



APERI Presents

The Emergency Response Partnership

Anathea Dortch & Don Williamson

December 2, 2025



Alabama Pipeline Emergency Response Initiative

The mission of the Alabama Pipeline Emergency Response Initiative (APERI) is to advance the ability of Alabama First Responders to recognize, manage, and mitigate a pipeline incident through improved training, communication, and cooperation with Pipeline Operators.

- ✓ Enhance responders understanding of pipeline risks and hazards
- ✓ Strengthen relationships through engagement in interest of public safety
- ✓ More effective way for operators to meet the intent of public awareness and liaison requirements



Training Update

Training Began July 2021

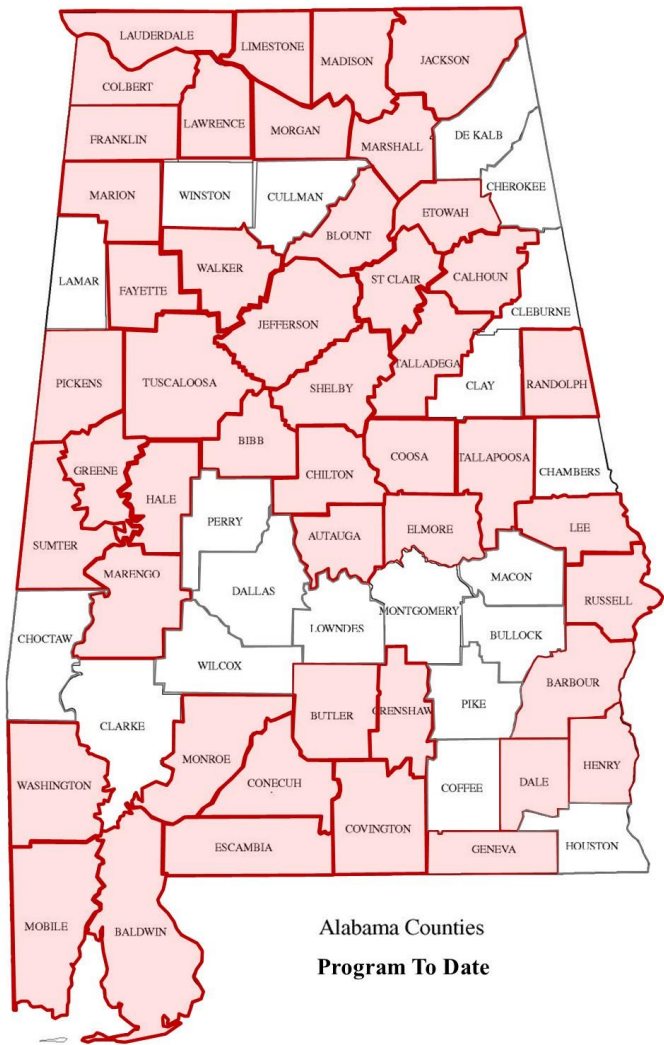
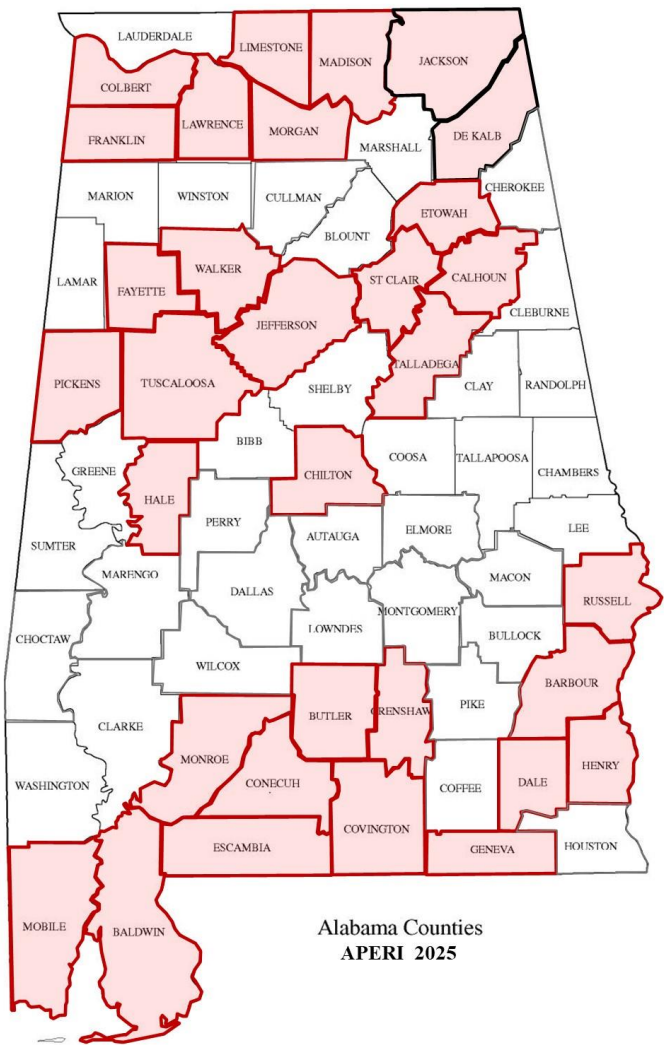
2025 YTD - 78 classes

