

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Howard “Skip” Elliott  
Administrator  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB’s September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number (for example, P-19-14 and -15). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.



Executive Secretariat-LRM  
Office of the Managing Director  
National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L’Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20594  
Tel: (202)314-6047  
Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)



Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Howard “Skip” Elliott  
Administrator  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Elliott:

This letter provides information about the National Transportation Safety Board’s (NTSB) September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems
- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendations to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. Additional information regarding these recommendations can be found in the noted sections of the report.

- Revise Title 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 192 to require overpressure protection for low-pressure natural gas distribution systems that cannot be defeated by a single operator error or equipment failure. (P-19-14) (See section 3.2.)
- Issue an alert to all low-pressure natural gas distribution system operators of the possibility of a failure of overpressure protection; and the alert should recommend that operators use

a failure modes and effects analysis or equivalent structured and systematic method to identify potential failures and take action to mitigate those identified failures. (P-19-15) (See section 3.2.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number (for example, P-19-14). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Kay Ivey  
Governor of Alabama  
State Capitol  
600 Dexter Ave.  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2751

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Kay Ivey  
Governor of Alabama  
State Capitol  
600 Dexter Ave.  
Montgomery, AL 36130-2751

Dear Governor Ivey:

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We are providing the following information to urge the State of Alabama to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
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- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Alabama. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Michael J. Dunleavy  
Governor of Alaska  
State Capitol  
Third Floor  
PO Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Michael J. Dunleavy  
Governor of Alaska  
State Capitol  
Third Floor  
PO Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Dunleavy:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Alaska to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems
- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Alaska. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Doug Ducey  
Governor of Arizona  
State Capitol  
1700 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2812

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Doug Ducey  
Governor of Arizona  
State Capitol  
1700 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2812

Dear Governor Ducey:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Arizona to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

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As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
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- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Arizona. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Asa Hutchinson  
Governor of Arkansas  
250 State Capitol  
500 Woodlane Ave.  
Little Rock, AR 72201-3405

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Asa Hutchinson  
Governor of Arkansas  
250 State Capitol  
500 Woodlane Ave.  
Little Rock, AR 72201-3405

Dear Governor Hutchinson:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Arkansas to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

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- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Arkansas. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman



October 24, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
1303 10th St.  
Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814-4910

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
1303 10th St.  
Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814-4910

Dear Governor Newsom:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of California to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

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- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of California. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Jared Polis  
Governor of Colorado  
136 State Capitol  
Denver, CO 80203-1792

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Jared Polis  
Governor of Colorado  
136 State Capitol  
Denver, CO 80203-1792

Dear Governor Polis:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Colorado to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Colorado. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Ned Lamont  
Governor of Connecticut  
State Capitol  
210 Capitol Ave.  
Hartford, CT 06106-1535

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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Executive Secretariat-LRM  
Office of the Managing Director  
National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20594  
Tel: (202)314-6047  
Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)



Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Ned Lamont  
Governor of Connecticut  
State Capitol  
210 Capitol Ave.  
Hartford, CT 06106-1535

Dear Governor Lamont:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Connecticut to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems



- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Connecticut. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
Governor of Florida  
State Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Ron DeSantis  
Governor of Florida  
State Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor DeSantis:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Florida to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Florida. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Brian P. Kemp  
Governor of Georgia  
111 State Capitol  
206 Washington St.  
Atlanta, GA 30334-1600

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Brian P. Kemp  
Governor of Georgia  
111 State Capitol  
206 Washington St.  
Atlanta, GA 30334-1600

Dear Governor Kemp:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Georgia to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Georgia. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Brad Little  
Governor of Idaho  
State Capitol Building  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0003

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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National Transportation Safety Board  
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Washington, DC 20594  
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Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)





Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Brad Little  
Governor of Idaho  
State Capitol Building  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0003

Dear Governor Little:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Idaho to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Idaho. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker  
Governor of Illinois  
207 State House  
Springfield, IL 62706-9998

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Managing Director  
National Transportation Safety Board  
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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable J.B. Pritzker  
Governor of Illinois  
207 State House  
Springfield, IL 62706-9998

