



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

In fall 2015, MAPC received a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration to study natural gas leaks in our region. MAPC is collaborating with [HEET](#) on the project. A press release on the grant is available [here](#).

The project endeavors to help us better understand ways to accelerate leak repair and pipe replacement. We are currently recruiting for assistance with 2 components of the project:

- 1) Developing best practices for municipal roadwork planning and utility coordination
- 2) Independently surveying natural gas leaks in municipalities

1. Municipal Best Practices - Municipalities are the gatekeepers to the roads under which natural gas pipelines run. As a result, we feel that there exists a substantial opportunity to accelerate leak repair and pipe replacement by having better coordination between municipalities and utilities. In Part 1, we will interview as many municipalities as possible in order to document the range current planning and coordination activities, issues, roadblocks, and innovative solutions. From there, we will try to distill a series of best practices and then publish a report that we'll share with the region. We expect to have different types of recommendations to reflect that the varying resource availability in different municipalities.

The interview requires only one hour with either the DPW Director or the Town Engineer. We may also ask for feedback on the best practices as they are developed.

2. Gas Leak Surveys – In the winter of 2016, we will determine the best candidate towns for independent gas leak surveys. We plan to survey about 10-15 miles of road in each of 15-25 municipalities. Our intent is to analyze the data on leak quantity and Grade that we capture, alongside the data that gas distribution utilities have reported, in order to assess impacts on the potential risk and prevalence of leaks. Our goal is to improve our understanding of the leaks and apply that knowledge to improve the speed of repair. We also plan to incorporate a study of tree damage near the leaks. The gas distribution utilities publish their leak detection and Grading procedures, and we plan to follow that same methodology.

We are actively developing our survey selection criteria. Participation in Part 1 is not a guarantee of participation in Part 2, but it is highly likely. If participating in Part 2, MAPC will share the raw data collected your municipality with you. Surveys will take place in spring, with the exact timing depending on weather, snow cover, etc.

If interested, contact Patrick Roche, Energy Coordinator for MAPC, at proche@mapc.org.