

Final Rule: 2011 Revisions to the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Rule Affecting the Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems (Subpart W) Source Categories

ACTION

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is promulgating amendments to specific provisions in 40 CFR part 98 subparts A (General Provisions) and W (Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems).
- This action amends provisions in subparts A and W to correct technical and editorial errors and clarifies certain provisions that were the subject of questions or concerns. These amendments will assist facilities with meeting reporting requirements, and provide greater specificity on applicability and reporting thresholds.
- These amendments maintain the accuracy of the data while, in some cases, reduce the burden for those entities that report under these subparts. These amendments have no appreciable effect on the total amount of GHG emissions covered by the GHG reporting program.
- Many of these amendments address issues raised in petitions from industry groups

FINAL RULE OVERVIEW

- In general, these amendments clarify reporting requirements, and ensure consistency across the calculation, monitoring and data reporting requirements for Subparts A and W. Note, however, that this rule makes important clarifications; it does not cover all remaining GHG reporting issues affecting these industries that are under consideration for revisions by the Agency.
- EPA is finalizing technical revisions to the following subparts:

Subpart A	General Provisions
Subpart W	Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems

SUBPART A (General Provisions)

Final amendments include:

- Revising the general provisions by adding a new paragraph that states that for the purposes of applying the terms owner and operator used throughout the general provisions, facilities reporting under the onshore production industry segment and the natural gas distribution

industry segment of subpart W will use their uniquely defined facility definitions as outlined in subpart W.

- Revising the definitions for continuous bleed and intermittent bleed pneumatic devices to clarify that continuous bleed pneumatic devices supply gas to process control devices and not to measurement devices, and also that intermittent bleed pneumatic devices automatically maintain process conditions and can be snap-acting or throttling devices that discharge all or a portion of the full volume of the actuator intermittently when control action is necessary.

SUBPART W (Petroleum and Natural Gas Systems)

Final amendments include:

- Clarifying definitions for onshore petroleum and natural gas production, onshore natural gas processing, and onshore natural gas transmission compression to assist in determining applicability.
- For the onshore petroleum and natural gas segment measurement requirements, replacing the “field” designation with “sub-basin category” consisting of counties and major formation types.
- Establishing a 1 mmBtu threshold for internal combustion engines (not compressor drivers) in the onshore production and natural gas distribution industry segments. Units that fall below this threshold would only need to report activity data.
- Clarifying key terms such as blowdown vent stacks, well venting and flaring, well completion and well workover event boundaries, and sonic and subsonic flow rates in pipelines.
- Allowing the natural gas distribution industry segment the option of surveying all of their stations over a 5 year period.
- Finalizing a default natural gas composition of 95% methane and 1% carbon dioxide for specific industry segments that is consistent with other parts of subpart W.
- Allowing company records to be used for flow meter calibration.
- Refining some equations and variables to correct inaccuracies, errors or inconsistencies.

NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION

- A pre-publication version of the preamble and regulatory text is available on EPA’s website at: <http://www.epa.gov/ghgreporting/reporters/subpart/w.html>

MORE INFORMATION

- The preamble and regulatory text will be published in the Federal Register and will be made available at www.regulations.gov, EPA’s electronic public docket and comment system. Other information will also be made available at this website. The Docket ID number is: EPA-HQ- OAR-2011-0512. Information is also available at the EPA Docket Center (EPA/DC) Public Reading Room. For more information, please call 202-566–1744 between the hours of 8:30 A.M. and 4:30 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time.

- For more information on other provisions of the GHG Reporting Rule finalized in October 2009 and the subsequent amendments during 2010 and 2011, including implementation information and a schedule of training opportunities visit the EPA web site: <http://www.epa.gov/ghgreporting/index.html>.
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