

# Greenhouse gases from oil and gas projected to continue to increase

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Derrick and platform of drilling gas wells in Marcellus Shale - Pennsylvania.  
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The fracking boom across the country has resulted in greenhouse gas

emissions steadily climbing each year since the United States has become the largest producer of oil and gas in the world.

As a result of the boom, there are plans over the next five years to build or extend 157 petroleum and [natural gas](#) drilling sites and chemical manufacturing and refinery [plants](#) across the country, according to federal records.

That expansion will result in [greenhouse gas emissions](#) across the U.S. totaling 990.5 million tons per year by 2025, according to a study by the Environmental Integrity Project.

The nonpartisan and [nonprofit group](#), established in 2002 by former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency attorneys, said that's the equivalent of 50 new coal-fired [power plants](#).

The emissions estimate includes the proposed Thailand-based PTT Global Chemical America ethane petrochemical plant in Belmont County. The so-called "cracker" plant, which would use natural gas and create ethylene, an ingredient used in plastics, would emit an estimated 1.785 million tons of greenhouse gases each year.

"It's company-supplied information. The big picture, especially for Appalachia—Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia—is this facility would create demand for even more oil and gas extraction and kind of lock this region into that economy," said Courtney Bernhardt, research director for the Environmental Integrity Project. "Right now, renewable sources of energy are available. And I know that this facility would be creating plastic, ultimately, but there are other ways to make plastic."

Ohio officials say the estimated \$5 billion plant, first announced in 2015, would be one of the state's largest economic development projects ever—if it goes through. To construct the plant, thousands of

construction jobs would be needed, and once the plant is up and running, there would be about several hundred permanent jobs.

While there has been no official announcement to move forward with the plant, permits have already been secured. JobsOhio, the state's economic development nonprofit agency, awarded \$30 million to prepare the site. PTT Global Chemical America spent more than \$100 million to conduct engineering designs.

The company also contributed \$10,000 to Gov. Mike DeWine's campaign fund a year ago.

"Every significant manufacturing facility produces emissions. The federal and state permits for the proposed PTTGCA plant require the use of best available control technology, along with extensive monitoring and compliance obligations—some of which were agreed to by the applicant as part of a settlement following appeal of the air permits," said Dan Tierney, spokesman for the governor's office.

The Environmental Integrity Project recommends that environmental agencies issue stronger permits, be better staffed to oversee compliance of companies, and that more accurate methods be used to monitor emissions.

"This study is from a longtime anti-oil and gas group that unfortunately, but predictably, continues to push the false narrative of either a [clean environment](#) or new job creation," Mike Chadsey, director of public relations for the Ohio Oil and Gas Association, said of the Environmental Integrity Project.

"In reality we can, and should, have both a clean and sustainable environment and good-paying, long-lasting jobs for hardworking Ohioans. That is why we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other groups to

continue to advocate for both huge projects like an ethane cracker as well as for common sense, reasonable and effective regulations."

In Ohio, 13.8 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions are already generated from petroleum and natural gas systems, chemical manufacturing and refineries, according to 2018 data from the Environmental Integrity Project.

Environmental groups have raised concerns about the amount of emissions and health effects if the plant is built.

"When viewed in the context of all the supporting infrastructure and the supply chain, those emissions start adding up," Bernhardt said.

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