



**National Conference of State Legislatures
Office of State-Federal Relations**

EPA Releases Final Methane Emissions Rules

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) unveiled [final New Source Performance Standards](#) to reduce methane emissions, volatile organic compounds and toxic air pollutants from oil and gas industry operations. The regulations, which were first proposed in 2015, will only pertain to new oil and natural gas wells and are the first time EPA has ever regulated methane emissions from these sources.

As part of the final regulations, companies will be required to install technologies in the wells that will monitor and limit emissions that inadvertently leak during the production and transmission processes. The rules also set a fixed schedule for when companies must monitor leaks as well as allowing the use of a number of innovative technology at the companies' discretion for monitoring and finding leaks. The final rule will be open for public comment for 60 days after the date of publication in the Federal Register.

The regulations are another step in the administration's goal of reducing methane emissions from the oil and gas sector by 40-45 percent from 2012 levels by 2025. According to EPA, methane, a key constituent of natural gas, has "global warming potential more than 25 times greater than" carbon dioxide.

Along with the release of the final regulations, EPA also issued a [draft proposal](#) to collect information that will help the agency craft methane emission reduction regulations for existing oil and gas wells. A detailed timeline for when we can expect the existing sources standards has not been announced.

Additional Resources

[EPA Fact Sheet](#)

[Regulatory Impact Analysis](#)

For any additional questions or concerns please contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779).