

Emergency Response Plan (ERP)



What is an Emergency Response Plan (ERP)?

Pipeline companies are responsible for ensuring the safety of those living and working in close proximity to pipelines and related facilities. As part of this responsibility, pipeline operators must have detailed Emergency Response Plans (ERP) in place. These ERPs provide the direction, protocols and tools necessary to effectively respond in the unlikely event of a pipeline emergency.

Many pipeline companies, including Alliance, base their response plans on the Incident Command System (ICS), an internationally recognized model used by most first responders for emergency response. The Canadian Energy Pipeline Association (CEPA), of which Alliance is a full member, mandates that all member companies base their emergency response planning activities around the ICS model. This provides a framework through which a pipeline operator and appropriate emergency responders can work together to effectively manage an emergency and deploy response resources. It also allows for member companies to easily share resources during incidents that require a large-scale response. ERPs are enacted in the event of an incident and are designed to ensure public safety through providing clear safety and stabilization direction for employees, first responders and others involved in responding to an emergency situation.

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What Does Alliance Pipeline's ERP Contain?

As a responsible operator, Alliance makes every effort to prevent a pipeline related incident through proactive monitoring, maintenance, inspections and security measures as well as various damage prevention efforts. To address the unlikely event of a pipeline emergency, Alliance has a detailed emergency response program in place, through which Alliance plans for and practices emergency response in a process-driven manner. As part of this, Alliance's ERP outlines the necessary steps and information required to protect individuals living and working in the incident area. The ERP charts the course for how Alliance would manage any sort of pipeline-related emergency.

In order to provide the most effective response to an emergency situation, Alliance's overall ERP is augmented by area-specific response plans that contain input provided from ongoing consultation with first responders and experts in each area that the pipeline passes through.

Within Alliance's ERP is a process-driven guide to:

- Implement immediate emergency protocols, including isolation of impacted pipeline systems/facilities and closure of impacted and nearby valves;
- Mobilize a trained Emergency Support Team specific to the area in which the incident occurred;
- Establish an Emergency Operations Centre, as directed in the ICS model of emergency management, from which to coordinate all incident-response activity;
- Deploy communications protocol designed to ensure effective sharing of information between Alliance, first responders, on-the-ground employees, affected public and the greater community;
- Activate evacuation procedures, if required
- Proactively address the emergency and bring the situation under control;
- Address the needs of impacted parties, specific to each unique situation; and
- Facilitate an investigation by appropriate regulatory bodies following the emergency.

Included within the plan are protocols for handling calls placed to Alliance's emergency phone number, coordinating staffing and the overall response effort with first responders, and addressing the needs of impacted stakeholders such as sheltering in place, evacuation and claims.

What is Not Included in Alliance Pipeline's ERP?

Alliance recognizes that every emergency is unique and that the needs of our stakeholders vary, so a "one-size-fits-all" approach cannot be effective. Because of this, Alliance's ERP does not contain certain specifics, such as outlining when someone might be evacuated and to where. Rather, the ERP provides the mechanism through which Alliance's trained personnel can quickly and effectively address any and all aspects of a pipeline emergency, based on the unique circumstances which may arise.

ERP Activation

Criteria for activating an Alliance emergency response effort, and at what level, are outlined in Alliance's ERP. Alliance is prepared to respond and would enact its ERP in any pipeline situation that poses the potential for harm to a member of the public, their property, or an employee.

Alliance is prepared for any sort of emergency, including natural disasters. Because the product shipped by the Alliance pipeline is natural gas, which would dissipate quite quickly in the event of a release, most potential related emergencies would typically be relatively short-term in nature, and would be addressed with an immediate response.

Emergency Prevention is Key

While emergency preparedness is crucial, Alliance makes every effort to prevent an emergency from occurring in the first place. Our entire pipeline system is remotely monitored, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, through technology that allows for remote operation of the system and automatic closure of block-valves. In addition, Alliance has an integrity management program which includes things like regular inspections of the pipeline along with aerial and foot patrols along the right-of-way. This, combined with a proactive maintenance program, ensures the pipeline is in top working order. Alliance also employs damage prevention efforts to proactively mitigate the potential for third-party damage to the pipeline caused by unauthorized excavation, and actively employs security measures to keep our facilities safe. These are just a few of the steps that Alliance takes to ensure the safety of those living and working near our pipeline and facilities.