



September 2015 eBrief Print Version

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### **North Texas GPA donates \$23,000 to Carthage, Texas, fire department**

North Texas GPA presented the Carthage, Texas, Fire Department with a \$23,000 donation earmarked for the purchase of confined space rescue equipment. The chapter, along with member companies Azure Midstream, DCP Midstream and MarkWest Energy Partners, collectively contributed to the total donation amount, which will allow the department to purchase on-scene safety and rescue equipment critical to gas plant incident response. The check was presented during the chapter's East Texas/North Louisiana Shrimp Boil on Sept. 24.

"Carthage firefighters are the first responders for gas plants in the area, so to North Texas GPA and our members, it's just as much our responsibility to make sure they have the necessary equipment to protect themselves, our community and our employees in the rare case of an incident," said Jason Randall, business development manager for Engineering, Procurement, & Construction and treasurer of North Texas GPA. "We greatly appreciate their service and the support they provide to us, and this is one way that we can support them in return."

By the nature of confined space rescues, a variety of specialty rescue gear is required. Carthage Fire Marshal Duane Baushke said the donated funds will be used to purchase confined space entry kits that assist in lowering and lifting personnel or equipment in and out of the space; coveralls and other protective gear for the firemen; and breathing equipment that delivers safe, breathable air when in oxygen deficient confined spaces.

"We are a combination fire department that has paid firemen but also relies heavily on volunteers," Baushke said. "It's a good pairing for the city and the fire department because it puts some room in our budget for necessary equipment that we would have to spend otherwise on salaries, but we still have to rely on donations for specialty equipment that we couldn't afford or would take significant time to acquire."

"We see natural gas prices going down and the economy affected, so this was an unexpected and much appreciated donation," Baushke said. "We will put it to good use."

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### **Deadline for convention speaking opportunities nears**

If you are interested in presenting at the 2016 GPA Convention, please note that the deadline to submit your abstract for consideration is Oct. 22. Our convention speakers receive complimentary registration, not to mention a tremendous amount of midstream industry exposure and recognition. The GPA Convention web site has a convenient online form that makes uploading your abstract fast and simple.

Please take a look at our information about speaking opportunities prior to sending your abstract to become familiar with our guidelines.

For more information:

[Speaking opportunities](#)  
[Submit your abstract](#)

For questions, e-mail [Johnny Dreyer](#).

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### **Capitol Hill update**

Congress has been focused on avoiding another government shutdown by trying to come up with a funding solution by the end of this month when current funding is set to expire. Until then, we will be in a holding pattern.

President Barack Obama and Congress hosted Pope Francis in Washington, D.C., where he addressed climate change among other issues. Shortly after his visit, House Speaker John Boehner announced that he will be resigning, effective the end of October. This clearly has huge impacts on Congress' fall schedule and shakes up the House leadership structure with members jockeying for new positions. Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R - CA) who is the current majority leader looks like the front runner to replace Boehner as the next speaker of the House.

On Sept. 18 in Billings, Mont., the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation held a field hearing on pipeline safety. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration Administrator Therese Dominguez testified, as well as several other witnesses, including Phillips 66 and the Montana Liquid Gas Pipeline Association. A second hearing on Sept. 29 focused on current challenges with the inspection and safe management of our nation's pipeline network.

### **EPA releases final methane rules**

In August during the GPA and GPSA board meetings in Santa Fe, N.M., the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a suite of rules to address methane emissions in the oil and gas sector. On Sept. 18, EPA published that suite of regulations in the federal register, which means the proverbial clock has started to tick, and EPA has provided a short 60-day window to file comments by the Nov. 17 deadline.

Since these are complex regulations and it will take more time than EPA has allotted to understand and evaluate their true impact on the midstream sector, GPA will file a request to extend the comment periods for the entire suite of proposed regulations. In the meantime, GPA's Environmental Committee has already formed working groups that are evaluating and addressing the regulations. Below is the suite of methane regulations, all with a comment deadline of Nov. 17.

1. Oil and Natural Gas Sector: Emission Standards for New and Modified Sources
2. Review of New Sources and Modifications in Indian Country: Federal Implementation Plan for Managing Air Emissions from True Minor Sources Engaged in Oil and Natural Gas Production in Indian Country
3. Source Determination for Certain Emission Units in the Oil and Natural Gas Sector
4. Release of Draft Control Techniques Guidelines for the Oil and Natural Gas Industry

### **Bureau of Land Management determines not to list Sage Grouse as endangered**

On Sept. 22, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) made the determination that a listing is "not warranted" under the Endangered Species Act for the Sage Grouse. This is of specific concern to the 173 million acres of Sage Grouse habitat in 11 states and 2 Canadian provinces.