1360 first responders from 279 different agencies including

- Firefighters
- Law Enforcement Officers
- State Fire Marshalls Office
- Hazmat Units
- Special Operation/Technical Rescue Units
- Medical Transport



Training





Outreach

- Coordinating training classes
- Conducting classes
- Email Blast with link to Portal



Portal

APERI

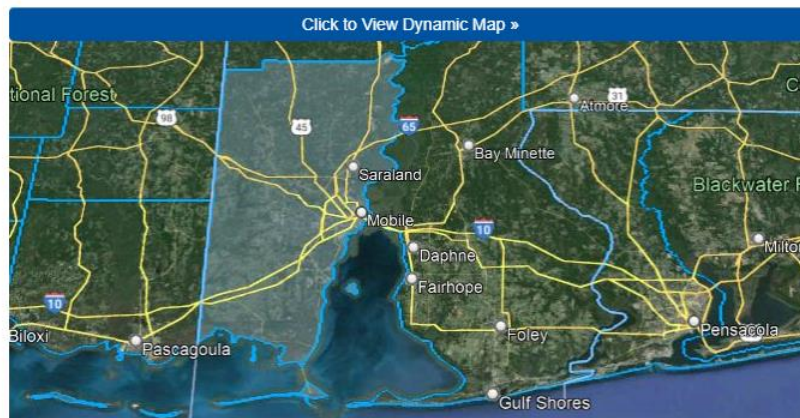
[Who we are?](#)[In case of emergency](#)[Signs of a leak](#)[Survey](#)[Contact](#)

Zachary,

While pipelines are the safest mode of transporting these types of products, occasionally problems do occur. When they do, we recommend **SARALAND FIRE RESCUE DEPT** follow the below steps.



Library

[APERI Trifold](#)[Pipeline Emergencies for Dispatchers](#)[APERI Member Operator Emergency Numbers](#)[Add/Update Contact »](#)

Local Contact



Don Williamson
Program Manager
(205) 427-2048

dwilliamson@alabamafirecollege.org

In case of emergency

Pipeline Incident Response Tactics

The list below summarizes emergency response tactics to implement when you respond to a pipeline incident.

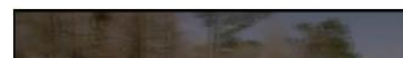
1. Assess the situation

- Approach with caution from upwind location.
- Isolate and secure the area.
- Employ ICS.
- Identify hazards.
- Identify and contact the pipeline operator using the emergency number listed on the pipeline marker.

2. Protect people, property & the environment

- Establish isolation zones and set up barriers.

Video





Outreach

- Coordinating training classes
- Conducting classes
- Email Blast with link to Portal
- Articles in the Alabama Fire College newsletter



Newsletter

DO YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN RESPONDING TO GAS LEAKS?

a message from the
**ALABAMA PIPELINE EMERGENCY
RESPONSE INITIATIVE**



Every day across Alabama, fire departments enter environments that, at any moment and without warning, could cause severe injury, or even a line-of-duty death (LODD). Too often, this happens without full awareness of the risks and, in some cases, without proper PPE.

The Alabama Pipeline Emergency Response Initiative (APERI) wants fire departments to understand a critical safety message from all Alabama gas operators:

don't make entry.

don't make entry.

Do not make entry into a structure with a gas leak (or a suspected gas leak) for the purpose of:

- Finding the source of the leak
- Ventilating the structure
- Attempting to repair the leak

don't make entry.

Leaking gas inside an enclosed structure can ignite suddenly, creating a 2,900-degree flash fire and explosion without warning.

Almost every gas leak incident reaches the explosive range of: 5–15% for methane, 2–10% for propane, either while the leak accumulates or as the structure begins to ventilate.

This is the **most dangerous stage** of a natural gas or propane emergency.

gas company's role:

Finding and repairing leaks, as well as ventilating the structure, is the responsibility of the gas company, not the fire department.

