

Transmission

A complex network of interconnected pipelines provides for the transmission and ultimate delivery of natural gas to customers in each of the lower 48 States. Flows of natural gas are primarily from the producing areas in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and offshore areas of the Gulf of Mexico toward the northeast and midwest. Imports, primarily from Canada, continue to make a significant contribution to the total gas consumption in the United States.

Expansion of the interstate pipeline system in 1996 added to existing capacity and increased deliverability to market centers. Further expansions projected through the turn of the century will add capacity for importing Canadian gas and improve access to deep-water production areas in the Gulf. Increased storage capacity, particularly facilities with high deliverability, and interconnections with the interstate pipeline system provide greater system flexibility for more efficient delivery of natural gas to the marketplace.

The volume of gas flowing from producing areas in New Mexico westward toward markets in California generally declined. The lower annual transmission volumes reflect decreased consumption of natural gas in the generation of electricity in California. California, which is second in the Nation for use of natural gas for generation of electricity in the United States reported a 20 percent decrease in consumption in that sector.

Flows from producing areas in Texas and Louisiana through Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky to consumers in the Great Lakes area increased. These increased flows were required to meet increased demand, particularly for residential consumers in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.

From the Great Lakes area eastward to consumers in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts, interstate flows were generally lower than in 1995. These

Figure 6. Principal Interstate Natural Gas Flow Summary, 1996

