

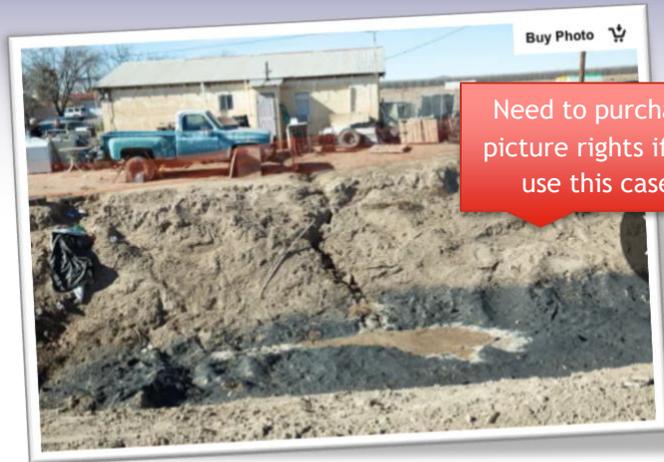
2018 Pipeline Explosion

Leak of 294,000+ gallons of petroleum into communities, farms

**New Mexico oil spill
cleanup continues weeks
after gas pipe burst**

Jan 10, 2018

Las Cruces Sun News.
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



Cost: Unknown

**Residents Impacted:
“dozens”**

In December of 2018, almost 300,000 gallons of petroleum gushed into a rural Dona Ana County community after a midnight explosion of the underground line buried just feet from nearby homes¹. At 294,000 gallons, it instantly became one of the 12 largest gas line spills in America this decade¹. While no cleanup cost is yet available, public reports show that similar sized spills have cost between \$5 million and \$66 million to remediate in other western states.

NMED reports that groundwater contamination is “likely” and they emphasize that the Rio Grande River and nearby irrigation district-fed properties lie less than a mile away¹. Dozens of residents were evacuated overnight as local officials struggled to identify and contain the massive spill. (Though first-responders received calls just after midnight, the company did not identify a leak until between 2 and 3 am).

New Mexico’s Public Regulation Commission’s Pipeline Safety Bureau “is responsible for licensing crude oil, natural gas, and oil and gas product pipelines.^{1”} License applications available online show that the PRC requires annual license applications for pipeline operations (for both interstate and intrastate pipelines) and those applications are due each July.

NMPRC does not conduct environmental reviews for these pipeline license application renewals. As the Dona Ana County incident shows, many pipelines are

laid near rivers and in low-lying areas where rupture is difficult to contain before it enters critical watersheds. Additionally, no public notice is given for these license renewals. Doing so would allow residents to learn of the location of buried pipelines and allow for the PRC to consider the impact of new development near these lines.

While every license application or renewal may not need an environmental review, those running through critical wildlife or groundwater source areas may rightly need additional review. that would lend this area to collapse.

¹ <https://www.krwg.org/post/nmed-gasoline-pipeline-release-near-anthony-nm-has-been-contained> , <https://www.lcsun-news.com/story/news/local/2019/01/10/burst-gasoline-pipeline-evacuation-kinder-morgan-dona-ana-county/2516155002/>

² <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2017/11/17/top-20-onshore-oil-and-gas-spills/876390001/>

³ https://www.env.nm.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/ENG_Span-KINDERMORGAN-PIPELINE-SPILL-PR.pdf

⁴ <http://www.nmprc.state.nm.us/transportation/pipeline-safety.html>