Even if a fire department has gas detection equipment, firefighters should not use it inside a structure for safety reasons. Gas company employees don't make entry into a structure with gas present. They wait for it to self-ventilate.

fire department's role:

INCIDENT MITIGATION & SCENE SAFETY

1. Establish a perimeter as recommended in the Emergency Response Guide (ERG).
2. Ensure the structure is evacuated.
3. With full PPE, shutting off the gas at the meter using the **outside** quarter-turn valve. Do not enter the structure.
4. Confirm the gas operator has been contacted, has all necessary information, and is enroute.
5. Remain on scene to assist and provide vital information to the gas company.

Following these guidelines ensures better risk assessment, protects your crews, and increases overall scene safety for both firefighters and the public.

For more information about APERI or to request additional pipeline training, contact us at: aperi.training@alabamafirecollege.org
205-427-2028



Outreach

- Coordinating training classes
- Conducting classes
- Email Blast with link to Portal
- Articles in the Alabama Fire College newsletter
- Online courses for New Recruit Firefighters, Dispatchers, and Law Enforcement.



Working Together

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Not just a pipeline operator's problem
Not just an emergency responder's problem
We ALL assume responsibility



Alabama Pipeline Safety

APACT

Damage Prevention

Pipeline Awareness

APERI

Emergency Response

Training

Pipeline Safety

Working Together



Working with the PSC

APERI Board Members are working with the PSC to ensure Pipeline Operators needs are met through the APERI program.



Fire Department Goals

- Safety of its firefighters and safety of the public through incident mitigation
- Work effectively with the subject matter experts, the pipeline operators, to solve the issues caused by a pipeline emergency



Incident Command (ICS)

- The Incident Commander (IC) will initially be the first arriving unit's highest-ranking officer
- Command may be transferred to an arriving officer
- Unified Command is created when the subject matter experts are present to assist the Commander.
- It is possible that command may be transferred at some point during the emergency to the pipeline operator and the IC will assist them for the remainder of the incident.



How to identify Incident Command

- Command vehicle (SUV, Battalion Chief, special command vehicles)
- White (chief) or red (captain) colored helmets
- Command vest “Commander” or “Incident Commander”
- By asking who and where is command



The Command Post (CP)

- Normally near the scene but can be established in the safe/cold zone on larger incidents.
- Contains fire department ranking officer, law enforcement, pipeline operators. May also include, depending on the incident, EMA and other government officials.



When You Arrive on Scene

- Identify and report to the Command Post for safety briefing and situation status
- Do Not go directly to the pipeline emergency location/problem



During the Emergency

Develop and communicate the plan for handling the pipeline emergency to the IC.

- With a multi-person response, pipeline personnel should be directed from the command post
- With a one-man response, let the IC know what you are going to do at the location.
- Operate with everyone on the same page or at least a basic understanding of your plan.

This is for your safety so the FD rapid response team can prepare to assist you if you go down during the incident. (unexpected ignition, suffocation, injury)

REMEMBER: Firefighters are not pipeline experts or techs, they are scene mitigators.



What you should expect from the Commander/Fire Department

- Safe scene
- Systematic way to solve the problem (Incident Command)
- A clear plan of action, a review of what has been put in place before your arrival.
- Professionalism and respect



What the fire department expects from you

- Notification on arrival
- Work within the command system
- Your guidance/knowledge on how to handle the emergency as the subject matter expert.
- What resources you need and have in route/coming.
- Professionalism and respect.



Following the pipeline emergency

- Let command know the threat/harm/emergency is completed or been solved so they can give an all clear/stand down order.
- Never leave the scene without letting Command know.
- Most likely the FD will go back into service and turn the scene over to you.
- Depending on the emergency, follow up with a review/post incident analysis and offer training to the FD to prepare for the next event.



Membership



The Value of Membership

Emergency Plans - 192.615

- Maintain liaison with appropriate fire, police, and other public officials

Public Awareness - 192.616

- Pipeline safety and emergency education to emergency officials and public officials

Documentation

- Training Information
- Class Sign-In Sheets
- Contact Information
- Survey Data
- Agency Capabilities



Investment

Distribution Operators

	NUMBER OF SERVICE LINES	COST PER TIER
Tier 1	0 - 499	\$ 200.00
Tier 2	500 - 1499	\$ 300.00
Tier 3	1500 - 2499	\$ 450.00
Tier 4	2500 - 4999	\$ 600.00
Tier 5	5000 - 9999	\$ 750.00
Tier 6	10000 - 19999	\$ 900.00
Tier 7	20000 - 39999	\$ 1,100.00
Tier 8	40000 - 79999	\$ 1,500.00
Tier 9	80000 - 159999	\$ 1,850.00
Tier 10	160000 +	\$ 2,100.00

