SMS Questions & Answers

Q. What is a Pipeline Safety Management System (Pipeline SMS)?

A. Pipeline SMS is a management tool that will help a pipeline operator comprehensively manage all the many aspects of pipeline safety.

Q. Why are Pipeline SMS needed?

A. Managing a pipeline, like other manufacturing and industrial activities, requires multiple different factors contributing to safe operations. A comprehensive safety management tool like a Pipeline SMS is needed to maximize safety performance.
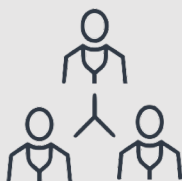
Q. How will a Pipeline SMS help improve pipeline safety?

A. Pipeline SMS provide pipeline operators a structured, comprehensive, regular method of assessing the risks of their operation, knowing their safety performance, learning from experience, and continuously improving pipeline safety.

Q. Who else has benefited from similar efforts?

A. The aviation, nuclear, chemical manufacturing and refining industries have all seen increased safety performance from safety management systems.

Q. Who encouraged pipeline operators to develop a Pipeline SMS?

A. Pipeline operators are following the recommendation of the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the encouragement of the U.S. Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, state regulators and safety experts.

Q. How was the Pipeline SMS developed?

A. In response to an NTSB recommendation, a joint group of pipeline safety stakeholders including gas and liquids pipeline operators, federal and state regulators, safety experts and public representatives developed the Pipeline SMS.