

Surveys & Study Corridor FAQs

What is a pipeline “study corridor”?

Study corridors are established along the proposed pipeline route to determine the best possible locations for the pipeline facilities and potential workspace areas. The initial study corridor for new “greenfield” pipeline will be approximately 600 feet wide and the study corridor along existing pipeline rights-of-way will be approximately 300 feet wide, which would allow future pipeline route refinements as necessary to incorporate landowner, environmental and construction related concerns. Once field evaluations are complete, the pipeline corridor will be reduced to a much narrower width that would be necessary to construct the pipeline. Typically, this is approximately 100 feet.

How are landowners notified if their property is affected?

The right-of-way and land department is responsible for developing and maintaining relationships with landowners near Spectra Energy’s pipeline facilities. These personnel, called right-of-way agents or land agents, are trained professionals and are involved in most aspects of a project’s development – from the initial project plan through construction and into operations. Representatives collect and evaluate information necessary to determine the pipeline path. As part of that effort, landowners whose property is within the initial study corridor will be contacted for permission to perform survey activities on their property in connection with a proposed project.

What can I expect to happen during a survey on my property?

Surveys are necessary to obtain field data to assess pipeline alignments for constructability and environmental impacts and to address individual landowner concerns.

These activities are planned only along the portion of your property within the study corridor. Prior to survey activities, the appropriate municipal officials will be informed of the surveys and the surveys will be performed in a minimal amount of time with the goal of little to no inconvenience to affected landowners.

Representatives of Spectra Energy will perform required civil, environmental and cultural resource surveys to thoroughly evaluate the proposed pipeline path to ensure the least overall environmental and landowner impacts, while balancing constructability concerns. The civil survey involves approximately four to five representatives, intermittently placing wooden stakes along a portion of each property to delineate the area described as the “study corridor.” Depending upon the length of the proposed study corridor on the property to be surveyed, this activity should take no longer than two days for each property that will be surveyed.

An environmental survey involves approximately two to three representatives walking within the study corridor, which will be clearly staked, to identify and delineate any vegetative and geological indicators of wetland areas that may be present on the property. The wetlands boundaries will be marked with small colored flags. Spectra Energy representatives will also look for the presence of any threatened or endangered species, if a suspected habitat is within the staked area. Depending on the length of the proposed route of the pipeline on the property being surveyed, this activity should take no longer than three days for each property that will be surveyed.

The cultural resources survey involves two to four representatives walking within the staked study corridor to identify any indicators of potential archaeological resources.
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If such a site is suspected, then the archaeologists would return to that location with spade shovels and perform a limited excavation of the test hole that would measure approximately 2x2 feet square and approximately 2-3 feet deep. Any area that is excavated for this type of survey will be restored to its preexisting condition. Depending on the length of the proposed route of the pipeline on the property being surveyed, the archaeological walkover will take less than one day. If a limited archaeological excavation is necessary, it should take no longer than two days, weather permitting.

During the survey activities, it is possible that Spectra Energy personnel may need to re-visit a property several times to complete the surveys. This could be due to inclement weather or because one or more species of a significant plant or animal has been identified. There are specific criteria, methods and timing that have been developed with the appropriate agencies. Spectra Energy follows these specific guidelines for gathering data on each identified species. In addition, cultural surveys may identify further survey work that needs to be performed.

Do these right-of-way agents need my permission to survey?

Spectra Energy makes every effort to communicate, work with, and seek input from each and every landowner. Our efforts to obtain permission to enter properties for survey are a part of our practice of encouraging a collaborative approach in order to obtain important information concerning the possible locations for the pipeline and to minimize impacts to property and environmental resources when and where possible. Many states have existing laws allowing access for the limited purpose of survey. Providing access to the property to conduct these necessary surveys does not authorize Spectra Energy to build a pipeline on the property and will not be used by Spectra Energy at anytime to imply that the landowner supports or agrees with the project.

What if I have questions as the survey is being conducted on my property?

Because it is important to us that all landowners understand the proposed features of the pipeline and overall project, our right-of-way agents will be available to meet with individual landowners while the surveys are taking place. All survey work will be performed during reasonable daylight hours only and all work will be performed by authorized professional surveyors and their crews.

If my land is surveyed, does this mean the pipeline will be constructed on my property?

Spectra Energy is required to perform surveys in order to fully understand the study corridor's attributes and to determine the optimal location for the pipeline. These surveys are also necessary to obtain important information for the federal and state agencies that will be reviewing the environmental impacts of the proposed projects. During the survey process, Spectra Energy will continue to meet with landowners, agencies and other stakeholders to discuss the project and to seek input on the proposed routing. Providing access to the property to conduct these necessary surveys does not authorize Spectra Energy to build a pipeline on the property and will not be used by Spectra Energy at anytime to imply that the landowner supports or agrees with the project proposal.

What kind of interactions will Spectra Energy have with affected stakeholders when addressing the proposed pipeline alignments?

Different companies take different approaches with engagement and communications with the affected public. Spectra Energy takes a collaborative approach. We communicate early and often about our project activities to build positive relationships and long-lasting partnerships with all those we come in contact with. Spectra Energy's experienced project development teams are committed to an open and ongoing communications process with stakeholders to develop a viable pipeline route that mitigates impacts to landowners and the environment and meets or exceeds customer needs, constructability requirements and safety regulations. Everyone will have multiple opportunities to interact and engage with the project team, as well as participate in the appropriate regulatory processes.

What sort of environmental impacts will these surveys have locally and regionally?

Spectra Energy is committed to protecting the environment. While Spectra Energy certainly does not anticipate any damages to result from these surveys, please be assured that you will be compensated if any damages to your property or crops occur that may be directly caused by these activities.