

Oil and Natural Gas Methane Pollution is a Big Problem in Utah

Methane pollution—from leaky equipment to intentional venting and flaring—harms public health and results in a loss of millions in royalties' revenue. As a state that has seen worsening air quality as a result of increasing energy production, Utah stands to benefit from policies that clean up methane pollution, the main component of natural gas.



Methane puts Utah families at risk

- When methane is released into the air, so too are **harmful pollutants that have significant public health consequences**. This includes toxic chemicals like benzene, which are linked to cancer, and smog-forming pollutants that can trigger asthma.
- The increased warming caused by methane pollution also sparks a domino effect that **increases ground-level ozone levels** that can also lead to asthma.
- The two biggest oil producing counties in Utah - Uintah and Duchesne are now **among the 15 most polluted in the country** for ozone smog pollution. These two counties had a combined **54 days that exceeded the national ozone standard** in 2013.

Methane leaks are an unnecessary waste

- **Utah is worst in the nation for methane wasted on tribal lands**. Utah is wasting more than \$17 million worth of natural gas from tribal lands in the state per year. Oil and gas operations in Utah wasted more gas on these lands than New Mexico, Colorado and Montana combined.
- Enough natural gas is lost on tribal and federal lands in the state to meet the annual heating and cooking needs for **all of the homes in Salt Lake City**. This pollution is equivalent to the annual greenhouse gas emissions of over 675,000 cars.
- Using available technology, the oil and gas industry can **cost-effectively cut methane pollution in half** over the next few years and grow jobs.

Methane pollution is threatening the climate

- Curbing methane pollution is critical because it is over **80 times more potent than carbon dioxide** in the first 20 years after its release, and is already responsible for a quarter of man-made warming.
- If federal action isn't taken, methane pollution from the oil and natural gas industry is projected to **increase around 25 percent** over the next 10 years.

Utah companies can help fix the problem and grow jobs

- Using available technology, the oil and gas industry can **cost-effectively cut methane pollution in half** over the next few years and grow jobs.
- Utah is home to eight companies that manufacture, sell and support methane control technologies, one of which is a headquartered and has manufacturing operations in the state.

Utah is starting to act on this problem

- The Utah Department of Environmental Quality has stated that **“increased oil and gas exploration and production in the Uinta Basin has contributed to the increase in... ozone [smog].”**
- Utah has made some pre positive steps recently by requiring that devices known as pneumatic controllers used by the oil and gas industry be retrofitted with lower emitting models.
- Even with these preliminary steps, Utah's efforts lag behind neighboring states. Utah should follow the lead of Colorado and Wyoming who have taken serious steps to address this harmful and wasteful pollution.

Methane pollution is a national problem that requires a national response.

- **Methane and air pollution know no state boundaries**. Utah should support strong federal efforts to cut methane which will also reduce the risk of air pollution.
- Federal regulators recently announced a suite of actions, including the **first ever direct regulation of methane pollution** from the oil and gas industry, and forthcoming standards to cut wasteful venting and flaring on federal lands.
- Now the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Environmental Protection Agency need to **move forward to reduce pollution** and ensure the oil and gas industry is minimizing waste and abiding by consistent and crucial clean air requirements.

BLM and EPA methane rules are vital to better protecting the health of Utahns and all Americans.