Dear Governor Pritzker:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Illinois to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Illinois. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Kim Reynolds  
Governor of Iowa  
1007 E. Grand Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0001

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

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Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)



Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Kim Reynolds  
Governor of Iowa  
1007 E. Grand Ave.  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0001

Dear Governor Reynolds:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Iowa to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Iowa. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman



October 24, 2019

The Honorable Matt Bevin  
Governor of Kentucky  
700 Capitol Ave.  
Frankfort, KY 40601-3454

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

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Executive Secretariat-LRM  
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National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20594  
Tel: (202)314-6047  
Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)



Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Matt Bevin  
Governor of Kentucky  
700 Capitol Ave.  
Frankfort, KY 40601-3454

Dear Governor Bevin:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the Commonwealth of Kentucky to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable John Bel Edwards  
Governor of Louisiana  
PO Box 94004  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable John Bel Edwards  
Governor of Louisiana  
PO Box 94004  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9004

Dear Governor Edwards:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Louisiana to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Louisiana. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Janet T. Mills  
Governor of Maine  
1 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Janet T. Mills  
Governor of Maine  
1 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0001

Dear Governor Mills:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Maine to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems



- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Maine. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
Governor of Maryland  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Larry Hogan  
Governor of Maryland  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

Dear Governor Hogan:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Maryland to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Maryland. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Tim Walz  
Governor of Minnesota  
130 State Capitol  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1605

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Tim Walz  
Governor of Minnesota  
130 State Capitol  
St. Paul, MN 55155-1605

Dear Governor Walz:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Minnesota to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Minnesota. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Phil Bryant  
Governor of Mississippi  
PO Box 139  
Jackson, MS 39205-0139

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02.. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Phil Bryant  
Governor of Mississippi  
PO Box 139  
Jackson, MS 39205-0139

Dear Governor Bryant:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Mississippi to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Mississippi. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Michael L. Parson  
Governor of Missouri  
PO Box 720  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0720

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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Executive Secretariat-LRM  
Office of the Managing Director  
National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20594  
Tel: (202)314-6047  
Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)



Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Michael L. Parson  
Governor of Missouri  
PO Box 720  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0720

Dear Governor Parson:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Missouri to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Missouri. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Steve Bullock  
Governor of Montana  
State Capitol  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Steve Bullock  
Governor of Montana  
State Capitol  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Bullock:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Montana to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Montana. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman



October 24, 2019

The Honorable Pete Ricketts  
Governor of Nebraska  
PO Box 94848  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Pete Ricketts  
Governor of Nebraska  
PO Box 94848  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

Dear Governor Ricketts:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Nebraska to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Nebraska. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Steve Sisolak  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol  
101 N. Carson St.  
Carson City, NV 89701-5336

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Steve Sisolak  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol  
101 N. Carson St.  
Carson City, NV 89701-5336

Dear Governor Sisolak:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Nevada to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Nevada. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

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Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York  
State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224-0343

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York  
State Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224-0343

Dear Governor Cuomo:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of New York to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems



- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of New York. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Roy Cooper  
Governor of North Carolina  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Roy Cooper  
Governor of North Carolina  
20301 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Dear Governor Cooper:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of North Carolina to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of North Carolina. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

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Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Tom Wolf  
Governor of Pennsylvania  
508 Main Capitol Bldg.  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0062

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

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All communications regarding safety recommendations will be stored by the NTSB and viewable by the public. Please do not send privileged or confidential communications in response to this recommendation. Responses marked as confidential or privileged (or similar designations) will be considered nonresponsive. If you have concerns about this protocol, please contact us at [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov) or call (202) 314-6290 and ask to be directed to the Safety Recommendations Division.



