



OCC Meets with Spectra Energy Regarding Natural Gas Pipeline Expansion

(February 26, 2013) OCC had an informative meeting today with representatives of Spectra Energy, operators of the Algonquin Gas Transmission pipeline system, about their proposed Algonquin Incremental Market (AIM) Project, which would expand the capacity of the pipeline. The pipeline traverses Connecticut from the area of Danbury through Oxford, Cromwell, and part of Glastonbury, before splitting into branches that cross the Northeastern and Southeastern portions of the state. Before reaching Connecticut, the pipeline connects New York and New Jersey to natural gas supply to our south and west. East of Connecticut, the pipeline extends through a corner of Rhode Island and then into the Boston suburbs and southeastern Massachusetts. The Algonquin pipeline is one of three natural gas pipelines that serve Connecticut, with the others being the Tennessee and Iroquois pipelines.

The AIM Project proposal would follow the path of the existing pipeline, so there will not be disruptions in new areas of the State, but replacing some existing pipes with larger pipes would require expansions of the width of some existing rights-of-way in a few areas along the path. In addition to expanding the size of the pipeline in certain areas, the AIM project would also provide some needed upgrades to compressor stations in the State.

Overall, the AIM Project, which is slated to be completed in November, 2016, would increase the capacity of the regional Algonquin pipeline by 20-25%, a significant increase. This would assist with the Governor's goal, as expressed in the recently-completed Comprehensive Energy Strategy, to give more Connecticut citizens and business the opportunity to use natural gas for space heating, which can have both economic and environmental benefits.

The State of Connecticut Office of Legislative Research, which provides detailed information to the General Assembly prepared a short, high-quality report in September 2012 about gas expansion in the State. So, for further information, you may want to first review that report at <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2012/rpt/2012-R-0407.htm>. In addition, for a fuller discussion of this and other issues, the Comprehensive Energy Strategy is available here: <http://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/DEEPEnergy.nsf/c6c6d525f7cdd1168525797d0047c5bf/39ef439bdefdebde85257b17004c3230?OpenDocument>. Of course, feel free to call OCC for further information as well, at (860)827-2900.