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Environmental Health Project Statement Urging Wolf Administration and DEP to Strengthen Methane Rule Proposal on Existing Oil and Gas Facilities

MCMURRAY, PA, December 12, 2018 – A recent analysis by the Environmental Defense Fund estimates that oil and gas facilities in Pennsylvania emit more than 520,000 tons of methane annually – five times higher than what the industry is reporting to the state. These emissions would create the same amount of pollution as 11 coal-fired power plants over the next 20+ years. Gov. Wolf and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have already finalized methane controls on general permits for new and modified natural gas well sites, compressor stations and transmission systems. They now face action on methane controls for *existing* methane sources.

Raina Rippel, director of the Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project (EHP), a public health organization serving people who suffer the ill effects of exposure to hazardous pollutants released from shale gas operations, issued the following statement:

“Our own data analysis, and that of dozens of other independent organizations, shows a direct correlation between pollution released at every stage of shale gas extraction and a host of serious health issues. These issues include asthma, skin rashes, fatigue, stress, depression, and an increased incidence of low birth weights and congenital heart disease among babies. Moreover, **leaking methane poses a serious risk to our climate, which creates additional severe and costly public health problems.**

“Because commonsense controls on methane – the primary constituent of natural gas – can help to save lives and ensure healthier homes, workplaces, and schools across the commonwealth, Pennsylvania should continue to strengthen such controls and adopt a comprehensive rule for existing natural gas infrastructure.”

About the Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project

The Southwest Pennsylvania [Environmental Health Project](#) (EHP) is a nonprofit public health organization that assists and supports residents of Southwestern Pennsylvania and beyond who believe their health has been, or could be, impacted by unconventional oil and gas development (UOGD, or “fracking”). EHP’s team includes medical professionals, community service professionals, and public health scientists who are available to assist individuals and communities in many ways. EHP offers healthcare evaluations and serves as a resource center for information related to UOGD activities. EHP also provides limited air and water quality monitoring devices to qualified residents.