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## BLM proposes methane reform to 30-year-old oil and gas regulations

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The Bureau of Land Management is proposing an update to the 30-year-old regulations for oil and gas operations on federal and Native American lands. The proposal aims to reduce the venting, flaring, and leaking of methane from the 100,000 onshore oil and gas wells on federal lands. The new regulation aims to reduce intentional and unintentional gas releases on federal lands by 50 percent and would create gradually reducing caps for methane leaks, phasing out reductions over a three year period. The reform includes requirements for replacing old infrastructure with best available technology, periodically testing for leaks, and submitting a “waste minimization plan” before a new lease can be approved.

Methane, the main constituent of natural gas, is a green house gas that is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Between 2009 and 2014, 375 billion cubic feet of methane was vented, leaked, or flared by federal leases, enough to power 5.1 million homes for a year.

Once the proposal is submitted to the Federal Register it will undergo a 60 day comment period, followed by a review and revise period, before BLM releases the final rule. BLM plans to hold public meetings in February and March. For more information, please visit <https://www.doi.gov/pressrelease>.

UPDATE: BLM published the proposed regulation to the Federal Register on February 8 and can be read [here](#).

Sources: Bureau of Land Management ([blm.gov](http://blm.gov)), E&E News

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