Executive Secretariat-LRM  
Office of the Managing Director  
National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20594  
Tel: (202)314-6047  
Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)



Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Tom Wolf  
Governor of Pennsylvania  
508 Main Capitol Bldg.  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0062

Dear Governor Wolf:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Henry McMaster  
Governor of South Carolina  
1205 Pendleton St.  
Columbia, SC 29201-3756

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Henry McMaster  
Governor of South Carolina  
1205 Pendleton St.  
Columbia, SC 29201-3756

Dear Governor McMaster:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of South Carolina to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment

- Safety management systems
- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of South Carolina. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Governor of South Dakota  
500 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-5001

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Governor of South Dakota  
500 E. Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501-5001

Dear Governor Noem:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of South Dakota to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of South Dakota. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of Texas  
PO Box 12428  
Austin, TX 78711-2428

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Greg Abbott  
Governor of Texas  
PO Box 12428  
Austin, TX 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Texas to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Texas. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman



October 24, 2019

The Honorable Gary R. Herbert  
Governor of Utah  
350 N. State St.  
Suite 200  
PO Box 142220  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-2220

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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National Transportation Safety Board  
490 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Gary R. Herbert  
Governor of Utah  
350 N. State St.  
Suite 200  
PO Box 142220  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-2220

Dear Governor Herbert:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Utah to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment

- Safety management systems
- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Utah. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Ralph S. Northam  
Governor of Virginia  
PO Box 1475  
Richmond, VA 23218-1475

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Ralph S. Northam  
Governor of Virginia  
PO Box 1475  
Richmond, VA 23218-1475

Dear Governor Northam:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the Commonwealth of Virginia to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the Commonwealth of Virginia. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Mark Gordon  
Governor of Wyoming  
Idelman Mansion  
2323 Carey Ave.  
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0010

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

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Email: [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov)





Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Mark Gordon  
Governor of Wyoming  
Idelman Mansion  
2323 Carey Ave.  
Cheyenne, WY 82002-0010

Dear Governor Gordon:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the State of Wyoming to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the 31 states that allow exemptions to professional engineer approval and stamping for natural gas infrastructure projects, including the State of Wyoming. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Remove the exemption so that all future natural gas infrastructure projects require licensed professional engineer approval and stamping. (P-19-16) (See section 3.4.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Charlie Baker  
Governor of Massachusetts  
280 State House  
Boston, MA 02133-1002

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-16). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

All communications regarding safety recommendations will be stored by the NTSB and viewable by the public. Please do not send privileged or confidential communications in response to this recommendation. Responses marked as confidential or privileged (or similar designations) will be considered nonresponsive. If you have concerns about this protocol, please contact us at [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov) or call (202) 314-6290 and ask to be directed to the Safety Recommendations Division.



Executive Secretariat-LRM  
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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

The Honorable Charlie Baker  
Governor of Massachusetts  
280 State House  
Boston, MA 02133-1002

Dear Governor Baker:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
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- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Develop guidance that includes a component for effective communications when deploying mutual aid resources within the first hours of a multi-jurisdictional incident. (P-19-17) (See section 3.5.2.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-17). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman

October 24, 2019

Mr. Joseph Hamrock  
Chief Executive Officer  
NiSource, Inc.  
801 E. 86th Ave.  
Merrillville, IN 46410

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

The attached letter from the NTSB Chairman provides information about the NTSB's September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendation may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>. For more information about NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-18). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@nts.gov). If your reply exceeds 20 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

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Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

October 24, 2019

Mr. Joseph Hamrock  
Chief Executive Officer  
NiSource, Inc.  
801 E. 86th Ave.  
Merrillville, IN 46410

Dear Mr. Hamrock:

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters.

We are providing the following information to urge NiSource, Inc. to act on the safety recommendation in this letter because we believe your organization can help reduce the risk of future accidents. For more information about the NTSB and our recommendation process, please see the attached one-page summary.

This letter provides information about our September 24, 2019, report *Overpressurization of Natural Gas Distribution System, Explosions, and Fires in Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts, September 13, 2018*, NTSB/PAR-19/02. The details of this accident investigation and the resulting safety recommendations may be found in the attached report, which can also be accessed at <http://www.nts.gov>.

