

Assembly Bill No. 1376

CHAPTER 605

An act to amend Sections 8589.7 and 51018 of the Government Code, and to add Section 3233 to the Public Resources Code, relating to oil and gas.

[Approved by Governor September 18, 1996. Filed with Secretary of State September 19, 1996.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1376, Bustamante. Oil spill reporting requirements.

Under existing law, every rupture, explosion, or fire involving a pipeline is required to be immediately reported by the pipeline operator to the fire department having fire suppression responsibilities and to the Office of Emergency Services, and is subject to additional specified reporting requirements.

This bill would authorize the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources to develop field rules for the San Joaquin Valley oil fields which establish volumetric thresholds for emergency reporting by the operator of oil discharges to land associated with onshore drilling, exploration, or production operations, where the oil discharges cannot pass into or threaten the waters of this state, subject to the concurrences of the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Fish and Game, as specified. The bill would require the adoption of field rules for the San Joaquin Valley oil fields by January 1, 1998. The bill would prescribe related requirements.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 8589.7 of the Government Code is amended to read:

8589.7. (a) In carrying out its responsibilities pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 8574.17, the Office of Emergency Services shall serve as the central point in state government for the emergency reporting of spills, unauthorized releases, or other accidental releases of hazardous materials and shall coordinate the notification of the appropriate state and local administering agencies that may be required to respond to those spills, unauthorized releases, or other accidental releases. The Office of Emergency Services is the only state agency required to make the notification required by subdivision (b).

(b) Upon receipt of a report concerning a spill, unauthorized release, or other accidental release involving hazardous materials, as defined in Section 25501 of the Health and Safety Code, or



concerning a rupture of, or an explosion or fire involving, a pipeline reportable pursuant to Section 51018, the Office of Emergency Services shall immediately inform the following agencies of the incident:

(1) For an oil spill reportable pursuant to Section 8670.25.5, the Office of Emergency Services shall inform the administrator for oil spill response, the State Lands Commission, the California Coastal Commission, and the California regional water quality control board having jurisdiction over the location of the discharged oil.

(2) For a rupture, explosion, or fire involving a pipeline reportable pursuant to Section 51018, the Office of Emergency Services shall inform the State Fire Marshal.

(3) For a discharge in or on any waters of the state of a hazardous substance or sewage reportable pursuant to Section 13271 of the Water Code, the Office of Emergency Services shall inform the appropriate California regional water quality control board.

(4) For a spill or other release of petroleum reportable pursuant to Section 25270.8 of the Health and Safety Code, the Office of Emergency Services shall inform the local administering agency that has jurisdiction over the spill or release.

(5) For a crude oil spill reportable pursuant to Section 3233 of the Public Resources Code, the Office of Emergency Services shall inform the Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources and the appropriate California regional water quality control board.

(c) This section does not relieve a person who is responsible for an incident specified in subdivision (b) from the duty to make an emergency notification to a local agency, or the 911 emergency system, under any other law.

(d) A person who is subject to Section 25507 of the Health and Safety Code shall immediately report all releases or threatened releases pursuant to that section to the appropriate local administering agency and each local administering agency shall notify the Office of Emergency Services and businesses in their jurisdiction of the appropriate emergency telephone number that can be used for emergency notification to the administering agency on a 24-hour basis. The administering agency shall notify other local agencies of releases or threatened releases within their jurisdiction, as appropriate.

(e) No facility, owner, operator, or other person required to report an incident specified in subdivision (b) to the Office of Emergency Services shall be liable for any failure of the Office of Emergency Services to make a notification required by this section or to accurately transmit the information reported.

SEC. 2. Section 51018 of the Government Code is amended to read:

51018. (a) Every rupture, explosion, or fire involving a pipeline, including a pipeline system otherwise exempted by subdivision (a)



of Section 51010.5, and including a pipeline undergoing testing, shall be immediately reported by the pipeline operator to the fire department having fire suppression responsibilities and to the Office of Emergency Services. In addition, the pipeline operator shall within 30 days of the rupture, explosion, or fire file a report with the State Fire Marshal containing all the information that the State Fire Marshal may reasonably require to prepare the report required pursuant to subdivision (d).

(b) (1) The Office of Emergency Services shall immediately notify the State Fire Marshal of the incident, who shall immediately dispatch his or her employees to the scene. The State Fire Marshal or his or her employees, upon arrival, shall provide technical expertise and advise the operator and all public agencies on activities needed to mitigate the hazard.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, the Legislature does not intend to hinder or disrupt the workings of the “incident commander system,” but does intend to establish a recognized element of expertise and direction for the incident command to consult and acknowledge as an authority on the subject of pipeline incident mitigation. Furthermore, it is expected that the State Fire Marshal will recognize the expertise of the pipeline operator and any other emergency agency personnel who may be familiar with the particular location of the incident and respect their knowledgeable input regarding the mitigation of the incident.

