



National Tribal Air Association's Fact Sheet on EPA's Proposed Policy Amendments to the 2012 and 2016 New Source Performance Standards for the Oil and Natural Gas Industry

What does this Proposal do?

In 1979, EPA identified the major source category of crude oil and natural gas production sector in which new source performance standards would be developed under Clean Air Act § 111. In 2009, EPA issued its “Endangerment Finding,” which found that greenhouse gases, including methane, threaten the public health and welfare. In 2012 and 2016, EPA concluded that the source category of the crude oil and natural gas industry should include the transmission and storage segments, and that the category contributes significantly to air pollution that may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health or welfare. Based on these conclusions, EPA set standards to cut methane emissions from new and modified sources in the oil and natural gas extraction, processing, transportation, and storage industry, with the cornerstone of the 2016 Rule being requirements for leak detection and repair.

As per the Trump administration's Executive Order 13783 to promote energy independence and economic growth, the EPA is co-proposing two amendments: 1) Primary proposal: remove the transmission and storage segment from the source category, and rescind methane as a regulated pollutant from the production and processing segments; or 2) Alternative proposal: keep transmission and storage segments in the source category, but rescind methane standards from all sources (production, processing, transmission, and storage). To better understand the segments and which are proposed for removal, please see the graphic at the end of this document.

How does this affect my Tribe?

It is estimated that approximately 3,465 oil and natural gas wells were located on Tribal lands as of 2015,¹ and approximately 16,000 miles of pipeline crossed Tribal lands as of 2017. Natural gas is 87-97% methane,² and a study from Colorado State University has shown the methane leak rate from the oil and gas industry to be 60% higher than EPA's estimates.³ Greenhouse gases are distributed throughout the atmosphere, and are the primary human contribution to climate change. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas, so any potential increase in emissions will continue to exacerbate climate change. Removing methane as a regulated pollutant from any segment of the

¹ U.S. Department of Energy Office of Indian Energy (September 2015). *Tribal Energy System Vulnerabilities to Climate Change and Extreme Weather*. Washington DC: Government Printing Office.

² <https://www.uniongas.com/about-us/about-natural-gas/chemical-composition-of-natural-gas>

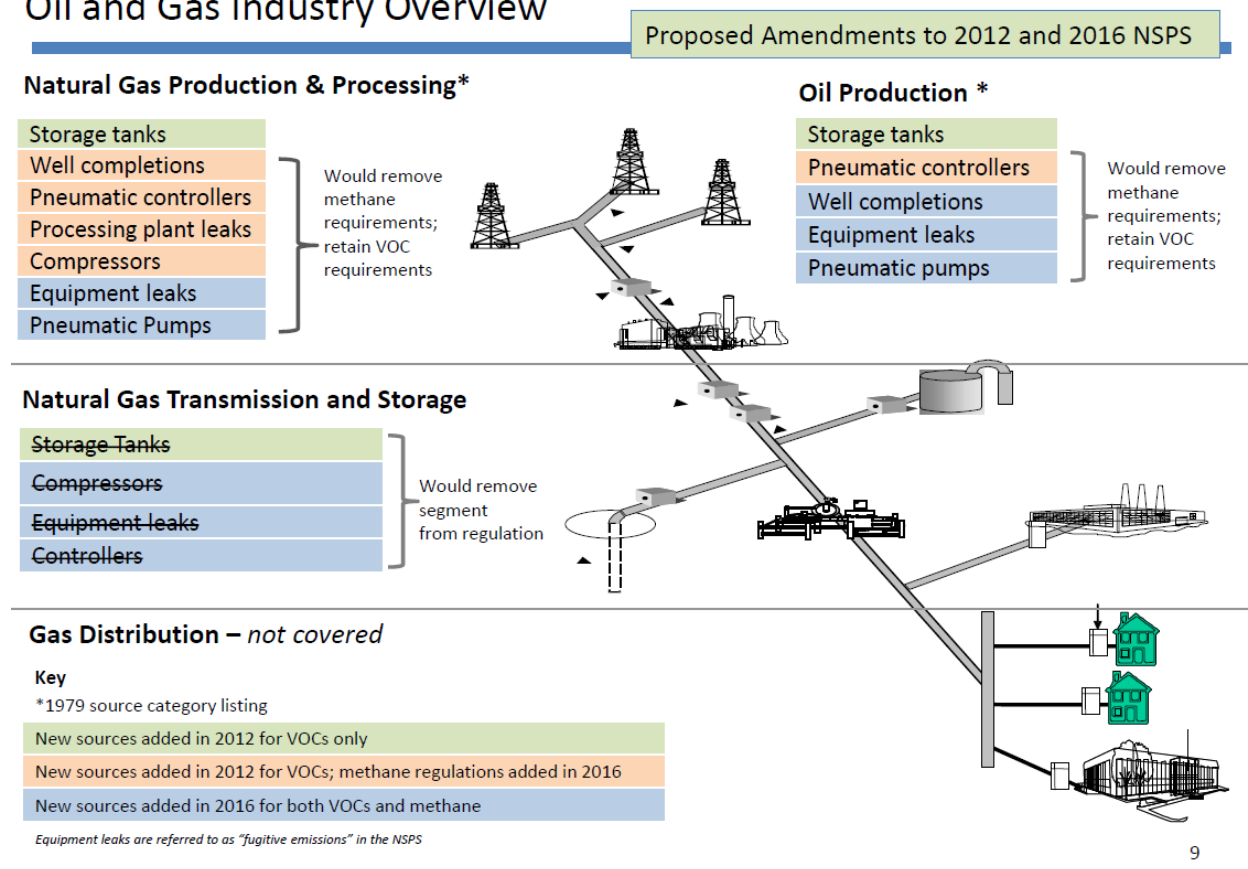
³ <http://theconversation.com/the-us-natural-gas-industry-is-leaking-way-more-methane-than-previously-thought-heres-why-that-matters-98918>

oil and natural gas industry will have deleterious effects on all humans and ecosystems. It will also prevent EPA from regulating methane emissions from existing oil and gas sources. Additionally, removing the transmission and storage segments from the regulated sources effectively negates EPA's ability to protect human and environmental health from pollutants emitted in the oil and gas industry.

Comments and Further Information

More information can be found on [EPA's website here](#). *Comments are due on November 25, 2019.* Instructions [on commenting can be found here](#), and all comments should be identified with Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2017-0757. In addition to this fact sheet, you can find additional tools such as recorded webinars and a template letter your Tribe can use to comment on NTAA's [website here](#). Any questions can be directed to the NTAA's Project Director, Andy Bessler, at Andy.Bessler@nau.edu or 928-523-0526.

Oil and Gas Industry Overview



The above graphic depicts the segments of the Oil and Natural Gas Industry, color coded to describe when each source was listed for regulation and whether Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), methane, or both are currently regulated. The lines through words indicate what is being proposed for removal.