

**CITY OF PIEDMONT**

**WATERWORKS, GAS & SEWER BOARD**

**PUBLIC AWARENESS PLAN**

## **Public Awareness Program Objectives**

The objectives of this Public Awareness Program are:

- To educate both our customers and non-customers who live or work near our pipelines how to recognize the odor of natural gas and how to respond if they detect possible gas odors. Early recognition of a gas odor and proper response can save lives.
- To raise the awareness of the affected public and key stakeholders of the presence of buried natural gas pipelines in the communities we serve. A more informed public will also understand that they have a significant role in helping to prevent third-party damage accidents
- To help excavators understand the steps that they can take to prevent third-party damage and respond properly if they cause damage to our pipelines.
- To help emergency response agencies that may assist the City of Piedmont Gas Board in an emergency understand the proper actions to take in response to a gas release or emergency.
- To educate the public about the protection of gas meters from damage by falling snow or other objects.

## **Public Awareness Policy**

Our goal is to provide safe, reliable gas service to our customers and ensure the safety of people living and/or working near our gas pipelines. Public awareness is a critical component of our overall safety program. Every employee of The City of Piedmont must be committed to fulfilling our public awareness responsibilities as described in this Public Awareness Program.

### **1. Program Administration**

Charlie Fagan, Mayor, is responsible for the overall conduct of this Public Awareness Program. The Program Administrator is responsible to ensure that:

- Target audiences are identified.
- Message(s) appropriate to each audience are identified.
- Appropriate media are selected to transmit each message to each audience.
- Appropriate message delivery frequencies are identified for each message and audience.
- Messages are delivered as specified in the plan.
- The effectiveness of the program is periodically evaluated.

- The plan is modified to reflect the findings of the effectiveness evaluation.

In addition to the Program Administrator, the following individuals are responsible for various aspects of the Public Awareness Program:

Robert L. Young, Utility Systems Manager, is responsible to periodically review the performance of the Public Awareness Program and the individuals responsible for its implementation. Funding and resource allocation requests for the Plan will be established at the level necessary to implement the Plan.

Alabama One Call Center will be working with The City of Piedmont to provide messages and group meetings to the following stakeholder audiences:

- Individuals living/working near our pipelines
- Emergency Officials in areas where we operate
- Excavators in areas where we operate

## **2. Affected Facilities**

All of The City of Piedmont's gas pipeline facilities are included in this Public Awareness Program

## **3. Stakeholder Audiences**

The following stakeholder audiences have been identified:

1. Affected public in areas where we operate
  - A. Our customers
  - B. Individuals living/working near our pipelines
2. Emergency Officials in areas where we operate
  - A. Fire Departments
  - B. Police/Sheriff Departments
3. Public Officials in areas where we operate
  - A. Mayors
  - B. City, Town and/or County Managers
4. Excavators in areas where we operate
  - A. Construction companies
  - B. Excavation Equipment rental companies
  - C. Public Street, Road and Highway Departments
  - D. Timber companies
  - E. Fence building companies
  - F. Landscapers
  - G. Well Drillers

H. Home Builders

I. One-Call Centers

- The Program Administrator is responsible to develop and maintain a list of each of these stakeholder audiences
- The list of our customers will be generated and maintained by Barbara Allen, Office Manager
- The list of Government and emergency response officials will be obtained by contracting each City, Town and /or County Government in which The City of Piedmont operates gas pipelines
- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of excavators will be obtained through a review of the “Yellow Pages” for each type of excavator listed above any by obtaining a list of Alabama One Call Center’s members in our operating area
- The list of individuals living or working near our pipelines will be developed by matching nine-digit zip code numbers to areas which are traversed by The City of Piedmont’s underground gas lines
- Alabama One Call Center will assist in obtaining a list of some stakeholder audiences

#### 4. Message Type, Content and Frequency

The following message type and content will be sent to each stakeholder audience via the media at the frequency listed.

