

# America should follow Colorado's lead and reduce methane pollution from the oil and natural gas industry

*Colorado is a national leader in cleaning up methane pollution- a senseless waste of a valuable energy resource that also harms public health and contributes to climate change. Now the rest of the country should follow.*



## Colorado took action

- In 2014 Colorado became **the first state in the nation** to directly regulate methane pollution from the oil and natural gas industry. Colorado's rules include stringent measures to detect and repair leaks, and minimize venting and flaring.
- **Since the rules were adopted, Colorado's economic growth has exceeded projections.** The state regulations demonstrate that smart environmental policy can go hand in hand with economic growth.

## Methane leaks are an unnecessary waste

- Oil and natural gas producers **in Colorado wasted nearly 250,000 metric tons** of methane in 2013, before the state's rules were put into place.
- This is almost enough to meet the heating and cooking needs all of the homes in Colorado Springs for a year, and nearly equivalent to the annual greenhouse gas emissions of about 1.3 million cars.

## Methane pollution puts Colorado 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 other smog-forming pollutants that can trigger asthma.
- The increased warming caused by methane also sparks a domino effect, as warming **increases ground-level ozone levels** that can also lead to asthma.
- **More than 3 million Coloradans** live in areas where ozone levels exceed national clean air standards — areas that also contain more than 14,000 oil and gas wells. Eleven counties across Colorado exceeded the national ozone standard during **31 days** in 2013.

## Colorado companies can fix the problem

- Using available technology, the oil and gas industry can **cost-effectively cut methane pollution** in half over the next few years.
- Colorado **ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation** for companies that manufacture, sell, and support methane control technologies — it is home to 19 of these companies, the majority of which are small businesses. Additionally, four companies in this industry have manufacturing plants in the state.

## 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** nationally over the next 10 years.

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

- Colorado is a leader in reducing methane pollution and should support strong federal efforts to cut methane nationally and level the playing field.
- The Obama administration recently announced a suite of actions, including direct national regulation of methane pollution from the oil and gas industry, and standards to cut wasteful venting and flaring on federal lands.
- Now **EPA and BLM 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.
- **National methane pollution rules are vital to better protecting the health of Coloradans and all Americans.**