

## **DOT Office of Pipeline Safety – Fact Sheet**

### **Role/Mission.**

The primary federal regulatory agency for onshore oil and natural gas pipeline systems is the U.S. Department of Transportation, Research and Special Programs Administration, Office of Pipeline Safety (RSPA OPS). OPS plays two roles in pipeline oil spill prevention and response.

OPS has inspectors in our regional offices who audit pipeline operators' compliance with our safety and prevention regulations (49 CFR 192 and 195). In the event of a pipeline spill, OPS regional inspectors respond to the accident site to investigate the cause of the spill and to oversee the pipeline operator's repair efforts. Before the line can be returned to service, the pipeline operator must obtain authorization from OPS.

OPS also has responsibilities for oil spill preparedness and response under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990. OPS headquarters manages our OPA 90 program for oil pipelines throughout the United States. This involves review and approval of pipeline operators' facility response plans and conducting exercises under the Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP). OPS headquarters also provides a liaison officer to assist the Federal On Scene Coordinator at the scene of major pipeline spills. The OPS Liaison Officer can assist the FOSC with pertinent information about the pipeline operator's response plan, pipeline operations, and other pipelines in the area.

### **Capabilities.**

To request an OPS headquarters Liaison Officer for an oil pipeline spill, contact the OPS headquarters Emergency Coordinator through the National Response Center, or during business hours contact Jim Taylor directly at (202) 366-8860.

Points of Contact:

OPS Southern Region, Fred Joyner, Regional Director: Atlanta Federal Center, 61 Forsyth Street, Suite 16T15, Atlanta, GA 30303. Phone (404) 562-3530, fax (404) 562-3569.

OPS Headquarters OPA 90 Program, Jim Taylor, Response Plans Officer: US DOT Office of Pipeline Safety, 400 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. Phone (202) 366-8860, fax (202) 366-4566.