

# Bulletin 2023-40

November 15, 2023

## Release of the New *Pipeline Rules* and Associated Instruments

Today, we released a new edition of the [Pipeline Rules](#) that came into effect on November 15, 2023. The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) administers the [Pipeline Act](#), which is the enabling legislation that allows for the licensing of oil and gas pipelines in Alberta. The *Pipeline Act* also gives the AER the authority to set technical requirements in the *Pipeline Rules* for pipeline design, construction, operation, discontinuation, abandonment, and removal.

In conjunction with the release of the *Pipeline Rules*, we have released new editions of

- [Directive 077: Pipelines – Requirements and Reference Tools](#),
- [Directive 056: Energy Development Applications and Schedules](#),
- [Manual 005: Pipeline Inspections](#), and
- [Manual 012: Energy Development Applications; Procedures and Schedules](#).

### **Pipeline Rules**

The main changes to the *Pipeline Rules* include

- allowing the use of temporary surface pipelines for water conveyance in support of the [Water Conservation Policy for Upstream Oil and Gas Operations](#) (Part 1);
- aligning with standard *CSA Z662: Oil and gas pipeline systems* concerning the Safety and Loss Management System and integrity management program (sections 14 and 15);
- clarifying requirements for minimum cover for existing or abandoned pipelines (section 29);
- removing duplicate requirements for pressure control and overpressure protection at pipeline tie-ins in cases where pressure control is managed elsewhere (section 31);
- reorganizing requirements for ground disturbance and including trenchless excavation techniques (Part 4);

- providing a limited exemption for release reporting of specific on-installation releases (low volume, low risk and not an indicator of pipeline integrity) (section 67);
- reorganizing requirements and updating the pipeline removal process to be consistent with current discontinuation and abandonment processes (notification after the activity is completed) (Part 9);
- allowing licensees up to 24 months (rather than twelve) to discontinue, abandon, or resume a pipeline managed under an integrity management program; and
- allowing for some system-wide abandonments without disconnecting tie-ins.

### ***Directive 077***

The main changes to *Directive 077* include

- expanding the use of temporary surface pipelines for water conveyance (improving operational efficiency) and adding five associated forms (authorization requests and information submissions);
- improving alignment with CSA standards and revising references to *CSA Z662: Oil and gas pipeline systems*;
- revising sections on the use of gaseous and nonfresh water as test mediums for pressure testing, including two new forms;
- deleting redundant content or content that is no longer relevant;
- revising figures and interpreting jurisdictional boundaries for pipelines and piping; and
- adding a new section on commingling oil effluent and gas production streams.

### ***Directive 056***

The main changes to *Directive 056* include

- reordering pipeline related sections to improve clarity;
- making minor changes to pipeline abandonment, discontinuance, removal, and line split;
- changing the pipeline technical audit documentation requirements for new construction and amendment applications; and
- changing application requirements in accordance with the revised *Pipeline Rules* and *Directive 077* and in alignment with *CSA Z662*.

## **Manual 005**

The main changes to *Manual 005* include

- adding new sections to align with changes in the *Pipeline Rules* (e.g., Safety and Loss Management Systems, integrity management programs);
- reorganizing sections to group technical subjects together;
- adding specified enactment requirements to the manual; and
- updating references to standard *CSA Z662*.

## **Manual 012**

The main changes to *Manual 012* include

- adding and changing sections because of changes in the *Pipeline Rules*, *Directive 056*, *Directive 077*, and OneStop;
- reordering sections and adding section numbers to improve clarity; and
- consolidating information from frequently asked questions (FAQs).

On November 16, 2020, we released proposed changes to the *Pipeline Rules* for public comment (see [Bulletin 2020-24](#)), and on July 12, 2022, we released a proposed version of *Directive 077* for public comment (see [Bulletin 2022-24](#)). We have considered the feedback from various stakeholders and rights holders, including Indigenous communities, industry, and environmental groups. A summary of what we heard and our responses is available on the *Directive 077* landing page.

The revised editions of *Directive 056* and *Directive 077* are available on our website at [aer.ca](#) > Regulating Development > Rules and Directives > [Directives](#). The revised editions of *Manual 005* and *Manual 012* are available on our website at [aer.ca](#) > Regulating Development > Rules and Directives > [Manuals](#). If you have any questions, contact our Customer Contact Centre by phone at 1-855-297-8311 or by email at [inquiries@aer.ca](mailto:inquiries@aer.ca).