



# Energy East Pipeline

## Energy East: an old pipeline & an export ploy

TransCanada's "Energy East Pipeline" would carry the astronomical volume of up to 1.1 million barrels per day through our communities; primarily for foreign export. Rather than invest in a new pipeline built to modern standards, for 70% of the route TransCanada chooses to convert the existing Natural Gas mainline that has serviced communities for over a generation. This old pipeline was built to transport a very different product and in the 55 year history of this gas mainline there have already been several significant incidents. We can expect these numbers to increase as an antique pipeline begins use for something other than what it was intended. Oil is much more dangerous than Natural Gas when it leaks into the environment and tar sands oil (diluted bitumen) especially is nearly impossible to clean up because unlike regular crude, it sinks in water (something TransCanada recently admitted -- Vancouver Observer Aug 19th).

## This pipeline cuts through our communities to then be EXPORTED TO FOREIGN MARKETS

This project has nothing to do with decreasing our dependence on foreign oil. With this pipeline, Canada is in the absurd position of promising foreign oil security, while we would continue to import for domestic use.

TransCanada announced this project simultaneously with a partnership to build a large deepwater port in the Bay of Fundy to export via the world's largest oil tankers. This of course is the complete opposite of how they attempt to position the Energy East Pipeline for public acceptance, no more than a token amount will be used domestically. Tar sands company Cenovus' CEO Brian Ferguson was frank about their desire to access an Eastern port, saying it was the "export option that was most enticing about TransCanada's proposal."

*"The key is to get to a deep water port and be able to put production onto tankers and access international markets. The plan is to be able to access tidewater and tankers and move volumes either down to the U.S. Gulf Coast or to Asia or to Europe from Saint John."*

-- Cenovus Oil CEO Brian Ferguson

Furthermore, NAFTA guarantees US first access to this oil. As an example, Newfoundland's offshore oil fields produce enough to meet all the oil demand in the four Atlantic provinces. But absurdly, Newfoundlanders don't get the oil they produce, the majority of it is exported and the U.S. gets first access via NAFTA.

## Converting a pipeline increases SAFETY RISKS

*"Pipelines operating outside of their design parameters, such as those carrying commodities for which they were not initially designed, or high flow pipelines, are at the greatest risk of integrity issues in the future due to the nature of their operation."*

-study for the U.S. Department of Energy

## Are we safe with an OLD PIPELINE built over a generation ago?

TransCanada first publicly announced this project three days after the major tar sands oil leak in Arkansas. The rhetoric coming out of the industry in response to that disaster positioned that this was an old pipeline and old pipelines leak. Even a spokesperson for TransCanada, Shawn Howard, pointed out that pipeline technology has changed dramatically since the affected Arkansas line was built. It is hard then to have any faith that an aging natural gas mainline is suitable for converting to a tar sands bitumen pipeline.

## Can we trust TransCanada to prioritize environmental safety?

TransCanada's first oil pipeline, the Keystone I, was pitched as a state-of-the-art pipeline that would "meet or exceed world-class safety and environmental standards." The company forecast it would leak no more than 1.4 times a decade but in its first year of operation (2010), the pipeline leaked 12 times. Federal pipeline regulators intervened & shut it down as an imminent threat to life, safety and the environment.

TransCanada has a poor record. Pipeline operators have no reason to want accidents on their pipelines; however, when forced to choose between expensive safety measures and saving money, we've seen decision makers face strong pressure to make the wrong choice.

Investigations by pipeline regulators and a succession of TransCanada whistleblowers paint a picture of a company that cuts corners compromising the safety of its pipelines, ignores its own quality control inspectors, and regards the minimum legal safety regulations as optional guidelines. Whistleblowers report the use of cheap steel prone to cracking, bad welds, sloppy concrete jobs, fudged pressure testing and a corporate culture that does nothing to correct these shortcuts.

A pipeline of this significant size raises serious questions: the environmental impact of the increased tar sands development this would allow, the risks associated with transporting it and the greater impact of tar sands spills. However TransCanada's performance over the last few years introduces a much simpler question -- should we trust this company to build or operate a pipeline anywhere?

