



# APGA OPERATIONS CONFERENCE

October 26-28, 2021 • Memphis, TN

## TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26:

- 1:00 PM      **OPENING REMARKS**  
*Jocelyn McInturff, Knoxville Utilities Board and APGA Operations & Safety Committee Chair*
- 1:15 PM      **WELCOME TO MEMPHIS**  
*Memphis Light, Gas & Water*
- 1:30 PM      **APGA WELCOME, ASSOCIATION UPDATE**  
From advocating for public gas systems to Congress to providing resources to help members succeed, APGA has been hard at work. Hear some of the recent initiatives undertaken by the association and how your system can get involved. Dave will also share some of the early insights from the recent strategic planning session undertaken by the APGA Board of Directors.  
*Dave Schryver, President and CEO, American Public Gas Association*
- 2:00 PM      **PHMSA PERSPECTIVE: IMPLEMENTING CONGRESSIONAL MANDATES & PIPELINE SAFETY IN 2021 AND BEYOND**  
Hear how the Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) is addressing the mandates within the Congressional PIPES Act of 2020. Better understand how these directives are driving their regulatory agenda. Alan will discuss how the change of administration has impacted both current rulemakings and expectations for pipeline safety efforts in the future.  
*Alan Mayberry, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA)*
- 2:45 PM      **NETWORKING BREAK & VENDOR EXHIBITS**
- 3:15 PM      **STATE PIPELINE SAFETY REGULATOR PERSPECTIVES**  
State pipeline safety regulators serve as important partners to natural gas distribution systems in their efforts to construct, operate and maintain safe pipeline systems. Hear some perspectives on where operators should be focusing and what new priorities might be around the next corner.  
*Mary Friend, National Association of Pipeline Safety Representatives (NAPSR) Chair and Director, Pipeline Safety for West Virginia Public Service Commission*
- 4:00 PM      **PIPELINE SECURITY: RECENT THREATS AGAINST DISTRIBUTION INFRASTRUCTURE AND FBI'S ROLE IN INCIDENT RESPONSE**  
Hear from personnel from the Memphis Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) field office on how the Bureau supports pipeline operators in responding to security incidents. Assistant Special Agent in Charge Baker will also share intelligence on threats to distribution infrastructure will be provided to ensure public natural gas utilities are taking appropriate steps in protecting assets.  
*Jeff Steelman, Supervisory Special Agent, Memphis Field Office, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)*
- 4:45 PM      **ADJOURNMENT**
- 5:30 PM      **NETWORKING RECEPTION**  
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# WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27:

7:00 AM **COFFEE & VENDOR EXHIBITS**

8:00 AM **CONCURRENT SESSIONS BEGIN**

	<b>OPERATIONS &amp; ENGINEERING TRACK:</b>	<b>SAFETY &amp; COMPLIANCE TRACK:</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL TRACK:</b>
FACILITATED BY:	Todd Brady	Stuart Saulters	Renee Lani
8:00 – 8:45 AM	<p><b>PREPARATION, PLANNING &amp; PRODUCT PROVIDERS PANEL</b></p> <p>The nation’s supply network was challenged in unique and unprecedented ways the past 18 months. Material needed by natural gas distribution operators was not spared. Hear from one supplier about how they navigated these times and what impacts they are still experiencing. Hear from a panel of stakeholders in the supply chain regarding how they’re continuing to navigate material supply challenges with attendees having the opportunity for direct participation – Q&amp;A, comments, discussion. <i>Bradley Utz and Mike Chitwood, Ed Young Sales Co</i></p>	<p><b>PANEL DISCUSSION: HOW DO UTILITY MANAGERS INFLUENCE SAFETY CULTURE?</b></p> <p>Recent industry research on safety culture found that “top management’s actions have the strongest positive influence on safety culture at the work group level by emphasizing compliance and public safety, and by encouraging good safety behavior by allocating resources to ensure it”. Hear from three APGA member system leaders on how they strive to have a strong positive influence on safety culture. <i>Moderator: Stuart Saulters, APGA John Lunde, Watertown Municipal Utilities Gas Dept, Allyson Horner, Gibson County Utility District, &amp; Todd Gentle, Huntsville Utilities</i></p>	<p><b>EMISSION MITIGATION TECHNOLOGIES: A CRASH COURSE</b></p> <p>Natural gas distribution operators are being asked to evaluate their operations &amp; maintenance plans for the ability to further minimize methane emissions. There are numerous strategies and technologies that operators can use to accomplish this goal. This presentation will attempt to outline the suite of options available for systems and will discuss when they are most appropriate and effective. <i>Nick Pero, Artera</i></p>
8:50 – 9:35 AM	<p><b>MEMBER PANEL DISCUSSION: LEAK MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p>APGA member systems will share their strategies for leak survey and repair. They will discuss how their strategies have evolved over time and how they plan to address the PIPES Act Section 114 mandate. They will also discuss how pipe replacement programs, state regulations, and evolving technologies have influenced their strategies. The panel will be moderated by Paul Wehnert of Heath Consultants Incorporated. <i>Moderator: Paul Wehnert, Heath Consultants Incorporated Panelist: Barry Ellison, Norwich Public Utilities,</i></p>	<p><b>CURRENT CHALLENGES IN PSMS IMPLEMENTATION</b></p> <p>API RP 1173 has been embraced by all sides of the U.S. energy pipeline sector. Jeff Wiese was on the API Committee that shaped RP 1173 and initial efforts to persuade operators of the potential value of adopting SMS. Mike LaMont has helped numerous operators understand and make headway on their SMS journey. They will identify, discuss, and make suggestions on coping with challenges many in the pipeline industry have faced in implementing a pipeline SMS. Both are involved with a variety of operators and pipeline trade associations on all stages of SMS adoption. Bring your related questions and let’s learn from one another – in the true spirit of SMS.</p>	<p><b>USING VACUUM PURGING TO REDUCE METHANE EMISSIONS</b></p> <p>The Gas Technology Institute (GTI) will share on their new project “Purging Gas Pipes into Service without Venting Gas to Atmosphere.” Learn how this technology can be incorporated into your operations to help minimize methane emissions from your system. <i>Dennis Jarnecke, GTI</i></p> <p><b>Sponsored by the APGA Research Foundation</b></p>

