Justification for the Performance of Natural Gas Inspections

The Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002, 49 U.S.C. § 60101 et seq. requires the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to establish minimum federal safety standards for the transportation of gas and hazardous liquid and pipeline facilities. The Secretary is further authorized to delegate to an appropriate state agency the authority to prescribe safety standards and enforce compliance with such standards over jurisdictional gas and hazardous liquid facilities. The Tennessee Regulatory Authority (TRA) has been designated as the appropriate state agency for the State of Tennessee. The TRA adopted Parts 191, 192, 193, 195 and 199 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, except § 192.455 (b), to serve as the minimum pipeline safety standards in Tennessee.

The Authority has safety jurisdiction over more than 33,884 miles of intrastate pipelines and 3 liquefied natural gas facilities that transport natural gas to over 1,161,457 customers. The Authority regulates private gas distribution systems, gas utility districts, municipalities distributing natural gas, master meter systems, direct sales customers and natural gas intrastate pipeline companies. A list of systems under this jurisdiction is provided elsewhere on this website. The Division's Engineers are trained professionals who inspect facilities and construction sites, review documents, investigate incidents and issue violations of non-compliance. Should the operator not make progress toward correcting cited violations, Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) § 65-28-108 provides for the assessment of a civil penalty not to exceed $10,000 for each such violation and for each day that such violation persists. The maximum fine shall not exceed $500,000.

The Division encourages the prevention of third party damages to natural gas and other underground facilities, the single leading cause of accidents, through the enforcement of Tennessee's Underground Utility Damage Prevention Law TCA § 65-31-112.