

2014 TEEA Winner Pollution Prevention Category: Pioneer Natural Resources, Amarillo

Narrator

In addition to nearly 700 gas wells, Pioneer Natural Resources operates 800 miles of pipeline in the Texas Panhandle.

Biff Hatfield, Operations Superintendent

Our process gas comes up through this pipe and down the pipeline.

Narrator

Every day, these spherical balls called “pigs” keep those lines clean.

Biff Hatfield

The gas gets behind the pig and pushes the pig down the pipeline to the next pig-receiver barrel.

Narrator

As the pig moves, it catches condensate, sediment, and rust. But every time a pressurized gas line is opened, there’s also a small loss of product. In 2006, Pioneer devised a process to drop line pressure before it’s opened.

Biff Hatfield

So instead of venting 125 pounds of gas to atmosphere, we vent it back into our gathering system and when we open a valve, we only vent a pound.

Narrator

Pioneer also built larger launching and receiving barrels which enables workers to insert 14 pigs at once. This means hatches only need to be opened a couple of times a week instead of a couple of times a day. That cut emissions by 90%.

Bonnie Black, Vice President Environmental

It was the right thing to do. So this is an example where there were operational efficiencies that had great environmental benefits.

Bailey Sullivan, Operations Engineer

We collaborated with the engineers in our office and the field guys and how they operate and we worked back and forth to come up with the solution.

Narrator

The company invested more than 4 million dollars in the new process and already has taken what it learned here to its other operations.

Cole Camp, Senior Environmental Specialist

I'm fourth generation oil and gas and seeing this kind of commitment from a company I work for, I'd be proud for my daughters to make the choice to be the fifth generation.