

Licensed pipeline awareness

A survey of council planning departments



Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) surveyed all council planning departments in October & November 2018 to better understand the awareness of licensed pipelines among statutory and strategic planners.

The results will help ESV develop a program to increase the planners' awareness of this critical infrastructure.

Summary of the survey results

- 43 councils participated in the survey.
- From 1-6 staff members from each council participated in the survey.
- Respondents were an even split of strategic and statutory planners.
- Over 58% of respondents do not know what a licensed pipeline is.
- Over 35% of respondents do not know whether there are licensed pipelines in their municipality.
- More than half of all respondents are not aware of the Pipelines Act or other regulations relating to pipelines.
- Over 70% of respondents do not know how to find the location of licensed pipelines, responding with:

Dial before you dig? Not sure. Don't know. I have unsuccessfully tried an online search. Google. Am guessing statutory planners would have records of this? DELWP website.

- Over 80% of respondents are unaware of the Australian Mapping Database.
- Over 80% of respondents said they would find it beneficial for ESV to present to planning staff on matters relating to planning around licensed pipelines.
- Some of the comments from survey participants included:

I became aware of a pipeline by accident. I should have been alerted to it by the Planning Scheme.

Someone should introduce an overlay with a referral to the relevant agency/licensee.

There are many competing priorities with respect to pipelines, particularly those that run through activity centres. Although there is strong policy for higher density development within these areas, there is little policy or guidance in regard to pipelines.

All the operators have differing levels of communication and activity with regards to communicating with Councils regarding their pipelines.

Just pleased you are investigating planner awareness on all this. In the process of answering the survey I was a bit stunned to think I, as a Council planner, might not instantly know who was responsible for a specific pipeline.

It would be useful to have additional information in the form of web links or advice.

It would be good to know where these pipes are.

[Licensee] objects to applications but each time there is a compromise over permit conditions - this is affecting orderly development in parts of [the city] centre - to the frustration of developers and Council.

For more information about licensed pipelines visit www.esv.vic.gov.au.