<p><i>Jared Smith, Jackson Energy Authority, &amp; Craig Powers, Memphis Light, Gas and Water</i></p>	<p><i>Jeff Wiese and Mike LaMont, TRC Companies</i></p>	
<p align="center"><b>NETWORKING BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS</b></p>		
<p align="center"><b>OPERATIONS &amp; ENGINEERING TRACK:</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>SAFETY &amp; COMPLIANCE TRACK:</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>ENVIRONMENTAL TRACK:</b></p>
<p><b>OVERPRESSURE PROTECTION – ELIMINATING A COMMON MODE OF FAILURE</b>  Section 206 of the PIPES Act of 2020 mandates PHMSA to write a regulation requiring operators to “eliminate the common mode of failure or provide backup protection capable of either shutting the flow of gas, relieving gas to the atmosphere to fully protect the distribution system from overpressurization events.” The presentation will discuss the various configurations for overpressure protection and how to prepare to meet this future regulation.  <i>Jack Hernig, Marie Co.</i></p>	<p><b>DESIGN AND INSTALLATION BEST PRACTICES FOR NON-STANDARD METER SETS</b>  This presentation will discuss some of the challenges operators face when designing and installing meter sets with non-standard configurations (condo buildings, townhouses, etc.) Hear some guidance operators should consider for these assets.  <i>Rob Getman, Magnolia River</i></p>	<p><b>INTRODUCING RNG &amp; HYDROGEN IN GAS DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS</b>  This presentation will share a few case studies from other utilities that have introduced Renewable Natural Gas or hydrogen into their gas distribution systems. Hear what you need to know about the technology as you explore them for your systems.  <i>Alberic Avisse, Honeywell</i></p>
<p><b>DAMAGE PREVENTION – GROUND PENETRATING RADAR</b>  Hear a case study from APGA member, Greenville Utilities Commission, on ground penetrating radar technologies. Learn the circumstances in which they used the technology and their lessons learned from the experience.  <i>Carl Smith, Greenville Utilities Commission</i></p>	<p><b>RESIDENTIAL METHANE DETECTION</b>  GTI has done extensive research to support the development of national standards for Residential Methane Detectors (RMDs). Hear about the testing and benchmarking GTI has performed to better understand accuracy detection levels and hurdles for home deployment. Results have led to their incorporation into existing safety programs to add another layer of protection for the detection of leaks.  <i>Dennis Jarnecke, GTI</i></p> <p><b>Sponsored by the APGA Research Foundation</b></p>	<p><b>MEMBER PANEL DISCUSSION: APGA'S COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP</b>  During the July APGA Annual Meeting, the membership voted to approve the new APGA Commitment to Environmental Stewardship. That commitment includes ten actions all APGA members should be striving to incorporate into their practices. Hear from three APGA members as they discuss how their system is working to meet those commitments.  <i>Moderator: Renee Lani, APGA</i>  <i>Panelist: Lucio Garcia, Las Cruces Utilities &amp; Diane Moore, Pensacola Energy</i></p>

