

Tips for Writing #NoKXL Letters to the Editor

Letters to your local paper are very powerful tools to get your voice heard not only to your local community, but to elected officials as well since they read the local papers to get a gauge on how the public feels about key issues.

You can also send similar letters to your church newsletter or send to your personal email list in order to spread the word.

Tips to help your letter to the editor get published:

- Start with a catchy opening and make your point clearly in the first paragraph.
- Papers have different guidelines, which are posted on their websites, but most require you to **keep your letter to 200-250 words**.
- State facts but don't overuse numbers. Letters that explain why you personally are opposed to the pipeline help the reader connect with you more than if you just cite numbers. (See the **Coronavirus/Covid-19 + KXL Fact Sheet** below).
- Bonus points if your letter references or rebuts a recently published pro-pipeline editorial or letter. It shows the editor you're an active reader who wants to contribute to the discussion.
- Target your local paper. We provide contact info for Nebraska publications below, but you should send yours to your local paper -- wherever that is. (There have been #NoKXL and pro-KXL editorials and letters already published in papers nationwide, Canada, Russia, etc.)
- A form or link to submit a letter is usually located somewhere on the letters/opinion page of your local newspaper's website.

WHERE TO SEND (NEBRASKA):

- **Omaha World-Herald:** [Submit to the "Public Pulse" letters section](http://www.omaha.com/opinion/public_pulse/submit/)
(http://www.omaha.com/opinion/public_pulse/submit/)
- **Lincoln Journal Star:** [Submit a letter to the editor](https://journalstar.com/forms/online_services/letter/)
(https://journalstar.com/forms/online_services/letter/)
- **Norfolk Daily News,** editor@norfolkdailynews.com
- **Daily Nebraskan (UNL)**
- **Fremont Tribune**
- **Grand Island Independent**
- **Kearney Hub**
- **Hastings Tribune,** tribune@hastingstribune.com
- **North Platte Telegraph**
- **Columbus Telegram,** jdean@columbustelegram.com
- **McCook Daily Gazette,** editor@mccookgazette.com
- **Scottsbluff Star-Herald**

EXAMPLES of “Cancel KXL” / Covid-19 #NoKXL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

“Good Neighbors” move forward with pipeline despite pandemic”

[York News-Times, 4/4/20 by Shannon and Kevin Graves of Bradshaw, NE](#)

Editor,

TC Energy (formally TransCanada), our self-described “good neighbors” from the north have decided to begin construction of Keystone XL in April despite the restrictions placed upon the people of the United States in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Alberta province Premier Jason Kenney has said in so many words that the economy of Alberta is more important than the pandemic. This assertion coupled with TC Energy’s intent to start construction of the pipeline in April, with its attendant influx of Canadian construction workers to the United States while we are under COVID-19 restrictions shows once again that the “good neighbors” are not so good after all.

From TC Energy’s perspective it’s probably their best time to begin construction on a highly contentious piece of Canadian infrastructure. The opponents of the project along with everyone else are being told to stay home by their president. A group of ten people standing six feet apart in objection to Keystone XL and its construction would certainly have a lesser effect than would a protest action in normal times.

Once again, as usual, our “good neighbors” found the means to have it their way at our expense. It doesn’t matter which side of the pipeline issue you are on, how can anyone think that this specific point in time is right to start construction?

Maybe you have to be Canadian.

Kevin and Shannon Graves, Bradshaw

“Demand halt to Keystone pipeline construction”

[Missoulian, 4/6/20 by Susie Clarion of Missoula, MT](#)

TC Energy (formerly TransCanada) is opportunistically, during a time when our minds and hearts are consumed with protecting our families and communities from the COVID-19 pandemic, pushing through construction of the massive dirty-oil Keystone XL pipeline through northern Montana. There are plans to move hundreds of workers to tribal and rural communities this week.

This construction project puts pipeline workers, and vulnerable indigenous and rural communities, at risk of suffering and spreading the pandemic. This on top of all the underlying risks to these communities, including sexual violence and crime that often are associated with these pipeline worker camps.

We must demand that our governor immediately halt all construction activity of Keystone XL in Montana and recall all of the TC Energy workers already dispatched. Our waterways, air, our climate, health and lives, including those of the pipeline workers, demand this.

Susie Clarion, Missoula

CORONAVIRUS / COVID-19 + KXL FACT SHEET:

- As communities everywhere brace themselves against the public health threat of the novel coronavirus, TC Energy (formerly TransCanada), the corporation behind the Keystone XL pipeline, has rushed forward against all good judgment on construction on this disastrous project.
- Despite the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, TransCanada / TC Energy Keystone XL is barreling ahead with construction plans for the Keystone XL pipeline.
- TC Energy, with support from Canada's Alberta government and enabled by the Trump Administration, is exploiting the coronavirus pandemic to push this disastrous pipeline forward.
- Construction of the Keystone XL pipeline would bring thousands of workers into rural communities of Nebraska, South Dakota, and Montana, putting more lives at risk amidst a public health emergency.
- Hundreds of out-of-town workers living in close quarters along the Keystone XL route and interacting with local residents are setting the stage for a public health catastrophe.
- Local hospitals and Indian Health Service centers along the route that are already under-resourced and ill-equipped to deal with the novel coronavirus pandemic could face even greater strain from the influx of workers.
- The "man camps" where workers will live while construction is underway are also associated with significant increases in violence against Indigenous women and contribute to the epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women; now, many native communities that live along the pipeline route fear for the worst.
- TC Energy is also needlessly endangering the lives of local elected officials and tribal governments who are being forced to continue processing and filing opposition to the corporation's various applications for county-level construction permits, road haul agreements, and preparations to build man camps.
- With many lessons to be learned from this global pandemic, now is the time to stop investing in the construction of pipelines. There is no return to 'business as usual' and the prioritization of polluters over people is unacceptable.
- This is a time when we must recognize that the health and safety of everyone -- especially the most vulnerable and marginalized communities -- is integral to the health and safety of our entire country. That's why we are all making sacrifices to protect our friends, families, and neighbors.

