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STEPHEN D. COAN  
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Heads of Fire Departments

**From:** Stephen D. Coan  
State Fire Marshal

**Date:** December 1, 2014

**RE:** **Legislation Concerning Blasting**

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Recently, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted a natural gas pipeline safety law, Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2014, "An Act Relative to Natural Gas Leaks," which became effective October 1, 2014.

One of the many sections the Act impacts is quarry blasting, specifically section 7 of this Act, which contains provisions relative to quarry blasting within 500 feet of a natural gas pipeline or facility. Such blasting now requires permission from the Department of Public Utilities.

"SECTION 7. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, explosive material, as defined in 527 CMR 13.03, shall not be used to fire a blast in any blasting operation at a site primarily used as a source of mined products from the earth if such site is within 500 feet of a natural gas pipeline or metering and regulation station without written approval by the department of public utilities." (This is similar to the Dig Safe requirements.)

Although the Act does not create new requirements for you as the permit granting authority, I wanted to make sure that you were aware of the change, so that you may ask to see this approval or require it as a condition of the permit (527 CMR 13.04(11)(d)).

Further assistance is always available from the Division of Fire Safety on this and similar issues. If you have further questions, please contact the Code Compliance and Enforcement Unit at (978) 567-3375 or in Western Massachusetts at (413) 587-3181.

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