9:35 –  
10:05 AM

10:05 –  
10:35 AM

10:40 –  
11:10 AM

11:15 – 11:45 AM	<p><b>QUALITY CONTROL CONSIDERATIONS FOR DISTRIBUTION PIPELINE PROJECTS</b>  This presentation will quality control considerations for distribution pipeline projects, including: managing new installations, repairs, and operations &amp; maintenance activities. The presentation will focus on how to ensure accurate as-built surveys, appropriate materials, and utilizing the right field crews.  <i>Glenn Vlass, American Innovations</i></p>	<p><b>RESIDENTIAL METHANE DETECTION PRESENTATION CONTINUES</b></p>	<p><b>MEMBER PANEL &amp; ROUNDTABLE CONTINUES</b></p>
11:45 AM – 1:00 PM	<b>LUNCH</b>		
FACILITATED BY:	<b>OPERATIONS &amp; ENGINEERING TRACK:</b>	<b>SAFETY &amp; COMPLIANCE TRACK:</b>	<b>WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRACK:</b>
	Renee Lani	Emily Wong	Todd Brady
1:00 – 1:45 PM	<p><b>ANALYTICS-DRIVEN ADVANCED LEAK DETECTION (ALD) TECHNOLOGY HELPING GAS UTILITIES ADDRESS NETWORK RISK AND EMISSIONS</b>  How gas utilities are using Picarro’s ALD technology and analytics to enhance its gas network assessments and emissions reductions.  <i>Doug Ward, Picarro</i></p>	<p><b>USE OF PIPELINE SAFETY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</b>  Providing a simple solution for complex problems around effectively monitoring and managing your Line Locate and OQ Training programs. By collecting the proper data and pairing it with the real-world analytics, you can better monitor these programs and be ready to make any adjustments before they become problems. Using these methods will help your team identify problem areas in real time eliminating any lag between initially finding a problem and getting it resolved. By doing this you will increase your company’s safety and production while minimizing in field concerns.  <i>Eric Cowan, G2 Integrated Solutions</i></p>	<p><b>INDUSTRY &amp; COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS</b>  The Center for Energy Workforce Development is a non-profit consortium working together to ensure a skilled, diverse workforce pipeline to meet future energy industry needs. One method CEWD uses to meet many of their goals is partnering with secondary schools and professional organizations to promote the merits of energy careers. As CEWD members, APGA has access to the incredible number of tools CEWD has developed. Hear about those tools, your access to them, and how they can help with your employee recruitment efforts.  <i>Missy Henriksen, Center for Energy Workforce Development</i></p>

1:50 –  
2:35 PM

<p><b>MEMBER CASE STUDY: IMPLEMENTING TRACKING &amp; TRACEABILITY</b> Hear from the City of Monroe, NC how they implemented Tracking &amp; Traceability (with bar code scanning) into their GIS system with the assistance of Patrick Engineering. They will discuss why they began this endeavor, how the solution was identified, any obstacles they overcame during its launch, and how it has positively impacted their operations. <i>Robert Miller, City of Monroe NC and Christophe Farnault, Patrick Engineering</i></p>	<p><b>A PRACTICAL WAY TO MAKE DIMP WORK FOR YOU</b> Knoxville Utilities Board will share how they utilize their Distribution Integrity Management Program (DIMP) to drive their decision making on operations &amp; maintenance (O&amp;M) activities and where KUB goes above and beyond existing regulatory requirements. <i>Jocelyn McInturff, Knoxville Utilities Board</i></p>	<p><b>ADVANCED TRAINING TECHNOLOGIES</b> This session will provide an overview of advanced training technologies for organizations to consider deploying to meet the needs of today's learner. These technologies include computer generated virtual reality (VR), 360° 3D HD VR video, and connected worker augmented reality (AR) platforms. Participants will learn about the benefits and capabilities of each technology along with seeing a live demonstration of each. Lastly, an overview of hardware equipment, software requirements, content development process, and technology deployment best practices will be discussed. <i>Ray Deatherage, GTI</i></p> <p><b>Sponsored by the APGA Research Foundation</b></p>
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2:35 –  
3:05 PM

**NETWORKING BREAK WITH EXHIBITORS**

3:05 –  
3:35 PM

<b>OPERATIONS &amp; ENGINEERING TRACK:</b>	<b>SAFETY &amp; COMPLIANCE TRACK:</b>	<b>WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TRACK:</b>
<p><b>METER BYPASS TECHNOLOGY</b> With Covid, utilities were tasked with performing maintenance work and having to go into homes and relight pilots. Bypass technology can help ease that moving forward as an operational change for utilities. <i>Jon Beam, Equipment Controls Company</i></p>	<p><b>OPERATOR CASE STUDY – LARGE SCALE OUTAGE PLANNING</b> Hear how one APGA member prepares for a potential large-scale outage by performing table top exercises. <i>Glen Boatwright, York County Natural Gas Authority</i></p>	<p><b>EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES</b> Efforts to recruit high-quality applicants for open positions are increasingly complicated. In this session, we will present a snapshot of current recruitment practices in the natural gas industry and lead a discussion of promising practices to develop an applicant pool. <i>Stephanie Balmer and Dr. Robert Lyons, ITS, Inc.</i></p>

