

UKOPA

United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operators' Association

IWG Update October 2025

Carl Scott
IWG Chair

www.ukopa.co.uk



Introduction

- The aim of the UKOPA Infringement Working Group (IWG) is to provide information and expert opinion, direction and guidance on pipeline safety to UKOPA members and industry stakeholders.
- Chair – Carl Scott
- Vice Chair – Clark Findlay
- 26 people
- 21 UKOPA member organisations.
- updated Terms of Reference in January 2024.



Microsoft Word
17 - 2003 Document

IWG Objectives

- To share knowledge and good practice on pipeline safety between UKOPA members.
- To produce and maintain pipeline safety good practice guides and technical briefing notes.
- To develop, maintain, review and update systems and processes for monitoring pipeline infringement data.
- To review, interpret, consult and influence Regulators' proposals for pipeline safety.
- To represent UKOPA, where appropriate, on external safety groups.

January 2025 IWG meeting

- 3rd meeting of the year recently took place at the Valero Kingsbury Fuel Terminal.
 - Highly Attended both in person and many more on Teams.
 - We were also joined by Carsten and Owen from OS who gave the members an update on NUAR which resulted in an excellent discussion between the NUAR team and our members.
 - We discussed the 2024 infringement database report.
 - Reviewed the Working Safely leaflets where we had some brilliant input from the members.
 - As well as some excellent safety shares

Update

2025 Work Programme – How have we done?

- Compile 2024 Infringement Report. The aim is to get all the data in by the end of Q1. **Completed in June**
- To increase the volume of users on our Landex safe digging E-learning. **Growing Year by Year**
- Review guidance documents for 'Working safely around high pressure pipelines'. **Several Drafts already**
- To have another successful advertising campaign aimed at a certain industry. **Another successful year**
- Create UKOPA's own Pipeline awareness video's, 3 storyboards have been created and discussions started with a production company. **Any Ideas Members?**

Infringement Database

- The 2024 infringement report was published in June and is available on the new UKOPA website for all members to read.
- This is a huge success compared to recent years – a huge thank you to the efforts of all members.
- There were a total of 880 infringements recorded in the database, this is 218 more than in 2023, Roughly a 33% increase, With 3 A1 infringements recorded.
- Will be great for the A1 infringements to be shared with the group.

UKOPA

United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operators' Association

UKOPA Report

2024 Infringement database report

UKOPA/RP/25/01 v1

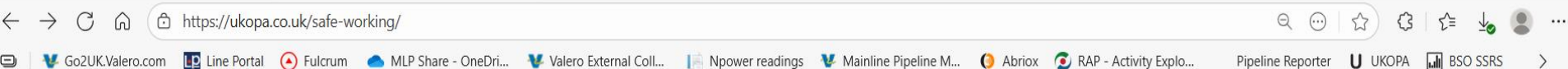
June 2025

Working with Agricultural Colleges (Landex)



- Original objective was to integrate a learning module with the next generation of people working in agricultural field or likely to encounter pipelines to promote pipeline awareness.
- Learning module has been rolled out to Landex colleges for 4 years and in 2025 we brought it to UKOPA's website for use of ALL members and their organisations, with a certificate published for every individual who passes the course.
- Course statistics.
 - All 33 Landex Colleges have accessed the materials
 - Over 5000 users have completed the course.
 - Over 90% of users who completed the course received C- grade or higher (70%)
 - Average session duration - 28mins
 - Please see below figures for 1st January 2025 to today.
 - Pipeline course visits by registered college students = 430
 - Pipeline course visits by guests = 234
 - Total visits = 664

Where to find the 'Working Safely Course'?



Safe Working

UKOPA offers guidance on safe practices for working near high-pressure pipelines. We provide resources on risk assessment, emergency planning, and regulatory compliance, supporting operators and stakeholders in maintaining pipeline safety and integrity.



Click here!

