

DIVISION OF UTILITY AND RAILROAD SAFETY

The Division of Utility and Railroad Safety assists the Commission in administering three safety programs: Gas and Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Safety, Railroad Safety, and Underground Utility Damage Prevention.

The Pipeline Safety Section of the Division helps ensure the safe operation of gas and hazardous liquid pipeline facilities, through inspections of facilities and new constructions, review of safety records, and investigation of incidents. In 2009, the Division's pipeline safety activities involved 9 natural gas companies, with a total of 18,224 miles of pipelines serving 1,039,346 customers, 138 master-metered operators, 33 propane systems and 4 hazardous liquid pipeline companies with a total of 897 miles of pipelines.

Summary of 2009 Activities

Gas Safety Inspection Man-days Conducted	685
Hazardous Liquid Safety Inspection Man-days Conducted	147
Number of Counts of Probable Violations Cited	2,643
Pipeline Accidents Investigated	17
Pipeline Safety Trainings Conducted	18
Testimony and Reports Prepared	3

The Rail Safety Section of the Division helps ensure the safe operation of jurisdictional railroads by conducting inspections of tracks and motive power and equipment and investigations of certain accidents. The Division's inspections involve more than 3,600 miles of track and thousands of cars and locomotives.

Summary of 2009 Activities

Number of Track Units ¹ Inspected	5,127
Number of Locomotive and Car Units ² Inspected	49,256
Number of Operating Practice Units ³ Inspected	996
Number of Defects Noted	5,643
Number of Violations Cited	109
Number of Accidents Investigated	73
Number of Complaints Investigated	22

The Damage Prevention Section of the Division investigates all reports of "probable violations" of the Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act ("Act") and on a monthly basis presents its findings and recommendations to an Advisory Committee appointed in accordance with the Act. This Committee then makes enforcement recommendations to the Commission. The Division provides free training relative to the Act and safe digging practices to excavators, utilities and others, conducts public education campaigns and promotes partnership among the stakeholders to further underground utility damage prevention in Virginia.

Summary of 2009 Activities

Underground Utility Damage Reports Investigated	1,411
Number of Individuals Having Received Damage Prevention Training	3,113
Number of Damage Prevention Educational Material Disseminated	149,519
Number of Damage Prevention Field Audits Conducted	816

¹ Each mile of track, record, crossing at grade, among other things, is considered a track unit.

² Each locomotive, car, motive power equipment record, among other things, is considered a unit.

³ Each location where operations are or may occur such as switchyards, field offices, yard offices, trains, yard crew locations and dispatching are considered an operating practice unit.