The determination, which FWS was required to make by next week under a pair of 2011 settlements with environmentalists, in large part relied on new regulations finalized by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to stem habitat loss across 67 million federal acres that represents most of the grouses' prime breeding grounds. Those agencies today also began a public process to withdraw millions of acres of sage grouse "strongholds" from future mining claims.

According to a Sept. 22 Washington Post article, scientists estimate the bird's population has plummeted by up to 90 percent, as drilling and mining operations disturbed its habitat. But federal officials concluded that enough fertile areas remain across 11 states for the sage grouse to someday thrive again.

This is positive news for midstream operators in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. Utah estimated that it would lose more than \$40 billion in economic production from oil and gas if the sage grouse was listed. Wyoming, second in the nation in energy production also has the largest Sage Grouse population according to the Washington Post article.

FWS said they are prepared to defend the decision to not list in court since environmental groups will almost certainly challenge the decision.

### **GPA selected to serve as small entity representative for EPA's Risk Management Plan**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is holding a Small Business Advocacy Review Panel on the agency's development of a rule that proposes to modify the current Risk Management Plan regulation to reduce the likelihood of accidental releases of toxic and flammable substances at chemical facilities and improve emergency response when those releases occur. This aligns with Executive Order 13650 titled "Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security" (EO 13650) that President Barack Obama signed on Aug. 1, 2013.

EO 13650 directs the federal government, whose overall aim is to prevent chemical accidents, to carry out a number of tasks. The tasks include improving operational coordination with state and local partners; enhancing federal agency coordination and information sharing; modernizing policies, regulations and standards; and working with stakeholders to identify best practices.

The panel will include federal representatives from the Small Business Administration, the Office of Management and Budget and EPA. The panel members will ask a selected group of small entity representatives to provide advice and recommendations on behalf of their companies, communities or organizations to inform panel members about the potential impacts of the proposed rule on small entities.

GPA applied and was selected to serve as a small entity representative on the panel. This provides GPA with a voice in the process for its small business members. If member companies have issues that they would like GPA to raise, contact [Matthew Hite](#) or [Johnny Dreyer](#).

### **GPA attends PHMSA Risk Methodology Workshop**

On Sept. 9, GPA Vice President of Government Affairs Matthew Hite attended a public Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration workshop in Crystal City, Va., on addressing risk modeling methodologies for gas transmission and hazardous liquids pipelines. The focus of the workshop was to provide the public and stakeholders an opportunity to share their knowledge and experience about risk modeling and practical approaches and techniques for pipeline and non-pipeline systems to advance pipeline risk models.

### **PHMSA hosts National Pipeline Mapping System Meeting**

On Sept. 10, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) held a meeting addressing a revised information collection request relating to the National Pipeline Mapping System, which GPA attended. Gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipeline operators are required to annually submit geospatial data, attributes, data and public contact information to PHMSA's National Pipeline Mapping System by the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002.

The current data elements collected and the positional accuracy of the pipeline data were developed by PHMSA through collaboration with the pipeline industry in 1998. The state of geographic information system (GIS) technology and operators' GIS systems has made significant advances since that time. Many data elements currently collected in tabular format in an operator's annual report are now stored in an operator's GIS. GIS data have added analytical and decision support capabilities that PHMSA wishes to leverage.

PHMSA issued a revised Information Collection Notice (OMB Control No. 2137-0596) on Aug. 27, and comments are due by Oct. 26. The notice outlines the new data elements and positional accuracy that will be required in operators' National Pipeline Mapping System submissions.

### **FWS to consider proposed listing decision for Rusty-Patched Bumble Bee**

On Sept. 18, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued a positive 90-day finding on the Rusty-Patched Bumble Bee. The species has an extensive 25-state range. A 90-day finding means FWS will consider a proposed listing decision for the species within 12 months, which could impact GPA members operating in North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

In the meantime, the notice indicates that FWS based its affirmative finding on three factors: 1) impact to habitat/range; 2) disease/predation; and 3) other natural or manmade factors. FWS is beginning status reviews for the bee and 22 other species and will be collecting information through Nov. 17.

