

January 9, 1978

Mr. James R. Troutman
Route 1, Box 698-C
Salisbury, North Carolina 28144

Dear Mr. Troutman:

Your letters of December 3, 1977, to the North Carolina Utilities Commission and of November 1977, to the Environmental Protection Agency have been forwarded to this Office for response.

The Materials Transportation Bureau, Office of Pipeline Safety Operations, regulates the safety of interstate petroleum pipelines (such as the one proposed by the Colonial Pipeline Company) under the Transportation of Explosives Act (18 USC 831-835). Regulations governing the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of petroleum pipelines are contained in 49 CFR Part 195 (copy enclosed). These regulations provide for public safety through requirements governing the structural integrity of pipelines.

The regulations do not require that environmental impact studies be prepared for the construction of pipelines. In the Federal government, such a study may have been prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Colonial pipeline if that agency granted a permit for it to cross a navigable waterway. You may contact that agency at its Office of Public Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20314, for further information on whether a study has been prepared.

Regarding your specific question about the safety of the pipeline if it is constructed 20 feet from your house, Section 195.210(a) of the regulations states that a pipeline right-of-way must be selected to avoid, as far as practicable, areas containing private dwellings, industrial buildings, and places of public assembly. However, where avoidance of populated areas is not practicable, Sections 195.210(b) and 195.248 prescribe an additional 12 inches of cover for pipelines within 50 feet of any private dwelling. Assuming normal excavation, a minimum of 48 inches of cover will be required if the line is constructed within 50 feet of your home.

This Office will be reviewing Colonial Pipeline Company's construction plans and specifications and making onsite field inspections during the construction of the pipeline to check for compliance with the Federal standards.

I hope that this information is satisfactory. Thank you for your interest in pipeline safety.

Sincerely,

Cesar DeLeon
Acting Director
Office of Pipeline
Safety Operations

Enclosure

December 9, 1977

Mr. James C. Thomas, Chief
Southern Region
Department of Transportation
Office of Pipeline Safety Operations
1568 Willingham Drive, Suite 207B
Atlanta, Georgia 30337

Dear Mr. Thomas:

Attached is a letter we received concerning construction of the new 40" Colonial Pipeline in North Carolina. Since we do not regulate such lines under Part 195, I am forwarding this letter for your response.

Yours very truly,

I. H. Hinton, Director
Transportation Division

Attachment