CLEAN AIR TASK FORCE

Oil & Gas Methane: Mapping the Path to a 65% Reduction

To tackle climate change, we must dramatically reduce methane emissions.

In the short-term, **methane is >80 times more potent than CO_2**. Methane accounts for a quarter of today's global warming, yet levels in the atmosphere are surging. Quickly and significantly reducing methane pollution is one of the most important opportunities we have to slow the rate of climate change now.

The oil and gas sector is the largest human-caused source of methane in the U.S. If we want to stay below 1.5°C in warming, we must reduce methane emissions from the fossil fuel sector by 65% globally, according to the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC).

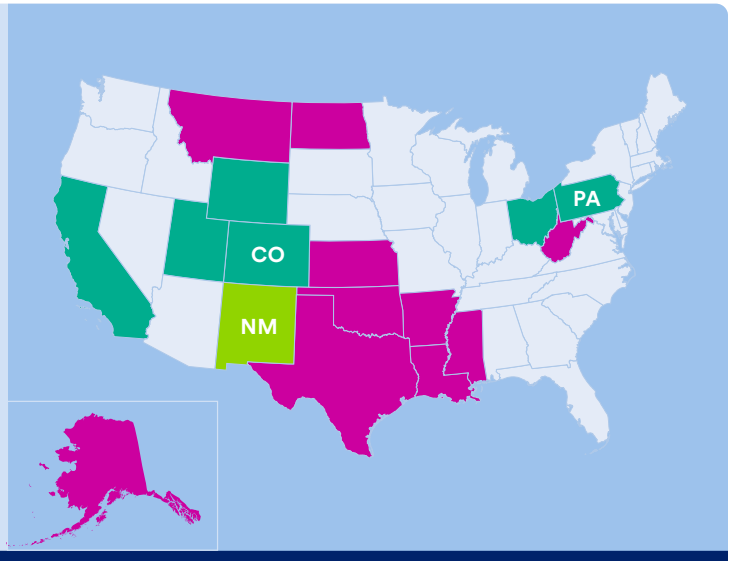
Using currently available technology, the U.S. can do its part to meet this global imperative, achieving a 65% reduction of methane from oil and gas by 2025.

Momentum at the state level has created strong precedents for action:

COLORADO: The first state to issue regulations for methane from oil and gas sector, Colorado recently strengthened requirements for key equipment.

PENNSYLVANIA: Current regulations cover new sources, and the state is working to adopt new rules that would cover older methane sources.

NEW MEXICO: Recently issued rules to reduce methane flaring, and will soon issue rules curbing methane pollution.



However, many large oil and gas producing states have failed to act to reduce their methane emissions. That's why **we need a national policy** that reflects the urgency of the climate crisis, building on progress at the state level to tackle methane emissions at scale.

The Issue

Without further action, oil and gas methane emissions are projected to reach nearly **12 million metric tons in 2025,** causing as much near-term warming as 260 coal-fired power plants.

The Proposal

LEAKS: The largest source of methane emissions from the oil and gas system is leaks: both simple leaking components and super-emitters – the infrequent but very large emissions events that arise from some problem or improper condition at oil and gas sites. **We can reduce these emissions using monthly leak detection and repair inspection programs or continuous monitoring techniques.**

PNEUMATIC EQUIPMENT: The next largest opportunity to reduce methane emissions is from outdated pneumatic equipment at oil and gas sites. These devices, ubiquitous at U.S. oil and gas sites, use gas pressure to operate equipment at sites where no electricity is present, but they are designed to release gas into the air when operating, and they often vent and leak far more gas than they are designed to. **By replacing this natural gas-driven pneumatic equipment with non-emitting alternatives, we can significantly reduce emissions.**

THE REMAINING MEASURES INCLUDE: Controlling emissions from storage tanks, removing exemptions that allow venting of emissions from well completions and workovers, capturing emissions from compressors and dehydrators, reducing venting and flaring of associated gas, and minimizing waste that occurs during equipment maintenance.

The Benefit

Together, these measures would have enormous climate benefits – reducing oil and gas methane emissions by 65%, or almost eight million tons of methane a year – a near-term climate benefit similar to replacing 150 million gasoline cars with cars powered with zero-carbon electricity.

More information can be found in our **detailed memo.**