Transmission & Liquid Operators

APACT Members: \$500 per County

Non-APACT Members: \$700 per County

***APACT Members receive a \$100 discount**



Scholarship Opportunity for APACT Members

TERMS



Must be a current APACT Member



Available to New AND Renewing APERI members



\$800 max per member



Current pipeline Operator members

- Alexander City Gas Dept
- Athens Utilities Gas Department
- Bridgeport Utilities
- City of Brewton
- City of Calera Natural Gas
- City of Moulton
- Clarke Mobile County Gas (CMC Gas)
- Cullman-Jefferson Counties Gas District
- Decatur Utilities
- DeKalb Cherokee Gas
- Fairhope Public Utilities
- Fayette Gas Board
- Florence Gas Department
- Gas Board of the City of Fultondale
- Hartselle Utilities
- Huntsville
- North Alabama Gas District
- Northwest Alabama Gas District
- Pickens County Natural Gas
- Riviera Utilities
- Russellville Gas Board
- Scottsboro WSG [Water Sewer Gas]
- Sheffield Utilities
- South Alabama Gas
- Southeast Gas
- Spire Alabama Inc
- Sylacauga Utilities Board
- The Gas Board of the City of Boaz Alabama
- The Utilities Board of the City of Oneonta
- Town Of West Jefferson
- Trussville Gas & Water
- Vina Natural Gas
- West Escambia Utilities, Inc
- Wheeler Basin Natural Gas Company
- Black Belt Energy
- Colonial Pipeline Company
- Enterprise Products
- Hunt Crude Oil Supply Company
- Hunt Refining Company
- Linde Pipeline
- Southern Company Pipelines
- Williams Gas Pipeline



Current APERI Board Members



Don Williamson
Board Chair
Emergency Responder



Anatheia Dortch
Board Co-Chair
Transmission Operator



Kevin Mazingo
Board Secretary
Transmission Operator



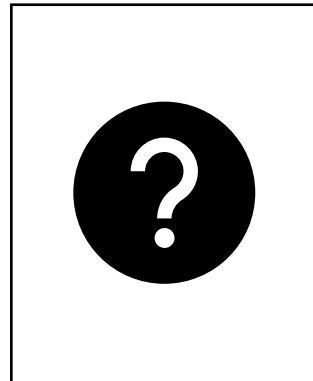
Eric O'Neal
Board Member
Emergency Responder



Ricky King
Board Member
Distribution Operator



Caroll Pellegrin
Board Member
Liquid Operator



This could be YOU!
Board Member
Distribution Operator

Past Board Members:

- Mason Matthews – formerly of Athens Utilities
- Mike Strength – Trussville Gas
- Jeff Bice – formerly of City of Calera Natural Gas
- Jim Green, Jr. – Scottsboro WSG

