

Working Safely Near High Pressure Pipelines

This **Good Practice Guide** is aimed at everyone in agriculture who may work near High Pressure pipelines (specifically buried pipelines) and outlines what you can do to reduce the risks when working near them. If machinery makes contact with the pipeline, damage can occur that could result in immediate failure or failure over a longer period of time.



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Hazards

Buried pipelines in the UK transport a variety of products at pressures up to 100 bar. This includes flammable and explosive products such as oil, natural gas, ethylene and petroleum as well as less obviously hazardous material such as water. The hazardous nature of the product is magnified by the high pressures, and should, for example a natural gas pipeline operating at 75 bar fail, an explosion could occur that may result in the deaths of people nearby; damage to an oil pipeline operating at 100 bar could result in extensive environmental issues.

Any damage to a pipeline or its coating can affect its integrity that could result in its failure immediately if enough damage is done, or in the future if the damage deteriorates with time perhaps via corrosion. It is therefore essential that safe procedures are complied with when working near to a pipeline.

The hazardous nature of these pipelines is recognised in UK legislation through The Pipelines Safety Regulations. Regulation 15 of this states that "No person shall cause such damage to a pipeline as may give rise to a danger to persons". This applies to persons working near such pipelines, and failing to comply could result in prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

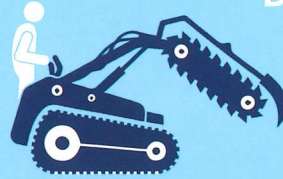
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Notifiable Activities

Prior to working in the vicinity of High Pressure Pipelines, other than routine agricultural activities such as ploughing, you should contact the pipeline operator who will provide any guidance and advice required.

2.1



Ditching & Drainage

- Ditch clearing
- Dredging, widening or creation of waterways/ponds, etc.
- Drainage investigator work/repairs
- Use of powered machinery to clear materials

2.2



Fencing

Installation of new or replacement fences / fence posts or gateposts.

2.3



Construction Work including

- Temporary or permanent tracks/roads
- Installation of water pipes, drains or sewers
- Property extensions (including permitted development)
- Change of use of existing building

2.4



Ground Cover & Storage of Materials

- Depth of cover must not be reduced or increased
- Materials not stacked or stored in the vicinity of the pipeline or within pipeline easement

2.5

Planting of Trees & Shrubs



Planting within the easement should not take place without prior discussion with the pipeline operator

2.8

Excavations (incl pits for Carcass burial)



All excavations are notifiable activities

2.6

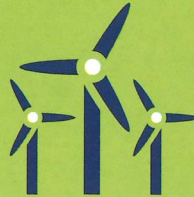
Fires



Should not be built or ignited within the pipeline easement

2.9

Wind turbines and solar farms



Contact pipeline operator at earliest possibility (UKOPA have produced good practice guides for both)

2.7

Sub-soil & Mole ploughing



Should not take place without prior discussion with the pipeline operator

2.10

All other works (incl piling & boring)



Please contact the pipeline operator for any other agricultural work not covered in this document, they will be more than happy to discuss any potential issues

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Information, Instruction & Training



Contractors and temporary staff may be at an increased level of risk when they work on your land, so make sure they know where the pipelines are and discuss and agree with them the precautions they need to take before they start work. More detailed instructions may be needed for those workers whose first language is not English.

The location of pipelines is normally indicated by marker posts at the edges of fields. Remember though that marker posts can be accidentally moved or damaged. Also, pipelines may not necessarily run in a straight line between posts. By contacting the pipeline operator in advance, an operator representative can visit your land to locate and mark out the pipeline and advise what works can and cannot be done safely.

The location of a pipeline is normally a **FREE** service.

4. What to do in an emergency

If, as a result of the activities you uncover ground or come into contact with a pipeline, then:

- A. Shut down all working machinery
- B. Remove all sources of ignition
- C. Remove everyone from the immediate area of the pipeline and move to a safer area
- D. If the pipeline is leaking dial 999 inform police and emergency services
- E. Do not attempt to seal a leaking pipeline
- F. If the leak is burning, do not attempt to extinguish the fire
- G. Contact the pipeline operator's emergency telephone number. This can be obtained either from on a nearby pipeline marker post, on all communications you will have had from the pipeline operator or on the documentation provided by the pipeline operator prior to you commencing work
- H. Follow the advice provided by the pipeline operator and then let them make the situation safe

Further Assistance and Pipeline Operators

The UKOPA website contains the company information details for all UKOPA members, visit www.ukopa.co.uk/emergency/

The UKOPA presentation about working safely near high pressure pipelines can be found at www.ukopa.co.uk/relevant-documents-and-information please do take a look at this and share with any staff and contractors working for you.

Pipeline operators are here to help, so please do contact them prior to any work taking place or if you have any queries.