As a result of this investigation, we identified the following safety issues:

- Adequacy of natural gas regulations
- Project documentation
- Constructability review
- Project management
- Risk assessment
- Safety management systems

- Licensed professional engineer approval of natural gas projects
- Emergency response

Accordingly, the NTSB makes the following safety recommendation to NiSource, Inc. Additional information regarding this recommendation can be found in the noted section of the report.

- Review your protocols and training for responding to large-scale emergency events, including providing timely information to emergency responders, appropriately assigning NiSource emergency response duties, performing multi-jurisdictional training exercises, and participating cooperatively with municipal emergency management agencies. (P-19-18) (See section 3.5.3.)

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate a response within 90 days of the date of this letter, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement this recommendation. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number (for example, P-19-18). We encourage you to submit your response to [ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:ExecutiveSecretariat@ntsb.gov). If your reply, including attachments, exceeds 20 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions on how to send larger documents. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Robert L. Sumwalt, III  
Chairman





# NTSB Recommendations and You

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged with investigating and determining the probable cause of transportation accidents. We do not make regulations, but we do issue recommendations to organizations such as yours when we discover shortcomings in the transportation system that increase the risk of accidents. **As a result of our investigative activities, we have issued one or more safety recommendations that we believe you can act on to improve transportation safety.**

## Why did the NTSB issue my organization a safety recommendation?

We issue safety recommendations to organizations that can bring about change to reduce the risk of accidents, either through their direct role in the transportation industry, their legislative or regulatory authority, or the significant influence they have among others in the industry. We believe your organization is able to make or influence such changes.

## What does the NTSB expect of safety recommendation recipients?

First and foremost, we encourage you to promptly take the recommended action to improve safety. Because we're eager to see recommendations implemented before more accidents occur, we follow recipients' efforts to implement each recommendation. We ask that you update us any time you achieve a significant milestone in your progress toward implementing the attached recommendation(s), or at least annually. We will provide feedback on your efforts by classifying each recommendation as open or closed, acceptable or unacceptable.<sup>1</sup> Information about your actions associated with your recommendation(s) is available at our [website](#) so that the public can see our combined efforts to improve transportation safety.

<sup>1</sup> For a full description of our safety recommendation classifications, see the [Status Explanation](#) page on our website.

## What should our response to the NTSB include?

Please respond to us within **90 days (30 for urgent recommendations)** explaining the specific actions you have taken or intend to take in response to the safety recommendation(s), and propose a timeline for completion. We understand organizations today are faced with competing priorities and limited resources, which can make implementing our recommendations a challenge. If, for any reason, you are not able to take the recommended action, or if you believe an alternate action would be more appropriate for your organization, please explain why. When you respond, please provide an e-mail address for future communications. We will review your response and provide feedback.

## What if my organization doesn't believe the recommended action is the best way to improve safety?

We base our recommendations on the evidence, facts, and circumstances of the accidents we investigate. Sometimes industry leaders identify ways to attain the same safety objective more efficiently, and we encourage recipients to share their ideas with us. In these cases, we will evaluate the alternate means of achieving the safety objective and provide feedback. We believe safety is a collaborative effort, and we're happy to work with your organization to set goals and make improvements.

## Why does the NTSB expect us to take action, even though our organization wasn't responsible for the accident that resulted in the safety recommendation?

Our goal is to prevent accidents. Often, the factors we identify as causing or contributing to an accident are not unique—they represent common practices or situations that may be accidents waiting to happen. In such instances, we may make recommendations intended to raise the minimum standard for safety throughout the industry.

## How do we contact the NTSB to provide updates or obtain further information?

Please contact us electronically at [executivesecretariat@ntsb.gov](mailto:executivesecretariat@ntsb.gov). If you wish to send us supporting documentation that, with your response, exceeds 10 megabytes, please contact us at the same e-mail address for instructions.

You can also reach our Safety Recommendations staff at **(202) 314-6290** (please ask to be directed to the Safety Recommendations Division).

**NTSB** | National  
Transportation  
Safety Board  
[www.ntsb.gov](http://www.ntsb.gov)

***We look forward to working with you to prevent accidents and save lives!***