- But, instead of following that example, TC Energy is actually moving forward with policies that would make a dangerous situation even worse, moving to tear communities apart and make our families sicker.
- For more than a decade, Indigenous Nations, rural communities, and everyday people have fought to beat this project back, reminding the world that Big Oil isn't invincible – and we're not backing down.
- Nebraska landowners are continuing to challenge TransCanada's eminent domain seizure of their land for Keystone XL in the county courts.
- TC Energy has still not secured all the required state, local and federal permits to move forward with Keystone XL -- including a permit in Holt County that has already been rejected until TransCanada meets certain conditions -- and permits for the pipeline issued by Trump are facing three federal lawsuits.

EXAMPLES OF GENERAL #NoKXL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

“Pipeline leaks can be devastating”

[Omaha World-Herald, 4/4/17 by Janece Mollhoff of Ashland, NE](#)

In her April 3 Midlands Voices, “Keystone XL is a gift to Nebraskans,” Roma Amundson wrote that leaks will not be a problem because pipeline leaks typically release no more than five barrels of oil.

However, just last week, it was reported about 12,615 barrels of oil spilled as a result of a pipeline leak in North Dakota that the company now believes started on Dec. 1, 2016, and was not discovered until Dec. 5 because the leak detection system failed. The oil contaminated Ash Coulee Creek, which runs through private and public grazing land.

That pipeline was only 6 inches in diameter; KXL pipe will be 36 inches and will carry a much more toxic mixture.

Can you imagine if this were any number of creeks in Nebraska where the surface water is, in many places, shallowly connected to groundwater that supplies wells for rural farms and towns?

The largest oil pipeline spill on record is the 2013 Tesoro Logistics spill involving an estimated 20,600 barrels. Cleanup efforts are ongoing after four years.

Nebraskans do not need the gift of toxic tar sands sludge spilling into our water and onto our agricultural land. The biggest benefit will go from Canada to China, where the oil will eventually be shipped.

Janece Mollhoff, Ashland, Neb.

“Keystone pipeline would put aquifer at risk”

[Sioux City Journal, 3/7/15 by Robert Schwarz, Sioux City](#)

This is in response to the Mini Editorial and a Letter to the Editor in the March 12 Journal, both supporting the Keystone pipeline.

The Ogallala aquifer that the pipeline would intersect is a large aquifer supplying nearly all the water for residential, agricultural and industrial use in eight High Plains states. It is also a shallow aquifer, with depths varying from surface level to 300 feet below the surface.

Two million people and countless livestock depend on the aquifer for drinking water and other purposes. Spills - and there will be spills sooner or later - would pollute the aquifer with chemicals like benzene, which is a potent carcinogen. There would be no way to clean up the spills and prevent oil from migrating to the Ogallala aquifer. Have some in the Midwest taken on a Third World mentality, where a paycheck is all that matters? There is no substitute for clean water.

One of the March 12 writers favors going forward with Keystone because he fears explosions near his home when railroads carrying oil pass nearby. Maybe he should relocate. Unreasonable? Think about two million people having to relocate because their water and soil is polluted.

Recent TV ads by Keystone XL try to reassure us that Keystone would be safe "because the pipeline is underground." In the case of the Ogallala aquifer that only means the pipeline would be closer to the water source when a spill happens.

Robert Schwarz, Sioux City

“Pipeline concerns”

[Lincoln Journal Star 3/3/15 by Walter L. Goossen, Henderson, NE](#)

Regarding TransCanada's use of eminent domain before they even have a permit to install the pipeline, who wants to do business with a company that is so arrogant and so presumptuous?

How can TransCanada, headquartered in another country, come and tell Nebraska farmers and ranchers if they do not sign easements voluntarily, they will use eminent domain? The U.S. is a sovereignty, yet a foreign country is trying to invade U.S. sovereignty and tell U.S. citizens that, if they do not sign easements, they will disregard landowners' rights and do what they want to do. I would think that a landowner would have the say-so regarding what is to be done with his property or on his property.

If TransCanada is allowed to use eminent domain to accommodate its self-serving purposes, in the future, can any foreign country or foreign company come in and use eminent domain to accommodate its self-serving purposes?

According to published reports, a Nebraska rancher dug down three feet on his property and there was the Ogallala aquifer. The proposed pipeline is to be four feet below the surface of the soil. Does this mean the pipeline could be lying in water in some areas? The product to be pumped is known as dilbit, which requires the addition of toxins in order to be pumpable and goes down, not up. With 1,200 pounds internal

pressure, if a ½-inch hole developed and existed for one to six months, how much toxic dilbit would leak into the aquifer? If the pipeline is lying in or above water, can you imagine the damage that would be done to water for humans, livestock and crop irrigation?

The power of eminent domain should never be allowed to be used by a foreign country or foreign company.

Walter L. Goossen, Henderson