



Amherst Bee 130

YEARS OF
COMMUNITY
JOURNALISM



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National gas exports too risky

On Nov. 16, the Town of Amherst was the location of the leading news story in the national debate concerning the safety of oil and gas infrastructure.

About 210,000 gallons of tar sands oil leaked from an underground section of the Keystone Pipeline. That is enough to cover an NFL football field with a 6-inch layer of oil. There was enough oil that seeped out of the ground to leave a visible scar on the farmland above.

Luckily for readers of this newspaper, the town in question is in South Dakota, not New York. However, the issues with the Keystone XL pipeline for the South Dakota community were very similar to those in New York with National Fuel's Northern Access pipeline.

Out west, the Lakota Nation fought hard to protect its sole tribal water source at Standing Rock. President Donald Trump ignored the health and safety concerns with his executive order clearing the way for the Keystone construction by a company that has had more than 200 significant leaks in its pipelines since 2000.

Here in New York, the Seneca Nation of Indians was part of a large coalition of landowners and environmental groups that fought the construction of the Northern Access. The state Department of Environmental Conservation denied the permit for construction based on concerns about impacts on wetlands, streams, fish and wildlife habitat.

If you wondered why people fought so hard earlier this year to stop the Northern Access, look again to Amherst, South Dakota. Water is life, and waters tainted with fossil fuel spills are not. Fossil fuels for export are not worth the risk, and Western New York thanks the DEC for its decision to deny the construction permits for the Northern Access.

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[Return to top](#)



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