What to do in a emergency

If as a result of the activities you uncover ground or come into contact with a pipeline then:

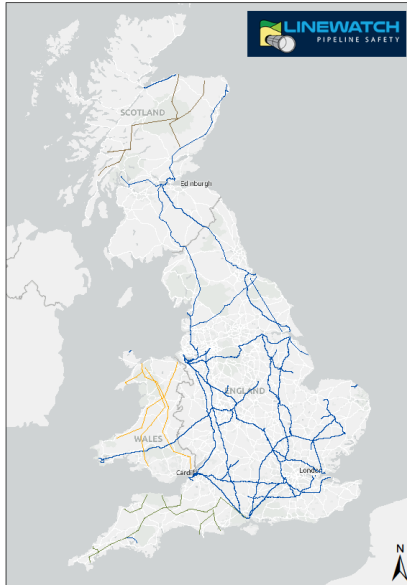
- Shut down all working machinery.
- Remove all sources of ignition.
- Remove everyone from the immediate area of the pipeline and move to a safer area.
- If the pipeline is leaking dial 999 and inform police and emergency services. Do not attempt to seal a leaking pipeline.
- If the leak is burning, do not attempt to extinguish the fire.
- Contact the pipeline operator's emergency telephone number. This can be obtained either from on a nearby pipeline marker post, on all communications you will have had from the pipeline operator or on the documentation provided to you by the pipeline operator prior to you commencing work.
- Follow the advice provided by the pipeline operator and then let them make the situation safe.

Working Safely Course

Throughout the UK there are thousands of kilometres of buried high pressure pipelines that most people are not even aware of. It is imperative that anyone who may work near these pipelines, is aware of the risks and how to work safely in the vicinity. This course is designed to provide you with the information necessary to work safely near high pressure pipelines and will provide you with a certificate of completion.

Take the Course

Example slides from the course.



UKOPA Overview

UKOPA (UK On Shore Pipeline Operators Association) is comprised of **30** UK onshore H

The length of pipelines operated by our members is nearly 5 times the distance between London and Edinburgh

A recognised and authoritative source of

Good Practice Guides & Technical



UKOPA

CERTIFICATE OF COURSE COMPLETION

[Redacted Name]

FROM

[Redacted Name]

**HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE
HP PIPELINE DAMAGE PREVENTION
AWARENESS
COURSE
ON**

February 20, 2025

High pressure pipelines

- HP pipelines are the most efficient and safest way to transport large quantities of hydrocarbon products over large distances.
- They transport hydrocarbon products including gas, crude oil and petrochemicals
- HP pipelines are predominately made of steel
- HP pipelines are wrapped in a protective coating (which can easily be damaged)
- They are nominally laid at 1.1 mtrs deep (although this might vary)
- They can be anything from approximately 6" to 42" in diameter
- They operate at up to 120 bar - approximately 50 times the pressure of a car tyre
- They run cross country (through farmland, under roads and rivers)
- Most of us are unaware that they are there



Working Safely Leaflets

4. What to do in an emergency

If you uncover ground near or have any contact with a HP pipeline, be that with mechanical equipment or otherwise, is potentially a serious incident and should be treated as an emergency situation. Please:

1. Shut down all working machinery
2. Remove all sources of ignition
3. Remove everyone from the immediate area of the pipeline and move to a safer area upwind of the location
4. If the pipeline is leaking dial 999 inform police and emergency services
5. Do not attempt to seal a leaking pipeline
6. If the leak is burning, do not attempt to extinguish the fire
7. Contact the pipeline operator's emergency telephone number. This can be obtained either from on a nearby pipeline marker post, on all communications you will have had from the pipeline operator or on the documentation provided by the pipeline operator prior to you commencing work
8. Follow the advice provided by the pipeline operator and then let them make the situation safe
9. Where possible keep all people and traffic well away from the location

Contractor's Guide to Working Safely Near High Pressure Pipelines



This Good Practice Guide is aimed at contractors and any one else who may work near High Pressure pipelines (specifically buried pipelines) and outlines what you can do to reduce the risks when working near them. Working near high pressure pipelines is dangerous. If machinery makes contact with the pipeline, damage can occur that could result in immediate failure or failure over a longer period of time.