<b><u>Stakeholder Audiences</u></b>	<b><u>Message Type</u></b>	<b><u>Frequency</u></b>	<b><u>Delivery Method and/or Media</u></b>
<b>Residents along the Distribution System</b>	<b>Baseline Messages</b> *Damage Prevention Awareness *Leak recognition and Response	<b>Baseline Frequency</b> Annually	<b>Baseline Activity</b> *Public Service announcements *Targeted distributions of print materials newspaper ads
<b>City of Piedmont Gas Customers</b>	<b>Baseline Messages</b> *Pipeline purpose and Reliability  *Damage Prevention Awareness *Leak recognition and Response	<b>Baseline Frequency</b> Bi-annually	<b>Baseline Activity</b> *Bill Stuffers *Targeted Distribution Of print materials *Countertop handouts
<b>Emergency Officials</b>	<b>Baseline Messages</b> *Pipeline purpose and reliability *Emergency preparedness communications	<b>Baseline Frequency</b> Annually	<b>Baseline Activity</b> *Print materials *Group meetings
<b>Public Officials</b>	<b>Baseline Messages</b> *Pipeline purpose and Reliability *Emergency preparedness communications	<b>Baseline Frequency</b> Every 3 years	<b>Baseline Activity</b> *Print materials *Group meetings
<b>Excavators/Contractors</b>	<b>Baseline Messages</b> *Awareness of hazards and prevention measures undertaken *Leak recognition and response *One-Call Requirements	<b>Baseline Frequency</b> Annually	<b>Baseline Activity</b> *One-Call Center outreach *Personal Contact
<b>One-Call Centers</b>	<b>Baseline Messages</b> *One-Call System Performance *Accurate Line	<b>Baseline Frequency</b> As required by the applicable One-Call Center	<b>Baseline Activity</b> *Membership in appropriate One-Call Center

Location information

\*Personal contact

\*Telephone calls

## **5. Development of Program Materials**

The Program Administrator is responsible for insuring that appropriate materials are developed and/or acquired for each communications activity listed above. Materials should be pre-tested for clarity, understandability and retain-ability before they are widely used. The pre-test should be performed using a small representative audience, for example, a small sample group of City of Piedmont employees and/or families that are not involved in developing the public awareness program.

Alabama One Call will be assisting The City of Piedmont in obtaining and distributing pre-approved materials for the Public Awareness Program.

## **6. Program Implementation**

The Program Administrator is responsible to insure that each target audience receives the appropriate materials via the specified media at the frequency specified in the preceding table. Records of these follow-up actions must be kept as specified in section 9 of this Plan.

## **7. Management of Input/Feedback/Comments Received**

It is anticipated that the implementation of this Public Awareness Program will generate requests for further information from those in the stakeholder audiences contacted. All inquires should be directed to the Program Administrator.

Inquiries about the location of pipelines should be directed to the Alabama One-Call Center at the following number: **1-800-292-8525**

Records of inquiries received as a result of public awareness efforts should be prepared and submitted to the Program Administrator for use in assessing the effectiveness of this Plan.

## **8. Measuring the Effectiveness of this Program**

The Program Administrator is responsible to periodically measure

- Whether the information is reaching the intended stakeholder audiences
- If the recipient audiences understand the messages delivered
- Whether the recipients are motivated to act in accordance with the information provided
- If the implementation of the Public Awareness Program is influencing bottom line results

This will include, at minimum

- Tracking the number of calls received in response to materials
- Reviewing the incidence of third party damage to The City of Piedmont's facilities
- Reviews following meetings with stakeholders
- Contacting a random sample of each stakeholder audience, confirming their receipt of the materials and assessing their understanding of the target messages
- Reviewing similar effectiveness evaluations performed by the Alabama One-Call Center

If the results of these evaluations indicate that one or more target audience is not effectively receiving one or more of the target messages, the Program Administrator should review the message type, content and delivery method to determine if more effective means of communications are available. Records of these effectiveness assessments and follow-up actions must be kept as specified in Section 9 of this Plan.

## **9. Records**

The Program Administrator shall maintain the following records:

- Lists, records or other documentation of stakeholder audiences with whom The City of Piedmont has communicated.
- Copies of all materials provided to each stakeholder audience
- Results of pre-tests and effectiveness assessments, including follow-up actions and expected results

These records shall be maintained for five (5) years.