



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

NOV 27 2019

Overnight Express Mail

Ms. Theresa Becenti-Aguilar
District 4 Commissioner/Chair
New Mexico Public Regulation Commission
1120 Paseo De Peralta
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Chair Becenti-Aguilar:

On October 17, 2019, a representative of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) conducted an evaluation of New Mexico's enforcement of its excavation damage prevention law. PHMSA conducted this evaluation pursuant to 49 United States Code § 60114 and 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 198, Subpart D -- State Damage Prevention Enforcement Programs. Based on this evaluation, PHMSA has determined that the enforcement of New Mexico's excavation damage prevention law is "adequate."

As you may be aware, excavation damage continues to be a leading cause of pipeline failures, some of which have resulted in fatalities, serious injuries, and environmental damage. Nationwide statistics show that effective enforcement of state damage prevention laws reduces excavation damage and pipeline incidents, resulting in enhanced public safety.

In closing, PHMSA appreciates your dedication to safety and encourages the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission to continue to support damage prevention outreach initiatives. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Dr. Christie Murray, our Director of Outreach and Engagement, at (202) 366-4996 or by email at Christie.Murray@dot.gov.

Sincerely,

Massoud Tahamtani
Deputy Associate Administrator, Policy and Programs
Office of Pipeline Safety

cc: Mr. Jason Montoya, P.E., Chief of Staff,
Pipeline Safety Bureau Chief,
New Mexico Public Regulation Commission