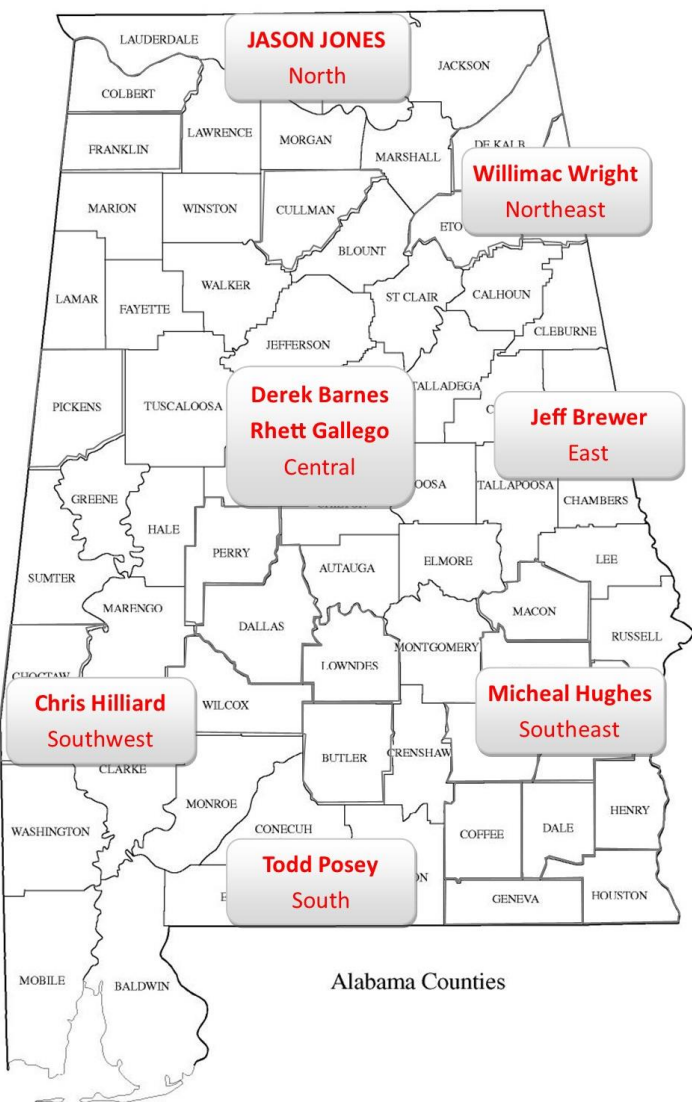


Board Member Position

APERI	Distribution Operator
Board	
Member	4-year Term
Position	
OPEN	Starting Jan 1, 2026



Instructors



Alabama Counties



Operator Participation!!!

Operator Participation in APERI Classes is crucial for the success of the program

Be Prepared

- Before Class
 - Contact the instructor to let them know you will be there
 - Send presentation materials if you have them
 - Bring props if you have them
- During Class
 - Introduce yourself
 - Give a brief overview of your system, describe how your company responds to pipeline emergencies and give out contact information.
 - Answer questions and engage in discussions
 - Participate in discussions and scenerio



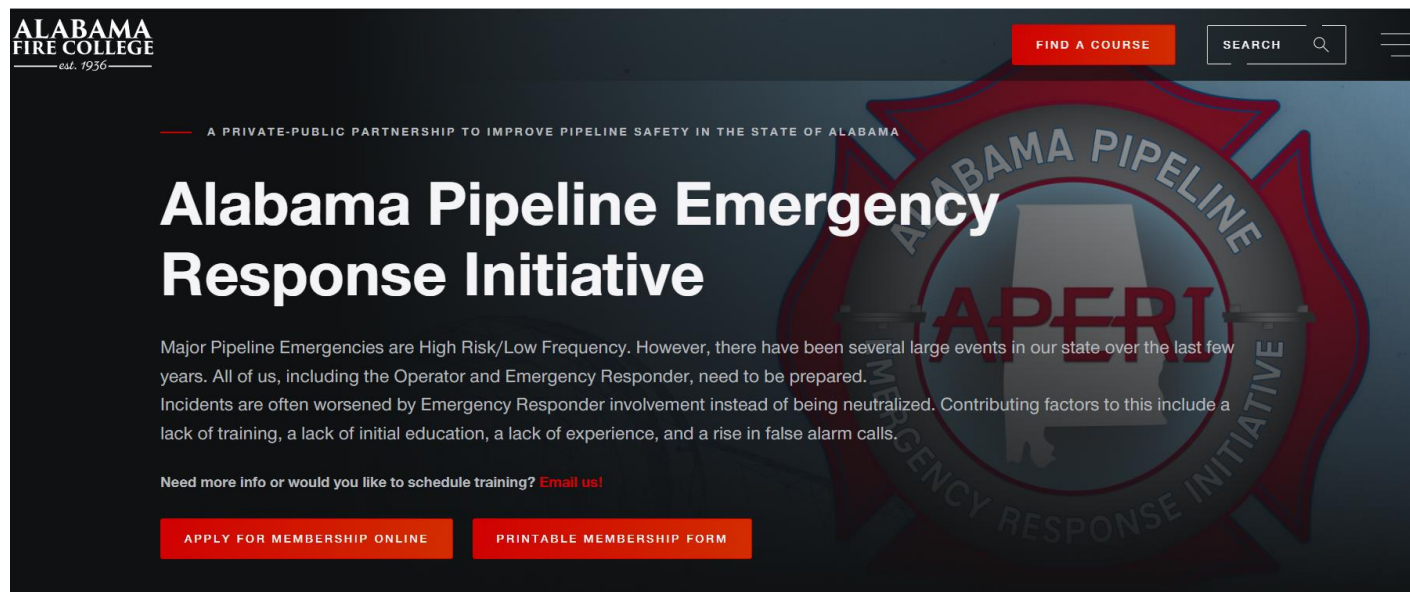
Member Testimonial

Mark Burgess
South Alabama Gas



Becoming a Member

<https://www.alabamafirecollege.org/courses-training/aperi/>





Contact

Don Williamson, Chair

dwilliamson@alabamafirecollege.org

205.427.2048

Anathea Dortch, Co-Chair

aldortch@southernco.com

678.899.9292

<https://www.alabamafirecollege.org/courses-training/aperi/>