For security reasons, attendees must register in advance. To register, obtain directions to the Vehicle Research and Test Center, or request additional information, contact Jan Cooper at telephone (937) 666–4511 extension 208. If Ms. Cooper is not available, you may register by contacting Fred Seebreg at telephone (937) 666–4511 or Susan Weiser at telephone (937) 666–4511 extension 209.

The handouts and other information presented at the workshop will be available for public inspection in the DOT Docket in Washington, DC, within two weeks after the meeting. Copies of the materials will be available at ten cents a page upon request to DOT Docket, Room PL–401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. The DOT Docket is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The material may also be accessed electronically at http://dms.dot.gov, at Docket No. NHTSA–2001–9663.

The handouts and other information presented at the workshop will also be available on NHTSA’s Web site at URL http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-01/presentations/presentations.html.

Should it be necessary to cancel the meeting due to inclement weather or any other emergencies, a decision to cancel will be made as soon as possible and posted immediately on NHTSA’s Web site at URL http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/nhtsa.announce/meetings/. If you do not have access to the Web site, you may call for information at the contacts listed below and leave your telephone or telefax number. You will be contacted only if the meeting is postponed or canceled.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jan Cooper at telephone (937) 666–4511 extension 208. If Ms. Cooper is not available, you may contact Fred Seebreg at telephone (937) 666–4511 or Susan Weiser at telephone (937) 666–4511 extension 209.

Issued on: November 20, 2002.

**Joseph N. Kiananthra,**
Associate Administrator for Applied Research.

[FR Doc. 02–30054 Filed 11–25–02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910–59–P**
past standards used to rate the long-term strength of plastic pipe may have
overrated the strength and resistance to brittle-like cracking of much of the
plastic pipe manufactured and used for gas service from the 1960s through the
early 1980s.

In 1998, NTSB made several
recommendations to trade organizations and to RSPA on the need for a better
understanding of the susceptibility of plastic pipe to brittle-like cracking. This
advisory bulletin responds to one of the NTSB recommendations. It is that RSPA
"[d]etermine the extent of the
susceptibility to premature brittle-like cracking of older plastic piping (beyond
that marketed by Century Utilities Products Inc.) that remains in use for
gas service nationwide. Inform gas
system operators of the findings and
require them to closely monitor the
performance of the older plastic piping and to identify and replace, in a timely
manner, any of the piping that indicates poor performance based on such
evaluation factors as installation, operating and environmental
conditions; piping failure
characteristics; and leak history."

In order to obtain the most complete
information on the extent of the
susceptibility to premature brittle-like
cracking of older plastic pipe, a meeting
was convened in May 1999 with all the
stakeholders to determine how
information on older plastic pipe could
be assembled. The meeting included
representatives of the American Gas
Association (AGA), the American Public
Gas Association (APGA), the Gas
Research Institute (GRI) (now the Gas
Technology Institute), the Midwest
Energy Association (MEA), and the
Plastic Pipe Institute (PPI).

As a result of the May 1999 meeting,
the Joint Government-Industry Plastic
Pipe Study Committee was formed to
address the recommendations of the
NTSB Special Investigation Report. The
committee held three separate meetings
to prepare a draft response to the NTSB
recommendations and to draft industry
notification of brittle-like cracking
problems, the subject of this advisory
bulletin. The committee membership
consisted of a representative from OPS,
a gas distribution operator from AGA,
and the Transportation Safety Institute.
Meetings were facilitated by General
Physics Corporation, Columbia, MD.
One of the committee findings was that
there is a lack of data available from the
industry to completely identify older
plastic pipe that is still in service and
can be susceptible to brittle-like
cracking.

This finding led to the formation of the
Plastic Pipe Database Committee
(ppdc) to develop a process for
gathering information on future plastic pipe
failures with involvement from the
states, which have assumed the
authority from OPS over gas distribution
systems, where most of the plastic pipe
is installed. The PPDC is comprised of
representatives from Federal and State
regulatory agencies and from the natural
gas and plastic pipe industries.

