

No. 2 gas-producing state moves to curb air pollution

December 13 2018, by Marc Levy

Pennsylvania is aiming to curb air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions from its vast natural gas exploration fields, with the Democratic governor's administration proposing new regulations Thursday even as the Trump administration moves to relax federal requirements.

Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf's administration brought the proposal to a technical review committee, the first step in what could be a two- to three-year process spurred by a 2016 federal requirement.

The proposal would impose stronger limits on smog-forming pollutants and require companies to more aggressively search for [methane leaks](#) at existing oil and gas installations.

Environmental groups welcomed it but also say it should go farther in imposing limits on methane emissions. A gas-industry trade group, the Marcellus Shale Coalition, said it is concerned about the cost for companies to comply and urged the Wolf administration to wait until the administration of Republican President Donald Trump finalizes any proposed changes to the Obama-era 2016 rule.

Methane is the primary component of natural gas and is one of the most potent heat-trapping pollutants. Pennsylvania is the nation's second-largest natural gas producer after Texas, and the Marcellus Shale beneath much of Pennsylvania is the nation's most prolific natural gas reservoir.

Earlier this year, Pennsylvania began enforcing tougher standards to reduce [methane emissions](#) and other air pollutants from new or updated equipment at well sites and on pipelines, a move environmental advocates said put the state among the leaders in going beyond federal requirements.

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Citation: No. 2 gas-producing state moves to curb air pollution (2018, December 13) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2018-12-gas-producing-state-curb-air-pollution.html>

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