It is common for utility companies, highways agency and / or landowners (amongst others) to instruct contractors to complete works. It is the responsibility of the contractor to

4. What to do in an emergency

If, as a result of the activities you uncover ground or come into contact with a pipeline, then:

- A. Shut down all working machinery
- B. Remove all sources of ignition
- C. Remove everyone from the immediate area of the pipeline and move to a safer area
- D. If the pipeline is leaking dial 999 inform police and emergency services
- E. Do not attempt to seal a leaking pipeline
- F. If the leak is burning, do not attempt to extinguish the fire
- G. Contact the pipeline operator's emergency telephone number. This can be obtained either from on a nearby pipeline marker post, on all communications you will have had from the pipeline operator or on the documentation provided by the pipeline operator prior to you commencing work
- H. Follow the advice provided by the pipeline operator and then let them make the situation safe

Working Safely Near High Pressure Pipelines

This Good Practice Guide is aimed at everyone in agriculture who may work near High Pressure pipelines (specifically buried pipelines) and outlines what you can do to reduce the risks when working near them. If machinery makes contact with the pipeline, damage can occur that could result in immediate failure or failure over a longer period of time.

Further Assistance and Pipeline Operators

The UKOPA website contains the company information details for all UKOPA members, visit www.ukopa.co.uk/emergency/

The UKOPA presentation about working safely near high pressure pipelines can be found at www.ukopa.co.uk/relevant-documents-and-information please do take a look at this and share with any staff and contractors working for you.

Pipeline operators are here to help, so please do contact them prior to any work taking place or if you have any queries.

<h3>1 Hazards</h3>  <p>Buried pipelines in the UK transport a variety of products at pressures up to 100 bar. The includes flammable and explosive products such as oil, natural gas, ethylene and petroleum as well as less obviously hazardous material such as water. The hazardous nature of the product is magnified by the high pressures, and should, for example a natural gas pipeline operating at 70 bar fail, an explosion could occur that may result in the deaths of people nearby; damage to an oil pipeline operating at 100 bar could result in extensive environmental issues.</p> <p>Any damage to a pipeline or its coating can affect its integrity that could result in its failure immediately if enough damage is done, or in the future if the damage deteriorates with time perhaps via corrosion. It is therefore essential that safe procedures are complied with when working near to a pipeline.</p> <p>The hazardous nature of these pipelines is recognised in UK legislation through The Pipeline Safety Regulations. Regulation 15 of this states that "No person shall cause such damage to a pipeline as may give rise to a danger to persons". This applies to persons working near such pipelines, and failing to comply could result in prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).</p>	<h3>2.1 Ditching & Drainage</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ditch clearing • Dredging, widening or creation of waterways/ponds, etc. • Drainage investigatory work/repairs • Use of powered machinery to clear materials 	<h3>2.5 Planting of Trees & Shrubs</h3>  <p>Planting within the easement should not take place without prior discussion with the pipeline operator</p>	<h3>2.8 Excavations (incl pits for Carcass burial)</h3>  <p>All excavations are notifiable activities</p>
<h3>2</h3> <h3>Notifiable Activities</h3>  <p>Prior to working in the vicinity of High Pressure Pipelines, other than routine agricultural activities such as ploughing, you should contact the pipeline operator who will provide any guidance and advice required.</p>	<h3>2.2 Fencing</h3>  <p>Installation of new or replacement fences / fence posts or gateposts.</p>	<h3>2.6 Fires</h3>  <p>Should not be built or ignited within the pipeline easement</p>	<h3>2.9 Wind turbines and solar farms</h3>  <p>Contact pipeline operator at earliest possibility (UKOPA have produced good practice guides for both)</p>
<h3>2.3 Construction Work including</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary or permanent tracks/roads • Installation of water pipes, drains or sewers • Property extensions (including permitted development) • Change of use of existing building 	<h3>2.4 Ground Cover & Storage of Materials</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of cover must not be reduced or increased • Materials not stacked or stored in the vicinity of the pipeline or within pipeline easement 	<h3>2.7 Sub-soil & Mole ploughing</h3>  <p>Should not take place without prior discussion with the pipeline operator</p>	<h3>2.10 All other works (incl piling & boring)</h3>  <p>Please contact the pipeline operator for any other agricultural work not covered in this document; they will be more than happy to discuss any potential issues</p>
<h3>3 Information, Instruction & Training</h3>  <p>Contractors and temporary staff may be at an increased level of risk when they work on your land, so make sure they know where the pipelines are and discuss and agree with them the precautions they need to take before they start work. More detailed instructions may be needed for those workers whose first language is not English.</p> <p>The location of pipelines is normally indicated by marker posts at the edges of fields. Remember though that marker posts can be accidentally moved or damaged. Also, pipelines may not necessarily run in a straight line between points. By contacting the pipeline operator in advance, an operator representative can visit your land to locate and mark out the pipeline and advise what works can and cannot be done safely.</p> <p>The location of a pipeline is normally a FREE service.</p>			

