



# NRC NEWS

Office of Public Affairs, Headquarters

Washington, DC. 20555-0001

[www.nrc.gov](http://www.nrc.gov) ■ [opa.resource@nrc.gov](mailto:opa.resource@nrc.gov)



No: 20-023  
CONTACT: Scott Burnell, 301-415-8200

April 15, 2020

## **NRC Issues Report on Review of Indian Point Pipeline Issues; Reactors Remain Safe**

An expert team of Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff and outside specialists has concluded the Indian Point Energy Center nuclear power plant would remain safe should there be a potential accident on a 42-inch natural gas pipeline near the plant. The team's [report](#) also recommends several follow-up actions, including that the plant owner, Entergy, revisit the assumptions it made in its analysis.

The team's safety conclusion is based on two factors. First, the Algonquin Incremental Market pipeline has a very small chance of rupture near Indian Point, due to the pipeline's modern construction, quality control and additional "high consequence" requirements for inspection and an integrity management program. Second, Indian Point's safety systems sit well outside the potential impact zones for postulated AIM pipeline accident effects such as heat, pressure and projectiles. The team's analyses also determined that any pipeline-related increase in Indian Point's risk fell below the NRC's thresholds for prompting additional action.

The team's report was submitted in response to direction from Margaret M. Doane, the NRC's Executive Director for Operations, following an NRC Inspector General report on the agency's handling of public concerns about the pipeline issues. The team reviewed how Entergy and the NRC analyzed potential hazards from the proposed AIM pipeline in 2014, as well as how the NRC processed a public stakeholder's petitions for enforcement action related to the pipeline. The team recommended that Entergy update the assumptions used in its analysis with the new information the team developed during its review. The team also recommended several improvements to NRC processes related to the conduct of technical reviews, peer review, inspection support, interagency cooperation and public petition processing. The NRC intends to hold a public meeting near the plant regarding the report when the region has sufficiently recovered from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The team included experts in NRC engineering reviews and probabilistic risk analysis, as well as a Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration safety expert. The team also incorporated important insights from researchers at Sandia National Laboratories with expertise on natural gas modeling and fire risk. All team members were independent of those performing prior reviews regarding the AIM pipeline and its potential effects on Indian Point. The team's work was peer-reviewed by a mechanical engineering expert from the NRC's independent Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards.