



EARTHWORKS

EARTHWORKS FACTSHEET

EPA HYDRAULIC FRACTURING AIR POLLUTION RULES – TALKING POINTS & BACKGROUND

Planning on making comments to the EPA about the proposed oil and gas air pollution rules? You need to know:

THE FACTS:

On July 28, 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed a series of cost-effective new rules (<http://www.epa.gov/airquality/oilandgas/actions.html>) under the Clean Air Act that would reduce harmful air pollution from the oil and natural gas industry.

These new regs are based upon proven technology and best practices that the oil and gas industry already uses in some states. They include the first federal air standards for hydraulic fracturing, along with requirements for several other sources of pollution in the oil and gas industry that currently are not regulated at the federal level.

The four new air regulations for the oil and natural gas industry are:

1. A new source performance standard (NSPS) for volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
2. A new source performance standard for sulfur dioxide
3. An air toxics standard for oil and natural gas production and
4. An air toxics standard for natural gas transmission and storage.

The proposed standards would:

- Generate a net savings of \$30 million annually for industry due to increased recovery of methane, otherwise known as natural gas.
- Reduce volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions by 540,000 tons, an industry-wide reduction of 25%.
- Reduce methane emissions by 3.4 million tons, which is equal to 65 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, a reduction of about 26%. This will be like eliminating the carbon dioxide emissions of 15 coal-fired power plants.
- Reduce toxic air pollutants, such as benzene, a known carcinogen, by 38,000 tons, a 30% reduction.

TALKING POINTS:

- The EPA has made a good first step toward insuring the oil and gas industry uses best practices while protecting public health and the environment.
- The oil and gas industry has been under-regulated for decades and has been allowed to fall behind as technology and science has progressed.
- We applaud EPA for proposing these rules that will standardize some of the most cost effective pollution controls available.
- Communities already impacted by heavy oil and gas drilling are counting on the EPA to take these proposed rules one step further by expanding it to the hundreds of thousands of existing wells.
- The recovered methane can result in millions of dollars saved by industry; more royalties paid to mineral owners, and increased resources used for domestic energy production.