au or call 1100 toll free during business hours.

Working safely around pipelines
Responsibilities and obligations
The cooperation of people living and working close to pipelines is essential for the safe and reliable operation of the pipeline. Pipelines are legally protected and severe penalties can be imposed against individuals and companies who endanger or damage pipelines. Damage to a pipeline may result in liability for repair costs, product losses, injury to people, property damage and potential claims by end-customers. Pipelines are regulated under the Pipelines Act (2005) by Energy Safe Victoria (ESV).

Pipelines are constructed, maintained and operated in accordance to these regulations as per the Australian Standard AS2885.

One of the most common ways for pipelines to be damaged is during excavation or earth moving activity carried out close to a pipeline or crossing with a heavy load over a pipeline without the pipeline operator’s knowledge. It is the responsibility of any person carrying out works close to a petroleum pipeline to inform and obtain an approval from the pipeline operator of the works to ensure that there is no accidental damage.

Identifying where a pipeline is located
Marker posts and signs are installed at regular intervals along pipeline easements, however they do not provide the exact location of the pipeline itself. The precise pipeline location must be requested from Dial Before You Dig or the pipeline operator before works in the vicinity of the pipeline can begin.

Easements
Most sections of pipeline are constructed within defined easements and registered against property titles which grant a Right of Way to the pipeline operator. A Right of Way allows access for any necessary inspections, repairs, maintenance or replacement of the pipeline.

If your property contains a pipeline easement or Right of Way, some basic guidelines to follow are:
• Buildings are not permitted over the pipeline or within the easement or Right of Way
• Tracks or roads for heavy equipment are not permitted within the easement or Right of Way, without written permission of ExxonMobil Australia
• There are limitations and guidelines about what can be planted on the easement or Right of Way.
To safely operate our pipelines, we follow an integrity management program that includes:

- Regular maintenance of our systems and equipment, such as cathodic protection, to prevent corrosion
- Inspection of pipelines at defined intervals to identify areas of damage or corrosion before a leak could occur
- Regular patrols of pipelines.

We work hard to prevent any incidents involving our pipelines. However, should a pipeline be damaged in any way, we have detailed emergency response procedures and strong relationships with emergency services to minimise any risk to the environment or the community.

Environmental management
We are committed to achieving and maintaining excellence in environmental care throughout our operations.

The community can assist by recognising the signs of a release. Signs of a release of a fuel or gas product from a pipeline include:

- By sight: Liquid on the ground, water bubbling or being blown into the air, vapour cloud, discoloured or abnormally appearing soil, an oily sheen on water surfaces, fire or explosion, dead vegetation
- By sound: Unusual noise such as hissing or roaring
- By smell: Unusual petroleum or chemical smell.

If a release occurs or you think there may be a release:

- Immediately and safely leave the area and move upwind of the release
- Call emergency services on 000 and contact ExxonMobil Australia at the number listed on the pipeline warning sign
- Do not touch, breath or make contact with the release
- Do not light a match, start any engine, use a phone or light switch or do anything close to the release which may create a spark
- Do not drive into a leak or vapour cloud area
- If you have concerns about your own health, contact your doctor immediately
- Do not attempt to operate any of the valves on the pipeline. It could worsen the situation.

For more information on our local operations and to advise us of any upcoming or planned works near our pipelines, visit www.exxonmobil.com.au.