2025 working safely leaflets review

What to do in an emergency

If as a result of the activities you uncover ground or come into contact with a pipeline, then:

1. Shut down all working machinery
2. Remove all sources of ignition
3. Remove everyone from the immediate area of the pipeline and move to a safer area
4. If the pipeline is leaking dial 999 inform police and emergency services
5. Do not attempt to seal a leaking pipeline
6. If the leak is burning, do not attempt to extinguish the fire
7. Contact the pipeline operator's emergency telephone number. This can be obtained either from a nearby pipeline marker post, on all communications you will have had from the pipeline operator or on the documentation provided by the pipeline operator prior to you commencing work
8. Follow the advice provided by the pipeline operator and then let them make the situation safe. Where possible keep all people and traffic well away from the location.

Hazards



This guide is aimed at farmers, agricultural workers and other contractors and anyone else who may work near high pressure pipelines (specifically buried pipelines) and outlines what you can do to reduce the risks when working near them. Working near high pressure pipelines is dangerous. If machinery makes contact with the pipeline, damage can occur that could result in immediate failure or failure over a longer period of time. Such as, an explosion resulting in the death of people nearby or extensive environmental damage.

It's common for farmers, landowners or other agricultural workers to instruct contractors to complete works. It is however the responsibility of contractors and all those working on site, to ensure that any proposed works are planned and carried out correctly and precautions made to protect high pressure pipelines where appropriate.

Prior to working in the vicinity of high pressure pipelines, you should contact the pipeline operator who will provide guidance and advice necessary to adequately plan the works.

Notifiable activities



Prior to working in the vicinity of High Pressure Pipelines, other than routine agricultural activities such as ploughing, you should contact the pipeline operator who will provide any guidance and advice required.

Ditching & drainage



- Ditch clearing
- Dredging, widening or creation of waterways/ponds, etc.
- Drainage investigatory work/repairs
- Use of powered machinery to clear materials.

Fencing



Installation of new or replacement fences / fence posts or gateposts. Notify the pipeline operator if installing new or replacement fences / fence posts or gateposts within 50m of the pipeline

Construction work



- Including:
- Temporary or permanent tracks/roads
 - Installation of water pipes, drains or sewers
 - Property extensions (including permitted development)
 - Change of use of existing building

Cover & materials storage



- Depth of cover must not be reduced or increased
- Materials not stacked or stored in the vicinity of the pipeline or within pipeline easement

Planting of trees & shrubs



Planting within the easement should not take place without prior discussion with the pipeline operator.

Fires



Should not be built or ignited within the pipeline easement.

Sub-soil & mole ploughing



Should not take place without prior discussion with the pipeline operator.

Excavations



All excavations are notifiable activities. Including pits for carcass burials.

Wind turbines & solar farms



Contact pipeline operator at earliest possibility (UKOPA have produced good practice guides for both).

All other works



For all other work, including piling & boring, please contact the pipeline operator for any other agricultural work not covered in this document, they will be more than happy to discuss any potential issues.

Information & training



Contractors and temporary staff may be at an increased level of risk when they work on your land, so make sure they know where the pipelines are and discuss and agree with them the precautions they need to take before they start work. More detailed instructions may be needed for those workers whose first language is not English. The location of pipelines is normally indicated by marker posts at the edges of fields. Remember though that marker posts can be accidentally moved or damaged. Also, pipelines may not necessarily run in a straight line between posts. By contacting the pipeline operator in advance, an operator representative can visit your land to locate and mark out the pipeline and advise what works can and cannot be done safely. The location of a pipeline is normally a FREE service.

