

News Release

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AER reports pipeline incidents are down due to improved performance

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For immediate release.

Calgary, Alberta (May 10, 2018)... The number of pipeline incidents in Alberta dropped by almost half over the last 10 years, according to a report on pipeline performance released today by the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER).

The [Pipeline Performance Report](#) shows that pipeline incidents fell by 48 per cent—from 800 incidents in 2008 to 417 incidents in 2017. At the same time, the length of pipelines grew by 11 per cent to 426 000 kilometres. In 2017 alone, pipeline incidents declined by six per cent over the previous year, with 62 per cent of incidents resulting in less than one cubic metre of substance released.

“The continued reduction in incidents shows that companies are getting better at managing the risks of their pipelines and that the steps we’re taking to keep them safe are working,” says Jim Ellis, president and CEO of the Alberta Energy Regulator. “While we’re encouraged that the performance of pipeline companies is improving, more needs to be done because all pipeline incidents are preventable.”

The report also shows that 80 per cent of the pipeline incidents in 2017 had little to no impacts on the public, wildlife, or environment, while those that had high consequences made up 6 per cent of the total.

Internal corrosion remains the leading cause of pipeline failures, with 92 per cent of high-consequence incidents occurring on pipelines that carry corrosive substances such as salt water or oil well effluent, which is a mixture of oil, gas, and salt water.

“In most cases, pipeline incidents are caused by problems that could’ve been avoided if the pipeline had been properly maintained,” says Ellis. “We know that in order to reduce incident rates, companies need to improve their performance further, and that means more than just complying with our requirements. Good performance means that companies need to go above and beyond to ensure that the right systems are in place to keep their pipelines safe.”

The Pipeline Performance Report is part of the AER’s [industry performance program](#), which launched in 2016 to measure, evaluate, and report on energy development activities that the AER regulates and to help improve the performance of oil and gas companies.

The Alberta Energy Regulator ensures the safe, efficient, orderly, and environmentally responsible development of hydrocarbon resources over their entire life cycle. This includes allocating and conserving water resources, managing public lands, and protecting the environment while providing economic benefits for all Albertans.

Editor's note: Stock [photos](#) are available for use and can be found on aer.ca.

Video clips for use:

- How does the Pipeline Performance Report help improve industry performance?
David Helmer, director of Pipelines in Industry Operations
16 seconds | [mp4](#)
- Are pipeline incidents preventable?
David Helmer, director of Pipelines in Industry Operations
27 seconds | [mp4](#)

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