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FracTracker Alliance Reports High Rate of U.S. Pipeline Incidents, Emerging Issues for Pipeline Transport

PITTSBURGH – [A new report released by FracTracker Alliance](#) examining pipeline incidents reported to the [Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration](#) (PHMSA) finds the rate of pipeline incidents in the U.S. [continues to average](#) 1.7 incidents per day, a concerning trend as new issues emerge for pipeline transportation.

According to the report, in just over 13 years, 8,140 reported pipeline incidents in the U.S. have resulted in 164 deaths, 737 injuries, 1,135 fires, 392 explosions, 46,463 people evacuated, and an estimated \$7.57 billion in property damage.

Key finding from the report:

- From January 2010 to January 2023, a total of 8,140 pipeline incidents were reported to PHMSA, an average of 1.7 incidents per day.
- PHMSA estimates that while [all gathering lines are required to report incidents](#) and file annual reports as of 2021, only about [5% of gathering lines](#) nationwide are subject to the agency's regulation.
- Carbon dioxide pipelines are more prone to incidents than pipelines currently carrying methane gas and other products, averaging an incident every 73.5 miles since 2010.
- Hydrogen, known to embrittle metal pipes, is unsuitable for transportation using existing pipeline infrastructure.

However, in addition to providing top-level incident summaries, the new report from FracTracker Alliance also suggests that the total impact of pipeline incidents may also be significantly underreported, a particularly concerning trend as new issues emerge related to [the expanded use of pipelines for transporting hydrogen](#) and carbon dioxide as a result of federal and state subsidies.

“Before the United States considers whether to build out new pipeline infrastructure to accommodate hydrogen and carbon dioxide, it is worth taking a look at the lengthy incident list of the existing system,” Matt Kelso, FracTracker Manager of Data and Technology, said.

The report concludes that renewable energy sources, which do not rely on pipelines, are safer for the environment and public health.

While Europe is rapidly expanding its renewable energy portfolio, accounting for [37% of electricity consumption](#) in 2020, in the United States, that figure was [just 17%](#) in 2019 according to the Energy Information Administration, despite the fact that [solar power](#) potential in the U.S. is much higher than most of Europe and [wind power](#) potential is at least comparable.

For more information, [visit this link to read the full report](#) or [view the interactive map of incidents reported to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration \(PHMSA\)](#). For questions or specific data requests related to this analysis, please contact Matt Kelso, FracTracker Alliance Manager of Data and Technology.

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