



## California State Fire Marshal Information Bulletin 03-001

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(Revised March 14, 2017)

### **ENCROACHMENTS INTO or ON PIPELINE EASEMENTS**

The purpose of this informational bulletin is to delineate the position of the State Fire Marshal regarding encroachments onto the pipeline easements.

Section 51014.6 of the California Government Code states, "(a) Effective January 1, 1987, no person, other than the pipeline operator, shall do any of the following with respect to any pipeline easement: (1) Build, erect, or create a structure or improvement within the pipeline easement or permit the building, erection, or creation thereof. (2) Build, erect, or create a structure, fence, wall, or obstruction adjacent to any pipeline easement which would prevent complete and unimpaired surface access to the easement, or permit the building, erection, or creation thereof. (b) No shrubbery or shielding shall be installed on the pipeline easement which would impair aerial observation of the pipeline easement. This subdivision does not prevent the revegetation of any landscape disturbed within a pipeline easement as a result of construction the pipeline and does not prevent the holder of the underlying fee interest or the holder's tenant from planting and harvesting seasonal agricultural crops on a pipeline easement. (c) This section does not prohibit a pipeline operator from performing any necessary activities within a pipeline easement, including, but not limited to, the construction, replacement, relocation, repair, or operation of the pipeline.

It is the position of the State Fire Marshal that nothing shall encroach into or upon the pipeline easement, which would impede the pipeline operator from complete and unobstructed surface access along the pipeline right of way. Nor shall there be any obstructions, which would shield the pipeline right of way from observation. In the interest of public safety and the protection of the environment, it is imperative that the pipeline operator visually assesses the conditions along the easement to ensure the integrity of the pipeline.

It is the responsibility of the pipeline operator to ensure they have unimpeded surface access and to be able to physically observe all portions of their pipeline rights of way. In cases where this is not possible, the pipeline operator shall inform the State Fire Marshal. The State Fire Marshal shall in conjunction with the pipeline operator resolve the issue.

Questions regarding the issue of pipeline encroachment can be addressed to:

CAL FIRE-Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Pipeline Safety Division  
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