



MNOPS Inspection Scheduling Update

Recently, I received the Lead Inspector Assignments for each town from MNOPS. This let us start developing an inspection schedule for 2010. Most of you have already heard from me with proposed inspection dates, and we've been able to confirm dates (or at least the week of an inspection) with about half the towns so far. I'll be following up with the rest of you over the next few days in an attempt to get the entire inspection schedule firmed up.

MNOPS recently hired four new Senior Engineers, and they have been assigned as Lead Inspectors for the small operators in the state. In general, the state was broken down into four quarters-northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast. Inspector assignments are:

- Northwest-Tom Prew
- Northeast-Kevin Streeter
- Southwest-Derek Sunstrom
- Southeast-Dan Christensen

These inspectors will initially be paired with an experienced inspector as they "learn the ropes". If things progress like they did last year, the new inspectors will be on their own after they get some experience.

The format of the inspection is expected to be very similar to what it has been in the past. As copies of the questions are available I will send them out to you in advance of your inspection. I'll also be available to come out and go over the inspection ahead of time for the towns that want to do that.

This will be a fairly substantial change, but it shouldn't present any major difficulties to municipal operators.

Program Review Update

During the Spring Conference at Madden's the Gas Circuit Rider program review was held. Thank you for the feedback.

Each town will also receive a survey of the program by email-please take the time and fill this out. Input from members is crucial to the success of the program.

Code Corner

Emergency response was a high priority discussion topic at the recent MNOPS Spring Conference. "Emergency response" is a broad topic and involves a lot of activity, but a likely focus during this year's inspections will include whether Emergency Plans required under 192.615 have been reviewed as required and if the employee training specified in those plans has been completed. Don't be surprised if inspectors ask for training rosters from these sessions. I've been involved in that training in many locations-if you want to set something up on reviewing emergency plans and procedures, please let me know.

A couple of other facets of emergency response that will likely be examined are:

- failure investigation (192.617) with a specific emphasis on "determining the causes of failure and minimizing the possibility of a recurrence"
- liason with fire, police, and other public officials (192.615 (c)), or in plain language, fire department meetings. This is also part of our Public Awareness plans.

Recent incidents in the state have resulted in a spotlight on emergency response. If one pipeline operator has emergency response issues, it affects all of us. The best way for us to deal with this increased focus is to be ready to respond to any emergency that we might encounter on our systems. In order to be prepared, we need to have the equipment and material to control the situation and make repairs, an emergency plan that will help us make good decisions and keep people safe, training in the use of the equipment, material, and emergency plan, a good working relationship with other emergency responders, and documentation of these preparations.

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