Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 4901:1-16-04 Records, maps, inspections, leak management, and service line abandonment.

Effective: May 21, 2026

(A) Each operator shall maintain all records necessary to ensure compliance with applicable sections of the pipeline safety code, and keep such records readily available for inspection by the commission, its staff, or its authorized representative(s).

(1) Unless otherwise provided by this chapter, each operator shall retain records for three years to show compliance with the requirements of the Pipeline Safety Code.

(2) Each operator shall retain records of each leak survey, as required by 49 C.F.R. 192.723 as effective on the date referenced in paragraph (D) of rule 4901:1-16-02 of the Administrative Code, for five years.

(B) Except for an operator of a master meter system, each operator shall establish and maintain maps of the operator's service area which identify the operator's intrastate gas pipeline facilities, excluding service lines as defined in 49 C.F. R. 192.3 as effective on the date referenced in paragraph (D) of rule 4901:1-16-02 of the Administrative Code.

(C) Each operator shall permit the commission, its staff, and authorized representative(s) to: enter its intrastate gas pipeline facilities; and to inspect, and copy records and maps, which the commission, its staff, or its authorized representative(s) may require to administer and enforce the pipeline safety code.

(D) Each operator shall investigate and classify all potential leaks to determine the location, extent, and potential hazard of migrating gas utilizing leak detection equipment. As used in this rule, leak detection equipment means any properly calibrated device capable of detecting and measuring the concentration of natural gas in the atmosphere. The operator shall classify all hazardous leaks immediately and classify all other leaks within two business days of discovery. All leak indications from remote leak detection systems are to be evaluated with a calibrated piece of equipment capable of measuring the concentration of natural gas in the atmosphere within a timeframe specified in the operator's written procedures adopted in accordance with 49 CFR Part 192.605. Leak surveys completed in accordance with 49 CFR Part 192.706 and 192.723 using remote technology are not considered complete surveys until all leak indications have been evaluated. Leaks are classified as follows:

(1) A grade-one classification represents an indication of leakage presenting an existing or probable hazard to persons or property, and requires immediate repair or continuous action until the conditions are no longer hazardous.

(2) A grade-two classification represents an indication of leakage recognized as being nonhazardous at the time of detection, but requires scheduled repair based upon the severity and/or location of the leak.

(3) A grade-three classification represents an indication of leakage recognized as being nonhazardous at the time of detection and can be reasonably expected to remain nonhazardous.

(E) Upon discovery of the corresponding leak(s) from above, each operator shall take the following actions:

(1) Take continuous action on leaks classified as grade one to protect life and property until the condition is no longer hazardous. Continuous action is defined as having personnel at the scene of the leak with leak detection equipment attempting to locate the source of the leak and taking action to prevent migration into structures, sewers, etc.

Leaks classified as grade one may be reclassified by performing a physical action to the pipeline (clamp, replacement, tape wrap, etc.) or pipeline facility. Venting, holes, aerators, or soil purging of a leak are not considered physical actions to the pipeline.

All below grade hazardous leaks repaired or reclassified, other than by the replacement of the affected section of pipe, must be reevaluated after allowing the soil to vent and stabilize but not more than thirty calendar days after such physical action.

(2) Repair or clear leaks classified as grade two no later than fifteen months from the date the leak is discovered, unless the pipeline containing the leak is replaced within twenty-four months from the date the leak is discovered. If a replacement project that will clear a leak classified as grade two is cancelled after the fifteenth month after classification of the leak(s), the associated leak(s) must be cleared within forty-five days of the cancellation of the project, not to exceed twenty-four months from the date of the leak classification. Leaks classified as grade two shall be reevaluated at least once every six months until cleared.

(3) Reevaluate leaks classified as grade three during the next scheduled survey or within fifteen months from the date of the last inspection, whichever is sooner, and continue to reevaluate such leaks on that same frequency until there is no longer any indication of leakage, the leak is reclassified, or the pipeline is replaced.

(F) Each operator shall establish a program to identify and replace, as necessary, its cast iron distribution pipeline system based on past operation, maintenance and leak history of the pipeline.

(G) Beginning August 5, 2023, each operator will have a plan for tracking and abandoning inactive service lines and will have a copy of its plan available for inspection. The plan will include the following:

(1) A service line is considered inactive and ready for abandonment when gas has not been billed to any customers served by the line for a period of thirty-six months.

(2) Beginning October 25, 2025, inactive service lines will be abandoned within twelve months of becoming inactive unless the operator determines there is a reasonable prospect for future use.

(3) Until a service line is abandoned the service line will be treated as active for the purpose of applying the requirements of the pipeline safety code.

(4) Unrecorded inactive service lines discovered in the course of leakage surveillance, construction, maintenance or inspection of facilities will be abandoned as soon as practicable but no later than twelve months after discovery. Unrecorded inactive service lines that are not abandoned upon discovery will also be fully located and leak surveyed within ten days of discovery and incorporated into maps of the operator's service area until they are properly abandoned.