

What suspending EPA's oil and gas pollution standards means for New Mexico

More Pollution Headed for New Mexico

EPA Administrator Pruitt's action to suspend commonsense leak detection and repair requirements creates an immediate health and environmental threat for communities in New Mexico. This loophole allows wells across the state to continue emitting methane, a powerful climate forcing pollutant, smog-forming volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) like benzene, a known human carcinogen. In New Mexico, thus far over **1,500 new and modified wells** are affected, causing approximately an estimated¹:

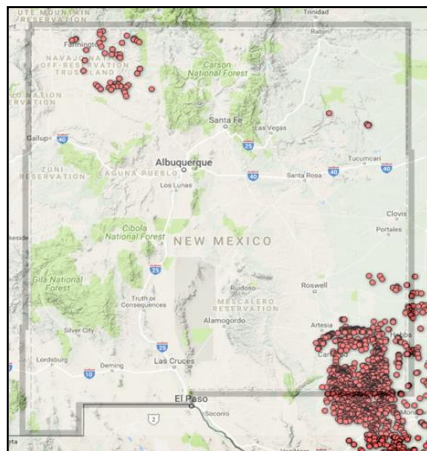
- 218-873 tons of methane
- 68-237 tons of VOCs
- 2.25-9 ton of HAPs

These emissions cannot later be removed from the atmosphere, and, because of the Administrator's action, will occur during peak summer ozone season.

Lea County and Eddy County in southeast New Mexico have the **3rd** and **4th** highest number of affected wells nationwide

Exxon Mobil recently invested \$6 billion in the Permian Basin in New Mexico. These investments in new development underscore the critical need for common sense standards to reduce pollution from these new sources. New Mexico does not have any state standards for leak detection and repair.

AFFECTED COUNTY	POPULATION	EMISSIONS [TONS]		
		METHANE	VOCs	HAPs
EDDY	57,621	439	120	4.6
LEA	69,749	314	85	3.3
SAN JUAN	115,079	82	23	0.9
RIO ARRIBA	40,040	31	9	0.3
CHAVES	65,282	4	1	0
SANDOVAL	142,025	2	0	0
ROOSEVELT	19,082	1	0	0
TOTAL	508,878	873	238	9



Affected Well Sources

New wells are being drilled every day that, because of Administrator Pruitt's action, will not need to perform common sense leak detection and repair. Baker Hughes reports **55 active drill rigs in New Mexico** as of June 2, 2017--the day on which Pruitt suspended the leak detection standards. This is a **175% increase** over the same time last year.

Affected wells in the state of New Mexico have generated:

- over **\$4 billion** in estimated revenue
- over **200,000,000 Mcf** of gas
- over **80,000,000** barrels of oil

Sources: *Drillinginfo; U.S. EPA; U.S. Census (2016;) EIA; Baker Hughes*

¹ Emissions estimates represent the range of additional possible 90-day emissions. The lower bound is based on an assumption of constant reductions over time, which likely understates emission reductions given the importance of the first survey. The upper bound is a 90-day estimate based on annual mitigation percentages and field data showing that an initial survey can help to deliver much of this first-year benefit. The remainder of the emissions estimates in the factsheet are based on the annual percentages.

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