

UPDATE FOR RESIDENTS

(As of 8/29/2019)

1. What is the current status of the compressor station?

The Transco compressor station (on Route 528 by the Turnpike Bridge) was built and completed in April 2018. The compressor station is functional but as of yet is not running at full capacity pending connection to the SRL (Southern Reliability Link) pipeline. The main purpose of the compressor station is to pressurize and pump gas into the SRL. (see below). In order to comply with regulations, the compressor station must be tested periodically. This involves running the equipment, which may result in the release of natural gas into the air, often called a blowdown. Transco is required to notify the Township and the Board of Education prior to any anticipated blowdown. Once the SRL pipeline is constructed and connected to the compressor station, the compressor station will then operate at full capacity. Scheduled blowdowns will occur as part of the compressor station's normal operations.

2. What is current status of the pipeline?

The proposed pipeline (the Southern Reliability Link or SRL) was approved by the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) in 2016. The pipeline is being built by New Jersey Natural Gas (NJNG). It is a "transmission line" which means that it is not used to distribute gas to homes and businesses. These types of gas lines are high pressure and designed to transport compressed gas over long distances. Since the portion of the pipeline in Burlington County will be built on county roads, Burlington County will be regulating the Project. Despite numerous lawsuits and appeals filed by Chesterfield Township, along with neighboring towns and environmental groups opposing the Project, the portion of the pipeline in Burlington County is expected to begin construction this winter. The exact timeline is not known as there are several issues that NJNG must resolve with the County.

3. What is involved with the settlement agreement that the Township entered into with NJNG?

The Chesterfield Township Committee has been opposed to the pipeline since it was announced. Over the last four years, the Township initiated several lawsuits in an attempt to stop construction. In recent months it became obvious to the Committee that the County would eventually have to grant the permits to allow its construction. As a result, the Committee decided that it would be beneficial to Chesterfield residents to negotiate terms with NJNG that would help to protect our residents during and after construction. The basic terms of the settlement include Chesterfield Township having a say in the work hours (restricted to the hours of 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday) as well as logistics such as detours. (The only exception to this will be special drilling projects that may extend beyond the proposed hours. NJNG will have to give advanced notice and obtain approval from the County for this). In addition, a "trust fund" is being set up to assist residents who experience property damage arising from the Project. NJNG is also required to pay Chesterfield Township just over \$2.07 million for impacts to the community from this Project, which will also allow us to repave our Township roads that may be damaged by the detours and heavy equipment traffic. NJNG is also reimbursing the Township \$550,000 for legal, engineering, and other fees incurred over the last four years. See the resolution approving the settlement at:

https://www.chesterfieldtwpnj.gov/images/resolutions/2019/7-8_authorize_execution_of_Settlement_Agr_w_NJNG_4830-6100-7005.pdf

4. What is the Township doing to protect residents from safety and possible health issues?

The Township has established a Task Force comprised of residents with expertise in legal, health, and environmental issues that meets regularly to monitor the impact of potential issues of the compressor station and pipeline. The Board of Education has established a similar committee to monitor the impacts to the elementary school. The Township Committee has also provided residents with educational sessions and a written fact sheet about the projects. We will continue to do this for our residents.

Over the past few years, in a separate effort to protect our residents, the Township Committee, together with the Task Force, has undertaken baseline air quality, water quality, and noise testing. Once the compressor becomes operational this data can be used to determine if operations contribute to the deterioration of air quality, well water quality, or increased noise levels within and around Chesterfield. NJNG has also agreed to maintain road access for school buses and emergency vehicles at all times.

5. Are there any health concerns with these projects?

At this point the Township cannot definitively say whether there are health issues related to this infrastructure. If you have specific questions regarding health issues, please discuss this with your physician.

6. Could the pipeline construction affect the sale value of homes in the area?

The Township Committee has contacted real estate agents in an effort to answer this question. At this time, we have not been able to answer the question definitively. To date, houses along the route have been sold and have received fair market value. If you have specific concerns regarding your property, we recommend you speak with a professional realtor.

7. Is there anything that can still be done to stop the pipeline and compressor station?

There are several environmental groups involved in lawsuits and appeals and other actions to try to stop the SRL and other proposed pipelines. The Sierra Club and Pinelands Preservation Alliance are continuing in the lawsuit that Chesterfield settled. This suit involves a potential conflict of interest with two of the Pinelands Commissioners who voted to approve the Project. It is possible that a court could void the first vote and force the Commission to vote again. People Over Pipelines is involved in litigation to request that the BPU reconsider their approval of the pipeline. Other environmental groups have ongoing initiatives to contact the Governor and other legislators to put a stop or a moratorium on pipelines. Residents can find out more about these efforts on social media.

8. What are the next steps the Township is undertaking?

The Task Force will have public information sessions scheduled over the next several months. The Township staff will also prepare subsequent informational documents with updates on a periodic basis. It may not be appropriate for the Township to answer specific questions and you may be directed to speak with a professional that would be better suited to addressing specific concerns. Residents are always welcome to attend the Township meetings if they have comments and concerns. The Township will continue to work closely with the County engineers to determine the timeline and logistics of the Project.