***"Incidents do happen along pipelines, that's a fact. ...Those incidents that have occurred, they shake public confidence quite substantially, as they should, I mean those incidents are quite horrific and they shouldn't occur. ...(New pipelines) are so far advanced from what we were using 20, much less 30, 40, 50 years ago."***

**-TransCanada President & CEO Russ Girling**

Source: [energyeastpipeline.com](http://energyeastpipeline.com)



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## Bitumen is the wrong product to be in a pipeline

Before the tar sands industry became mostly foreign owned, upgrading facilities were planned in Alberta. This would have created a safer product for pipelines, but upgrading is expensive, so all new facilities were scrapped in favour of piping the cheaper but dangerous alternative: diluted bitumen. Protecting profits puts our communities at risk. To thin it for pumping, the heavier-than-water tar sands bitumen is diluted with natural gas & lighter oil products (imported significantly from US); also, poisonous solvents (ie: carcinogens benzene & toluene).

The corrosive bitumen weakens pipelines. Compared to conventional oil, it is both more likely to spill and harder to clean up when there is a spill. It has been compared to sand blasting the inside of the pipe.

Initially Energy East would carry lighter tar sands products. That's because most East Coast refineries can't handle the heavier stuff. But a central part of the project is a deep water port, designed for supertankers, to carry diluted bitumen to refineries that can handle it. The tar sands companies can't fill 1.1 million barrels a day of the light stuff for very long, so as soon as the new port is complete we'll see the product change to diluted bitumen.

## Tar sands spills are much more dangerous than other pipeline accidents

Once spilled in a waterbody, the diluents (added to make bitumen flow) gas off, leaving the heavy bitumen to sink.

The 2010 tar sands spill into the Kalamazoo River highlighted an industry that was unprepared to address the unique challenges associated with tar sands diluted bitumen spills. Three years after a million gallons of tar sands crude spilled into the Kalamazoo River watershed, a billion dollars has been spent on cleanup yet 40 miles of that river are still contaminated. Conventional cleanup methods outright failed (or made the spill worse) and crews were forced to improvise (dredging the river bottom with excavators). Since then, neither industry nor regulators have developed effective methods to contain tar sands spills in waterbodies.

## But isn't this Natural Gas mainline currently under used and available for conversion?

The scenario where this Natural Gas mainline is labeled as "under used" has been artificially created to gain public acceptance for this project. High tariffs have been imposed on gas suppliers who used this mainline, encouraging them to find markets elsewhere and making us reliant on natural gas sources in the East where the reserves are increasingly obtained via fracking.

Natural Gas suppliers in Ontario & Québec are coming forward saying this pipeline conversion will affect their supply to consumers and ultimately raise the price.

## There is no reason to trust that pipelines are safe where there has been spill after spill.

Few tar sands pipeline spills are detected by these much-touted sensors. In fact, leak detection systems miss 19 of 20 spills. Inside a tar sands pipeline, liquids develop and mimic a leak on detection systems. Pipeline monitors have trouble telling the difference between these and true leaks. Consequently, in the spills we have seen bitumen continues to flow for hours because the alarm is ignored.

## Who is really benefiting from this?

The answer is not the people, not our economy, not our own domestic oil supply and not the our environment -- it only helps the oil industry. It will make oil companies richer and more powerful.

Economic growth is hurt by oil price volatility. Nations that export fossil fuel too often become over-reliant on that sector. That destabilizes the economy, leads to other industries being neglected or ignored, and undermines democracy by holding government hostage (ie: the recent omnibus bills were written by oil & pipeline industry lobbyists).

*"The Canadian public is being subjected to a misleading narrative and a misrepresentation of the facts by financial institutions, who like the government of Canada, are behaving as marketing executives for Big Oil."* -economist Robyn Allan

## Will this create many Jobs?

Nope. TransCanada inflates their job numbers. For their Keystone XL project, the US State Department report countered their lofty job claims, estimating that the pipeline will only create roughly 35 permanent jobs. Some also claim that manufacturing jobs would be created, but TransCanada currently manufactures half of their steel in India.

The use of an existing pipeline for 70 per cent of the Energy East project means that the new job potential is even lower, since these few jobs already exist.

A pipeline like this would imperil jobs. When it spills bitumen there will be impacts on farming, fisheries, tourism and other sectors reliant on clean water sources. This is not progress. Plus, there is tremendous potential for jobs in improving energy efficiency and transitioning to renewable energy sources.

Please see these additional resources:

[www.canadians.org/energyeast](http://www.canadians.org/energyeast)

[www.notranscanadapipeline.com](http://www.notranscanadapipeline.com)

[www.tarsandssolutions.org](http://www.tarsandssolutions.org)

[www.tarsandsrealitycheck.org](http://www.tarsandsrealitycheck.org)

[www.TarFree613.ca](http://www.TarFree613.ca)

[www.forestethics.org/tar-sands](http://www.forestethics.org/tar-sands)