



## What is the Colonial Pipeline that runs through the Township?

A 30-inch pipeline runs from Houston, Texas to Linden, New Jersey carrying 15,000 to 24,000 gallons of liquid petroleum products per hour. Called the Colonial Pipeline, it carries various types of refined petroleum products such as gasoline, aviation kerosene, diesel fuel, and home heating oil. No natural gas or crude oil is sent through the Colonial Pipeline.

The Colonial Pipeline Company is a shipping company that moves products for customers. The company does not own what is going through the line. Colonial Pipeline falls under the supervision and is regulated by the U. S. Department of Transportation, just like any other shipping company.

At two-cents a gallon, the 5,519 miles of pipeline is the most cost effective means for companies to transport the liquid petroleum products from the refineries in the South to the distribution center/storage tanks throughout the eastern United States.

A 4.6-mile section of the Colonial Pipeline runs through Franklin Township. Yellow, black and red marker signs are located along its route (see photo). The pipe is buried six to nine-feet underground, down the center of a 50-foot-wide right-of-way. No structures or trees are allowed within this right-of-way.

Colonial Pipeline Company adheres to a rigid inspection and maintenance schedule. Air inspections along the pipeline are completed on a weekly basis, which is one reason for a clear easement with no vegetation. Instruments or tools, called

pigs, are run through the pipeline. The tool is called a pig because it squeals a little bit as it goes through the line. Every three months a pig with a sponge is sent through that cleans the pipeline. Another type of pig is a smart pig. It can measure the density of the pipe along its route from the inside. If the "smart pig" detects a problem, then a crew is sent out



*Colonial pipeline marks the pipeline with yellow, red, and black warning signs.*

to inspect the pipe and repair or replace sections as needed.

The company also monitors the pressure along the entire pipeline, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, from its Control Center in Atlanta, Georgia. It can detect almost instantly if there is a drop (because there is a rupture) or an increase (because of a blockage) in pressure. There are pumping stations approximately every 50 miles where the flow can be stopped, plus additional valves near wetlands, river crossings, and other points along the pipeline.

The greatest environmental hazard from the pipeline is a rupture that allows the liquid petroleum products to spill, contaminating the ground and water supply.

The liquid running through the pipeline is not flammable. It is the fumes that evaporate off the liquid petroleum products when exposed to air that can explode if exposed to a flame. Since 1961, Colonial Pipeline Company has never had an explosion, although there have been releases of liquid petroleum from the pipeline.

If there is a rupture in the pipeline, it can take up to one hour for Colonial Pipeline response crews to arrive at the scene.

The number one cause of a rupture is unauthorized digging from third parties. To prevent rupturing the pipeline and a major oil spill in our community, call 811 before beginning any excavation project near the marked pipeline.

Signs of a leak include:

- Petroleum product patches on the ground or sheen on the water.
- Spots of dead vegetation.
- Unusual noises coming from the pipeline or marker, anything from a hiss to a roar.
- An unusual odor; each petroleum product has its own characteristic scent.

If a leak is suspected, call 911, as local fire companies are trained to deal with pipeline leaks.

Colonial Pipeline offers a \$500 reward to anyone that reports unauthorized digging within the easements. Colonial Pipeline's 24-hour Control Center can be reached at 1-800-926-2728.

More information on Colonial Pipeline can be found at [www.colpipe.com](http://www.colpipe.com).