

Keystone XL Safety/Water Concerns

- The pipeline would traverse 6 large TX rivers that feed many lakes and municipal reservoirs pumping highly caustic tar sands at high pressure and heat through farms, rivers, and aquifers. ¹
- DilBit, the primary substance to be pumped through this pipeline, “... poses an elevated risk to public safety not only due to higher risks of spill or rupture but also because DilBit spills pose increased hazards to the environment and public safety.” If spilled, this dense tar sands oil would not float to the top of the water like conventional oil, but would sink to the bottom, making containment and clean-up close to impossible. ²
- The pipe would be .465 inches thick and would run at 1440 psi, which, while sufficient for standard crude pipelines, is insufficient for the corrosive, thick tar sands. ³
- The pipeline would be buried 4 feet underground and heated to 140°F to aid movement. ⁴
- The Keystone pipeline system is TransCanada’s first “oil” pipeline, ⁵ and the Keystone XL expansion would carry 1.1 million barrels/day. ⁶ The first leg of the Keystone pipeline has already had 12 spills as of May 2011, after only 10 months of being operational, prompting the U.S. Government to issue a Corrective Action Order and shut it down temporarily. ⁷
- Tar sands pipelines have failure rates 16x higher per mile due to internal corrosion than crude lines. Tar sands have many times more sulfur and acidity than regular crude. ²
- If and when this pipeline leaks, first responders would be tasked with containing an emergency situation. Local law enforcement have never had to deal with this sort of pipeline and TransCanada has released no emergency response plans for Keystone XL. ⁸
- This pipeline would contain hydrogen sulfide gas in a concentration dangerous to anyone who came in contact with it, including affected landowners. ⁹
- A new Texas hydrology report shows that the Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer, which provides drinking and irrigation water for 10 million+ Texans, is at risk as its sensitive outcrop is along Keystone XL’s proposed route. The report also shows that in some areas where the outcrop would be crossed in Rusk County, active fault zones exist! ¹⁰

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1. <http://www.keystonepipeline-xl.state.gov/clientsite/keystonexl.nsf?Open>

2. http://dirtyoilsands.org/files/NRDC_TarSandsBitumen.pdf

3. <http://www.terrytribune.com/node/585>

4. <http://tarsandspipelines.wordpress.com/2010/10/19/no-good-news-for-keystone-xl/>

5. <http://puc.sd.gov/commission/dockets/hydrocarbonpipeline/2007/Hp07-001/final061407.pdf>

6. http://www.downstreamtoday.com/news/article.aspx?a_id=11890&Aspx

7. <http://blog.nwf.org/wildlifepromise/2011/06/first-ever-us-dot-order-shuts-down-keystone-tar-sands-pipeline/>

8. http://plainsjustice.org/files/Keystone_XL/Keystone%20Pipeline%20Oil%20Spill%20Response%20Planning%20Report%202010-11-23%20FINAL.pdf

9. <https://docs.google.com/viewer?>

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10. <http://www.sierraclub.org/dirtyfuels/downloads/2011-03-hydrology-report.pdf>

