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PHMSA Announces Enforcement Action Against Enbridge for 2010 Michigan Oil Spill *Largest Civil Penalty Ever Proposed by Agency*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) today proposed a record \$3.7 million civil penalty and 24 actions against Enbridge Energy for the July 25, 2010, crude oil spill near Marshall, Mich.

“We will hold pipeline operators accountable if they do not follow proper safety procedures to protect the environment and local communities,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood.

PHMSA’s investigation found multiple violations of its [hazardous liquid pipeline safety regulations](#) related to integrity management, failure to follow operation and management procedures, and reporting and operator qualification requirements. PHMSA issued its notice and proposed civil penalty to Enbridge in a [Notice of Probable Violation](#).

Enbridge’s Line 6B ruptured on the evening of July 25, 2010, while the pipeline was in the process of a scheduled shutdown. Despite control center alarms, there were several attempts to restart the line, resulting in more pressure which expelled more oil.

On July 26, a local natural gas company employee notified the Enbridge control center about the spill. By that time, more than 20,000 barrels of crude oil had been spilled.

Enbridge has 30 days to respond to PHMSA.

Pipeline safety is a top priority at PHMSA. In April 2011, Secretary LaHood issued a [Call to Action](#) on pipeline safety, asking pipeline operators to replace and rehabilitate aging pipelines. PHMSA closed a [record number of enforcement cases in 2011](#) and is collecting more data about pipelines and stepping up efforts to [educate the public](#) about

staying safe around pipelines. The new [Pipeline Safety Act](#) gives PHMSA even more ways to hold pipeline operators accountable as well as the ability to issue civil penalties double that of previous statutory amounts for operators that violate pipeline safety laws.

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration develops and enforces regulations for the safe, reliable, and environmentally sound operation of the nation's 2.6 million mile pipeline transportation system and the nearly 1 million daily shipments of hazardous materials by land, sea, and air. Please visit <http://phmsa.dot.gov> for more information.

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