

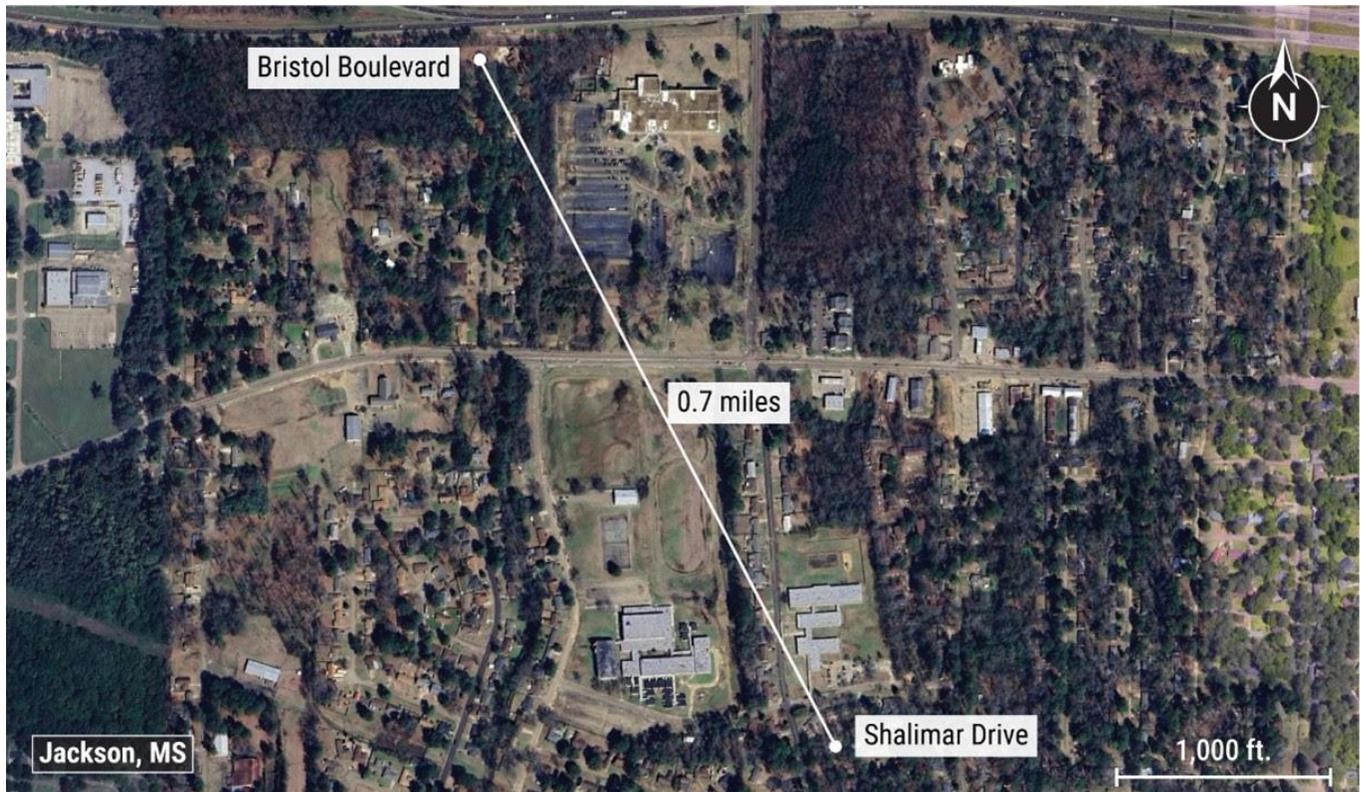
News Release

Unrepaired Leaks Led to Natural Gas Pipeline Explosions in Mississippi

WASHINGTON (Mar. 26, 2026) — Two natural gas pipeline explosions that destroyed homes in Jackson, Mississippi, happened after Atmos Energy Corporation failed to promptly repair underground gas leaks it had already identified, the National Transportation Safety Board said Thursday.

The first explosion occurred at a home on Jan. 24, 2024. The blast and fire killed one person, injured another, and destroyed the house. Three days later, on Jan. 27, gas from a similar leak caused another explosion and fire at a home about 0.7 miles away, destroying two homes.

The NTSB determined that soil movement loosened underground pipe connections, allowing gas to escape. Atmos detected the leaks at least eight weeks before the explosions but classified them as “nonhazardous” and did not repair them. Gas migrated into the homes, accumulated, and ignited. The NTSB also found that Atmos lacked sufficient procedures to regularly recheck known leaks in areas with adverse soil conditions, allowing the leaks’ consequences to worsen over time.



This map and photos show the locations involved in the accident. The top image is a topographical map illustrating the distance between the Bristol Boulevard and Shalimar Drive sites. The bottom right photo shows the Shalimar Drive residence after the explosion, and the bottom left shows the Bristol Boulevard residence. (Images courtesy of Google Earth, PHMSA, and the Mississippi Public Service Commission; arranged clockwise from top.)

Several residents reported smelling gas before the explosions but did not contact the company. NTSB found that if pipeline operators had provided clearer, more direct instructions on what to do when smelling gas, residents would have known to immediately leave the area and call 9-1-1 and the gas company each time they smelled it.

The investigation also found that Atmos did not maintain complete records for many of its service lines in Mississippi, limiting its ability to identify high-risk infrastructure. Its safety

management programs did not adequately address aging pipelines or soil-related hazards. Investigators noted natural gas alarms inside the homes might have warned occupants to evacuate before the explosion.

As a result of the investigation, the NTSB issued eight safety recommendations to Atmos. The recommendations call for replacing vulnerable pipe connections, checking known leaks more frequently, improving public and emergency responder education, better tracking service-line information, enhancing risk assessment methods, and making gas alarms available to residents.

The [final report](#), including the probable cause and safety recommendations, is available on the investigation webpage. The [public docket](#) is also available online.

###

NTSB | 490 L'Enfant Plaza SW | Washington, DC 20594
Contact us: mediarelations@ntsb.gov | Follow us: [@NTSB_Newsroom](#)