

U.S. EPA Publishes Regulations for MSW Landfills on August 29, 2016



The U.S. EPA Landfill Methane Outreach Program (LMOP) is providing its Partners and other interested parties information about the final updated performance standards and emission guidelines for municipal solid waste (MSW) landfills.

On August 29, 2016, the U.S. EPA Office of Air Quality Planning & Standards published two final rules:

- **New Source Performance Standards (NSPS)** to reduce landfill gas emissions from MSW landfills constructed, modified or reconstructed after July 17, 2014; and
- **Emission Guidelines and Compliance Times (EG)** to reduce landfill gas emissions from MSW landfills constructed, modified or reconstructed on or before July 17, 2014.

Both actions are part of the President's March 2014 [Climate Action Plan: Strategy to Reduce Methane Emissions](#). Reducing methane emissions is an essential part of an overall strategy to address climate change. Regulatory and voluntary programs have helped reduce methane emissions from landfills by 18 percent from 1990 to 2014; however, landfill methane emissions remain substantial.

EPA determined it was appropriate to update these rules based on significant changes in the landfill industry that have occurred since the initial rules were issued in 1996, an improved understanding of landfill gas emissions, and public comments.

Landfills with a design capacity of at least 2.5 million metric tons and at least 2.5 million cubic meters of waste in place are subject to the rules. These criteria are the same as in the 1996 rules.

For both the NSPS and EG, EPA determined that a well-designed and well-operated landfill gas collection and control system remains the best system of emission reduction for landfill gas. Both rules require affected landfills to install and operate a gas collection and control system within 30 months after landfill gas emissions reach the threshold of 34 megagrams (metric tons) of non-methane organic compounds (NMOC) per year. This threshold was previously 50 megagrams per year in the 1996 rules.

Landfills may control landfill gas by combusting it in an enclosed combustion device for energy generation, by using a treatment system that processes the collected gas for sale or beneficial use, or by flaring it.

To read the final rules and other related information, see EPA's Air Toxics webpage at <https://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/landfill/landflpg.html>.

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