(c) For purposes of this section, “rupture” includes every unintentional liquid leak, including any leak that occurs during hydrostatic testing, except that a crude oil leak of less than five barrels from a pipeline or flow line in a rural area, or any crude oil or petroleum product leak in any in-plant piping system of less than five barrels, when no fire, explosion, or bodily injury results or no waterway is contaminated thereby, does not constitute a rupture for purposes of the reporting requirements of subdivision (a).

(d) The State Fire Marshal shall, every fifth year commencing in 1999, issue a report identifying pipeline leak incident rate trends, reviewing current regulatory effectiveness with regard to pipeline safety, and recommending any necessary changes to the Legislature. This report shall include all of the following: total length of regulated pipelines, total length of regulated piggable pipeline, total number of line sections, average length of each section, number of leaks during study period, average spill size, average damage per incident, average age of leak pipe, average diameter of leak pipe, injuries during study period, cause of the leak or spill, fatalities during study period, and other information as deemed appropriate by the State Fire Marshal.

(e) This section does not preempt any other applicable federal or state reporting requirement.



(f) Except as otherwise provided in this section and Section 8589.7, a notification made pursuant to this section shall satisfy any immediate notification requirement contained in any permit issued by a permitting agency.

(g) This section does not apply to pipeline ruptures involving nonreportable crude oil spills under Section 3233 of the Public Resources Code, unless the spill involves a fire or explosion.

SEC. 3. Section 3233 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:

3233. (a) The division may develop field rules which establish volumetric thresholds for emergency reporting by the operator of oil discharges to land associated with onshore drilling, exploration, or production operations, where the oil discharges, because of the circumstances established pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (c), cannot pass into or threaten the waters of the state. The division may not adopt field rules under this section, unless the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Fish and Game first concur with the volumetric reporting thresholds contained in the proposed field rules. Subchapter 1 (commencing with Section 1710) of Chapter 4 of Division 2 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations shall apply to the adoption and implementation of field rules authorized by this section.

(b) The authority granted to the division pursuant to subdivision (a) shall apply solely to oil fields located in the San Joaquin Valley, as designated by the division. The division shall adopt the field rules not later than January 1, 1998.

(c) For purposes of implementing this section, the division, the State Water Resources Control Board, and the Department of Fish and Game shall enter into an agreement that defines the process for establishing both of the following:

(1) The circumstances, such as engineered containment, under which oil discharges cannot pass into or threaten the waters of this state.

(2) The volumetric reporting thresholds that are applicable under the circumstances established pursuant to paragraph (1).

(d) In no case shall a reporting threshold established in the field rules, where the oil discharge cannot pass into or threaten the waters of this state, be less than one barrel (42 gallons), unless otherwise established by federal law or regulation. Until field rules are adopted, emergency reporting of oil discharges shall continue as required by existing statute and regulations.

(e) An operator who discharges oil in amounts less than the volumetric thresholds adopted by the division pursuant to this section is exempt from all applicable state and local reporting requirements. Discharges of oil in amounts equal to, or greater than, the volumetric thresholds adopted by the division pursuant to this section shall be immediately reported to the Office of Emergency



Services which shall inform the division and other local or state agencies as required by Section 8589.7 of the Government Code. Reporting to the Office of Emergency Services shall be deemed to be compliance with all applicable state and local reporting requirements.

(f) Oil discharges below the reporting thresholds established in the field rules shall be exempt from the emergency notification or reporting requirements, and any penalties provided for nonreporting, established under paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 13260 of the Water Code, subdivisions (a), (c), and (e) of Section 13272 of the Water Code, Section 25507 of the Health and Safety Code, Sections 8670.25.5 and 51018 of the Government Code, and subdivision (h) of Section 1722 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations. Oil discharge reporting requirements under Section 51018 of the Government Code shall be applicable if a spill involves a fire or explosion.

(g) This section shall not affect existing reporting or notification requirements under federal law.

(h) Nothing in this section shall be construed to relieve any party of any responsibility established by statute, regulation, or order, to clean up or remediate any oil discharge, whether reportable or exempt pursuant to this section.

(i) Reporting provided pursuant to this section is not intended to prohibit any department or agency from seeking and obtaining any supplemental postreporting information to which the department or agency might otherwise be entitled.

(j) For purposes of this section, "oil" means naturally occurring crude oil.

