

NEWS RELEASE

Pipelines 2.5 times safer than rail for oil transportation; tankers have safest record of all

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For Immediate Release

CALGARY—Transporting oil by pipelines is more than twice as safe as using rail, and marine tankers are safer still with a markedly improved safety record over the past 40 years, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian policy think-tank.

“The evidence is clear—building new pipelines and shipping oil by tanker is the safest and most environmentally responsible way to get Canadian oil to global markets,” said Kenneth Green, Fraser Institute’s senior director of energy and natural resource studies and co-author of *Safety First: Intermodal Safety for Oil and Gas Transportation*.

The study updates previous research that finds pipelines are 2.5 times less likely to experience a spill than rail, with an occurrence rate of 0.03 accidents per million barrels of oil shipped by pipeline between 2004 and 2015, compared to 0.08 accidents per million barrels of oil shipped by rail over the same period.

Marine tankers, by comparison, have a spill rate of less than 0.001 per million barrels of oil shipped.

Indeed, while oil shipped by tanker has increased from 1.4 billion tonnes in 1970 to 2.9 billion tonnes in 2015, the amount of spillage has plummeted by 98 per cent.

Specifically, in 1970, there was 383,000 tonnes of oil released in spills globally compared to just 6,000 tonnes in 2016.

“Canadians will benefit greatly from increased oil exports, which should be transported in the safest way possible. That means building new pipelines to Canada’s coasts and shipping oil by marine tanker around the world,” Green said.

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