

August 6, 2026

Pennsylvania Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (AQTAC) Meeting, 9:15 a.m. (EDT)
Virtual Meeting

Remarks by Talor Musil regarding methane protections to the Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment today. My name is Talor Musil and I am the Field Manager at the Environmental Health Project, a nonprofit organization defending public health in the face of oil and gas development. Since 2012, our organization has directly engaged hundreds of Pennsylvanians impacted by the air pollution emitted from oil and gas facilities, providing health education and air quality analysis resources to help communities understand and mitigate their exposures. With these communities in mind, I would like to express my support for the state methane reduction rulemakings announced by the Governor on July 25 and on today's agenda. By grounding the forthcoming standards for existing and new facilities in state authority, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection will lay a solid foundation for public health protections that have impact and longevity.

Strong methane protections will lower the risk of experiencing these health impacts for the [1.5 million Pennsylvanians living within half a mile of oil and gas facilities](#), such as wells, compressor stations, and processing facilities. A "strong" rule would include:

- frequent, verified, mandatory inspections using a leak detection and repair program at all well sites;
- requirements to install sophisticated pollution control equipment;
- robust enforcement mechanisms; and
- significant penalties for violations.

As a public health organization, EHP is primarily concerned with the health impacts from exposure to methane's co-pollutants, such as [toxic volatile organic compounds \(VOCs\)](#), and the risk of [illness](#) and injury from extreme weather events caused by methane's contribution to climate change. Because methane leaks are a risk with low-producing wells and high-producing wells alike, as well as with both conventional and unconventional wells, all of these categories should be held to similarly strict standards. Notably, [more than sixty percent](#) of Pennsylvania's methane emissions come from low-producing well sites, half of which are owned by just 11 corporations, including one operator who owns more than 1 in 4 of these wells.¹ Research also

¹ This well ownership analysis was conducted by the Environmental Defense Fund using 2024 Enverus data.

shows that Pennsylvania's low-producing well sites have the same climate impact as 21 million passenger cars or 23 coal-fired power plants operating for 1 year.²

Thank you again to the DEP and Governor Shapiro for taking this critical step towards the development of strong and durable methane standards. Reducing methane emissions will improve both the short- and long-term health outcomes of Pennsylvanians.

About the Environmental Health Project

The [Environmental Health Project](#) (EHP) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit public health organization that defends public health in the face of shale gas development. EHP provides frontline communities with timely monitoring, interpretation, and guidance while engaging diverse stakeholders: health professionals, researchers, community organizers, policy makers, and others.

² Climate impacts were determined by the Environmental Defense Fund using AR6 GWPs of fossil methane and [EPA emissions factors](#) for passenger car emissions and coal power plant emissions.