### **GPA files comments on proposed changes to pipeline safety rules**

On Sept. 9, GPA filed comments with the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on its Notice of Proposed Rulemaking concerning several miscellaneous proposed changes to the pipeline safety rules. The primary and most substantial changes relate to the expansion of operator qualification requirements to construction and emergency response activities; additional training relating to control room management; and establishing a cost recovery mechanism for certain reviews of projects or designs.

GPA members have a significant interest in several key aspects of the proposal, specifically the expansion of operator qualification requirements, both in terms of fully applying the existing program to type A and B gathering lines, as well as the removal of the four-part test. GPA also has a desire to clarify the implications of the design review of new and novel technologies, as many operators are either using or evaluating the use of composite pipe in their systems.

GPA believes the rule as currently drafted has significant unintended consequences due to the broad scope of the proposals. Further, the actual cost of the proposal far exceeds the projected \$3.1 million cost offered by PHMSA that will be incurred by industry when implementing such changes. Moreover, little, if any justification has been provided to demonstrate how or why the proposed changes are reasonable or necessary.

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**Technical Section B ballot of GPA 2100 underway – deadline nears**

Technical Section B – Analysis and Test Methods has completed revisions to GPA 2100 - *Qualitative Determination of Carbonyl Sulfide in Propane Using Length of Stain Tubes*. The ballot to accept the changes was sent to Section B members on Sept. 14, and the deadline to vote is Oct. 15. Changes to this document include updates to some materials used in the procedures, the inclusion of a “cautionary statement,” and the addition of the concept that if high accuracy and repeatability is required and chromatography is not indicated or feasible, there are many portable handheld electronic devices available which operate on low power and are intrinsically safe.

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### **GPA fall technical meetings**

GPA's fall technical meetings will be held Oct. 8 - 9 in Dallas at the Crowne Plaza Dallas – Market Center Hotel. This includes meetings of Technical Sections A (Facilities Design & Optimization), B (Analysis & Test Methods), C (Product Specifications), H (Measurement, Calculations & Handling of Hydrocarbon Fluids Including NGL and Natural Gas), M (Operations & Maintenance) and the Technical Committee. These meetings are open, and no registration is required. For details, please take a look at the [GPA calendar of events](#).

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### **GPA attends Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission conference**

GPA's Director of State Government Affairs Debbie Beaver recently attended the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (IOGCC) annual conference in Oklahoma City. The IOGCC is comprised of governors, state oil and gas regulators, industry and the environmental community, and its mission is to resolve issues surrounding the natural resources found in the United States. Members of committees must be appointed, and Oklahoma Secretary of Energy Mike Teague recently appointed Beaver to the Energy Resources, Research & Technology Committee and Legal & Regulatory Affairs Committee. Beaver attended the two committee meetings held in conjunction with the annual conference.

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2016 GPA Convention sponsorship registration, hospitality request forms are open  
Registration for 2016 GPA Convention sponsorship opportunities opened this month, and all opportunities are secured on a first-paid, first-served basis. The sponsorship page on the GPA Convention web site will be updated daily to provide a list of what is available. To learn more about all options, download the [2016 GPA Convention Promotional & Advertising Opportunities packet](#).

The deadline to make requests for 2016 hospitality space, for both public spaces and hotel suites, is Nov. 13. GPA will communicate space assignments in mid-January. If we have space left after we assign spaces based on the initial requests up until Nov. 13, those will be handled additionally on a first-come, first-served basis.

For sponsorship information and to access the registration form, visit [www.GPAconvention.org/sponsor-2016](http://www.GPAconvention.org/sponsor-2016).

For the hospitality information and to access the request forms, visit [www.GPAconvention.org/2016-hospitality](http://www.GPAconvention.org/2016-hospitality).

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### **GPA/GPSA Calendar**

- 3** - Appalachian Basin GPA 3rd Annual Sporting Clays Event
  - 8** - GPA Fall Technical Meetings
  - 8** - Houston GPA Annual Meeting & Golf Tournament
  - 19** - GPA/GPSA Engineering Data Book Training & Certification Course
  - 27** - Research Meeting
  - 28** - North Texas GPA Sporting Clays Event
  - 30** - Permian Basin GPA Sporting Clays Event
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### **Gas Processors Association**

Sixty Sixty American Plaza, Suite 700  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74135  
(918) 493-3872  
[www.GPAGlobal.org](http://www.GPAGlobal.org)  
[www.GPAconvention.org](http://www.GPAconvention.org)  
[GPA@GPAGlobal.org](mailto:GPA@GPAGlobal.org)

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