3:40 –  
4:10 PM

<b>METER BYPASS TECHNOLOGY PRESENTATION CONTINUES</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTING MEASURES TO PROTECT PIPELINES UNDER THE NEW TSA GUIDELINES FOR PIPELINE SECURITY</b> Memphis Light, Gas, and Water has focused on preventing security incidents for many years now. This session will give you an opportunity to hear a little of their story. Hopefully, you'll be able to implement some of their lessons learned at your utility. <i>Allan Long, Memphis Light Gas &amp; Water</i>	<b>SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES FOR EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT</b> What practices are most impactful for engaging, developing, and retaining employees? What adult learning concepts could be implemented at your company to drive retention of learnings? What landmines and blindspots should an instructor look out for? How can technology complement in-person learning opportunities?  This presentation will be a quick overview of answers to the above questions and a roundtable discussion of what other utilities are doing in the learning space. <i>John Gann, MEA Energy Association</i>
<b>PE PIPE: UNDERSTANDING ALLOWABLE SCRATCH DEPTHS</b> This presentation will discuss the origin of the 10% scratch depth rule and research performed since its introduction over 50 years ago. Historical scratch depth test data was re-analyzed to create a formula that will allow operators to determine the allowable scratch depth of pipe in their system for a desired pipe life of 50yrs or greater based on pipe operating temperature, PENT value, and stress at the scratch. <i>Chris Ampfer, WL Plastics</i>	<b>APGA PIPELINE SAFETY LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY UPDATE</b> APGA Director of Legislative Affairs, Emily Wong, will update attendees on recent legislative and regulatory initiatives impacting pipeline safety including mandates from the PIPES Act of 2020. <i>Emily Wong, APGA</i>	<b>EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION CONTINUES</b>

4:15 –  
4:45 PM

5:15 PM

**NETWORKING RECEPTION**

## THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28:

7:00 AM

**COFFEE & VENDOR EXHIBITS**

8:00 AM

**KICKSTART YOUR CULTURE OF INCLUSIVITY**

Culture. Culture. Culture. It is one of the buzziest of buzzwords. With organizations thrust into a remote (or, at the very least, hybrid) workplace, everyone is trying to crack the culture code these days. This casual session dives deep into the successes of Energy Worldnet, its inclusive culture, and the catalysts behind “the movement”. Join APGA’s Stuart Saulters, as he speaks with leadership at Energy Worldnet and learn the tips to kickstarting your culture of inclusivity.

*James Cross & Chris Isaacson, Energy Worldnet*  
*Moderated by Stuart Saulters, APGA*

- 8:45 AM **2021 SOAR GOLD WINNERS: MEMBER BEST PRACTICES PANEL**  
Hear from the three APGA 2021 System Operational Achievement Recognition Program Gold Winners. Each will discuss a program they have implemented at their system in attempt to achieve operational excellence.  
*Moderated by Stephen Mayfield, City of Tallahassee and SOAR Task Group Chair*
1. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion - *Salina Douglass, Knoxville Utilities Board*
  2. Employee Development Systems - *Durk Tyson, Greenville Utilities Commission*
  3. Pipeline Safety Management Systems - *Bradley Walters, City of Rocky Mount*
- 10:15 AM **NETWORKING BREAK**
- 10:30 AM **APGA SECURITY & INTEGRITY FOUNDATION UPDATE: SHRIMP 4.0 RELEASE**  
A new user interface for the SIF SHRIMP tool for Distribution Integrity Management was unveiled this fall. View the new features and learn about next steps for SHRIMP.  
*Daniel Pate, RCP and Todd Brady, APGA SIF*
- 11:00 AM **ROUNDTABLE: REFLECTION**  
This interactive roundtable is an opportunity to share your challenges related to the design, construction, operation and maintenance of natural gas distribution systems.  
*Moderator: John Lunde, Watertown Municipal Utilities Gas Department, APGA Operations & Safety Vice Chair*
- 11:30 AM **CONFERENCE WRAP-UP & ADJOURNMENT**

**CONFERENCE LOCATION:**

The Guest House at Graceland

3600 Elvis Presley Blvd, Memphis, TN 38116, USA

For hotel information, please go to <http://www.apga.org/fallevent/location>