Members include AGA, APGA, PPI, the
National Association of Regulatory
Utility Commissioners (NARUC), the
National Association of Pipeline Safety
Representatives (NAPSR), and OPS.

The PPDC database is expected to
improve the knowledge base of gas
utility operators and regulators and is
intended to help reveal any failure
trends associated with older plastic
piping materials. The PPDC's mission is
to "develop and maintain a voluntary
data collection process that supports the
analysis of the frequency and causes of
in-service plastic piping material
failures."

It provides an opportunity for
government and industry to work
together to evaluate the extent of plastic
pipe performance problems and to
mitigate any risks to safety. The PPDC
started gathering data in January 2001
from OPS and State pipeline safety
agencies. For more information on the
PPDC, go to the AGA Web page
(http://www.ag.org), and enter "PPDC" in the
keyword search.

II. Advisory Bulletin (ADB–02–7)

To: Owners and Operators of Natural
Gas Distribution Pipeline Systems.

Subject: Notification of the
Susceptibility to Premature Brittle-like
Cracking of Older Plastic Pipe.

Advisory: In recent years, brittle-like
cracking has been observed in some
polyethylene pipes installed in gas
service through the early 1980s. This
brittle-like cracking (also known as slow
crack growth) can substantially reduce
the service life of polyethylene piping
systems.

The susceptibility of some
polyethylene pipes to brittle-like
cracking is dependent on the resin, pipe
processing, and service conditions. A
number of studies have been conducted on
older polyethylene pipe. These
studies have shown that some of these
older polyethylene pipes are more
susceptible to brittle-like cracking than
current materials. These older
polyethylene pipe materials include the
following:

- Century Utility Products, Inc.
- Low-ductile inner wall "Aldyl A"
piping manufactured by Dupont
- Polyethylene gas pipe designated
PE 3306. (As a result of poor
performance this designation was
removed from ASTM D–2513.)

The environmental, installation, and
service conditions under which the
piping is used are factors that could lead
to premature brittle-like cracking of
these older materials. These conditions
include, but are not limited to:

- Inadequate support and backfill
during installation.
- Rock impingement.
- Shear/bending stresses due to
differential settlement resulting from
factors such as:
  - Excavation in close proximity to
    polyethylene piping.
  - Directional drilling in close proximity
to polyethylene piping.
  - Frost heave.
- Bending stresses due to pipe
installations with bends exceeding
recommended practices.
- Damaging squeeze-off practices.
- Service temperatures and service
pressures also influence the service life
of polyethylene piping. Piping installed
in areas with higher ground
temperatures or operated under higher
operating pressures will have a shorter
life.

Gas system operators may experience
an increase in failure rates with a
susceptible material. A susceptible
material may have leak-free
performance for a number of years
before brittle-like cracks occur. An
increase in the occurrence of leaks will
typically be the first indication of a
brittle-like cracking problem. It is the
responsibility of each pipeline operator
to monitor the performance of their gas
system. RSPA issues the following
recommendations to aid operators in
identifying and managing brittle-like
cracking problems in polyethylene
piping involving taking appropriate
action, including replacement, to
mitigate any risks to public safety.

Because systems without known
susceptible materials may also
experience brittle-like cracking
problems, RSPA recommends that all
operators implement the following
practices for all polyethylene piping
systems:

1. Review system records to
determine if any known susceptible
materials have been installed in the
system. Both engineering and
purchasing records should be reviewed.
Based on the available records, identify
the location of the susceptible materials.
More frequent inspection and leak
surveys should be performed on systems
that have exhibited brittle-like cracking
failures of known susceptible materials.
2. Establish a process to identify brittle-like cracking failures. Identification of failure types and site installation conditions can yield valuable information that can be used in predicting the performance of the system.

3. Use a consistent record format to collect data on system failures. The AGA Plastic Failure Report form (Appendix F of the AGA Plastic Pipe Manual) provides an example of a report for the collection of failure data.

