

Opinion: EPA goes halfway on methane emissions

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The Environmental Protection Agency's proposed new restrictions on methane emissions are a reasonable imposition on the oil and gas industry. Whether they're adequate to help fight climate change is another question, and the answer depends on what the government does next.

Under the proposed rules, new or modified oil and gas wells would have to use pumps and compressors that better capture methane, and companies would have to work harder to find and fix leaks – cutting the sector's methane emissions by 20 to 30 percent. That would be about halfway toward the Obama administration's goal of pushing methane emissions from the oil and gas industry down 40 to 45 percent below their 2012 levels by 2025.

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