Working Safely Near High Pressure Pipelines

This guide is aimed at everyone working in the vicinity of high pressure pipelines. A further guide with information specifically aimed at those working in the agricultural sector is also available and can be found on the UKOPA website.



2025 advertising campaign.

- Carrying on from last year, IWG's 2025 advertising campaign has been a huge success.
- IWG have published 'working safely near buried pipelines' articles in both Professional Builder magazine and the Farmers Guide, Aswell as once again participating in the yearly 'yellow Wellies' farming safety campaign.

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

WORKING NEAR BURIED PIPELINES

Carl Scott, Chair of the United Kingdom Onshore Pipeline Operators Association's (UKOPA) Infringement Working Group outlines the risks of accidental damage to buried assets, as well good practice when working near to buried pipelines.



The latest Infringement Report (2024) from UKOPA shows that there was a total of 880 infringements recorded in the last year. These represent instances where work was conducted too close to buried pipelines or within easement areas without appropriate procedures being followed.

Of the 880 cases reported three resulted in actual damage to the pipelines and in two cases product was released. In all cases there was damage to the pipeline coating, requiring repairs to be undertaken to ensure safety and integrity. Damaging pipelines can lead to product loss, significant environmental damage, prosecution or even death. That's why Pipeline easements are legally protected zones under the Pipeline Safety Regulations (1996). No construction, excavation, or installation work should occur within these zones without written permission and guidance from the pipeline operator.

High-Risk Activities in Construction
The data clearly identifies construction activities as a significant contributor to infringements:

- Excavations such as digging in the vicinity of a pipeline accounted for nearly a quarter (22.5%) of all cases.
- Installations, such as signage,



structures, and buildings within easements, made up 14%.

- Fencing activities were responsible for nearly one in five infringements.
- Ditching, often part of land drainage or landscaping work, contributed 17.6%.

In total, 315 of the 880 infringements occurred on private land, development sites, or construction land, with an additional 141 near roads or watercourses — locations frequently involved in civil engineering and utility projects.

A Shared Responsibility

Contractors and utility companies were reported as the cause of 279 infringements, emphasizing the critical need for consistent safety protocols and better communication across project teams.

To help construction professionals reduce the risk of pipeline strikes and related incidents, UKOPA and its members strongly encourage contractors, before any work begins, use available tools such as the LInesearchbeforeUdig (LSBUD) service to locate and understand buried infrastructure. This free to use website www.rdr.link/88024 allows users to conduct searches for buried pipelines in advance of undertaking any works. If a search reveals the presence of a high-pressure pipeline, you must engage

directly with the pipeline operator. They will provide specific guidance and, where required, supervision.

As a guide, if undertaking works within 50m of a pipeline contractors should notify the pipeline operator. The pipeline operator can provide safety guidance and advice including coming out and marking the pipeline to enable contractors to undertake the required activities.

Contractors, employees and temporary staff working on site also need to be informed of the pipeline's location to discuss and agree on the necessary precautions before starting work. To prevent risks to people, the pipeline or the planet, anyone planning works within 3 metres of a buried pipeline must obtain permission from the pipeline operator. This is not to prevent the works, but simply to ensure they are undertaken safely.

To support those in the construction sector, UKOPA offers a range of educational resources including a Working Safely Near Pipelines video, which provides a clear visual overview of what to do and what to avoid. There is also an online 'Working Safely Course' available for employees or those working on site which is an essential learning tool for anyone planning or conducting work near buried pipelines.



 BOTH RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE VIA THE UKOPA WEBSITE AND ARE RECOMMENDED FOR SITE MANAGERS, HEALTH & SAFETY PROFESSIONALS, AND OPERATIVES ALIKE.
www.rdr.link/88028

26 | SEPTEMBER 2025 PROFESSIONAL BUILDER

Pipeline awareness Video's

- The sub group managed to come up with several storyboards to make a series of short pipeline awareness videos suitable for social media.
- Unfortunately since the idea came about many years ago there has been a dramatic price increase and we have had to put the videos on hold.
- Do any members have any ideas how to move forward with this?
- Please contact either myself – carl.scott@valero.com or Nikki with any ideas you may have, we are looking to review in January on if we carry on with this idea or not.

Any Questions?