4. Collect failure samples of polyethylene piping exhibiting brittle-like cracking. Evidence of brittle-like cracking may warrant laboratory testing. Although every failure may not warrant testing, collecting samples at the time of failure would provide the opportunity to conduct future testing should it be deemed necessary.

5. Whenever possible record the print line from any piping that has been involved in a failure. The print line information can be used to identify the resin, manufacturer and year of manufacture for plastic piping.

6. For systems where there is no record of the piping material, consider recording print line data when piping is excavated for other reasons. Recording the print line data can aid in establishing the type and extent of polyethylene piping used in the system.

Issued in Washington, DC, on November 21, 2002.

Stacey L. Gerard, Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 02–30055 Filed 11–25–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–60–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34276]

Massachusetts Port Authority-Acquisition Exemption-Certain Assets of Boston and Maine Corporation

The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport), a noncarrier, has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to acquire from the Boston and Maine Corporation (B&M) certain railroad rights-of-way and related improvements, totaling approximately 1.45 miles, in Charlestown, Suffolk County, MA. Massport proposes to acquire B&M’s right, title and interest in the rail line, known as the Mystic Wharf Branch line, between milepost 0.00 and milepost 1.45.¹

Massport indicates that it does not intend to conduct rail operations over the line, but is acquiring it to preserve the rail right-of-way and availability of rail service to the Port. Massport further indicates that it may develop an adjacent haul road on the property at a later date. According to Massport, B&M will retain an exclusive permanent easement on the line for rail operations, and its affiliate Springfield Terminal Railway Company will continue to be responsible for providing rail operations over the line. Massport will not obtain the right or obligation to provide rail freight service on the line. Massport certifies that its projected revenues as a result of this transaction will not result in the creation of a Class II or Class I rail carrier.

The parties reported that they intended to consummate the transaction on November 13, 2002.

If the notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio.² Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34276, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423–0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Keith G. O’Brien, REA, CROSS & AUCHINCLOSS, 1707 L Street NW., Suite 570, Washington, DC 20036.

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at http://www.stb.dot.gov.

Decided: November 19, 2002.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams, Secretary.

[FR Doc. 02–29876 Filed 11–25–02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915–00–P

¹B&M received Board authorization to abandon the above-described line pursuant to a decision in Boston and Maine Corporation-Abandonment in Suffolk County, MA, STB Docket No. AB–32 (Sub-No. 92) (STB served Dec. 21, 2001).

²Massport simultaneously filed a motion to dismiss this proceeding, maintaining that the Board should not exercise jurisdiction over this transaction. The motion will be addressed by the Board in a separate decision.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request

November 15, 2002.

The Department of Treasury has submitted the following public information collection requirement(s) to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling the Treasury Bureau Clearance Officer listed. Comments regarding this information collection should be addressed to the OMB reviewer listed and to the Treasury Department Clearance Officer, Department of the Treasury, Room 11000, 1750 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20220.

DATES: Written comments should be received on or before December 26, 2002 to be assured of consideration.

Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN)

OMB Number: 1506–0019.

Form Number: FinCEN Form 101.

Type of Review: Revision.

Title: Suspicious Activity Report by the Securities and Futures Industry.

Description: Treasury is requiring certain securities broker-dealers to file suspicious activity Reports.

Respondents: Business or other for-profit.

Estimated Number of Respondents/Recordkeepers: 8,300.

Estimated Burden Hours Per Respondent/Recordkeeper: 4 hours, 40 minutes.

Estimated recordkeeping/filing per response: 4 hours.

Estimated record (SAR) completion time: 40 minutes.

Frequeney of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Total Reporting/Recordkeeping Burden: 9,334 hours.

Clearance Officer: Lois K. Holland (202) 622–1563, Departmental Offices, Room 11000, 1750 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20220.


Mary A. Able, Departmental Reports, Management Officer.

[FR Doc. 02–29990 Filed 11–25–02; 8:45 am]