



MARCH 2024

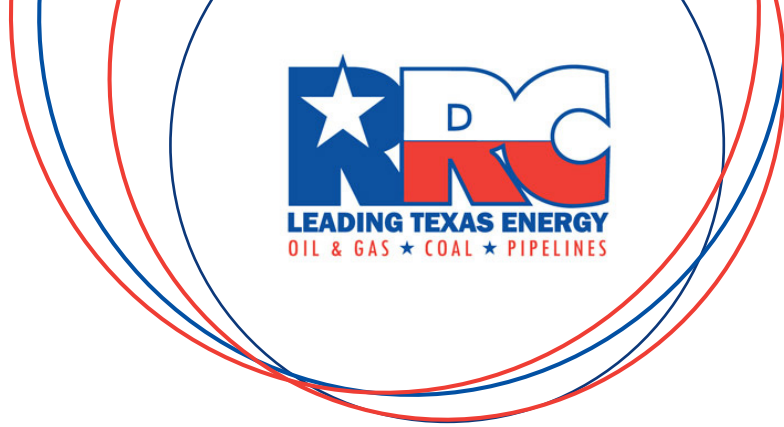
Energy News



From the Field Photo

Workover rig on an SWD well in Burleson County

Photo from Timothy Wojcik



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Upcoming Events

RRC Open MeetingWednesday, April 24, 2024

[VIEW OPEN MEETING WEBCASTS ▶](#)

RRC Adopts New Rule for Energy Conservation Programs

RRC commissioners voted to adopt a new rule, **16 TAC §7.480**, at their March open meeting, which allows natural gas distribution companies to offer energy conservation programs to their customers for rebates, discounts, or incentives. The rule was proposed after House Bill 2263 was passed during the 88th Texas Legislative Session, which allows local distribution companies to submit plans for energy conservation programs to the Commission for approval.

Local gas distribution companies will then be allowed to recover the costs prudently incurred for putting these energy efficiency programs in place. Energy-saving light bulbs and smart thermostats are examples of some of the ways everyday household items can perform many of the same functions using less energy.

Rule TAC §7.480 provides a framework for natural gas energy conservation programs across the state to encourage Texans to participate in energy efficiency efforts. Natural gas distribution companies can begin submitting applications on April 8, 2024.

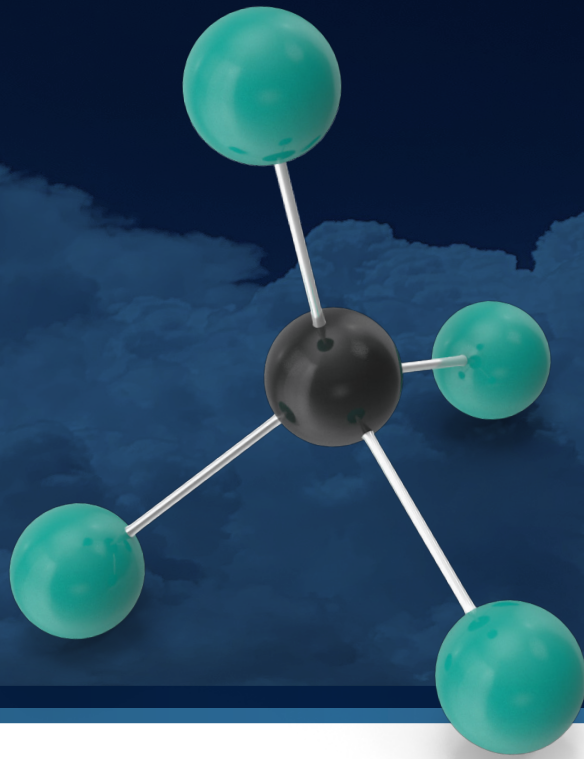
Railroad Commission Challenges the EPA's Methane Rule

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published its Methane Rule in the Federal Register this month, and the Texas Attorney General filed a lawsuit challenging the rule. RRC Commissioners voted in late January to refer the rule to the Office of the Attorney General to challenge it because of the serious issues it would cause to stifle the Texas economy.

There have been major breakthroughs in emissions reduction and also previously identified concerns that were expanded on in [comments it submitted](#) in collaboration with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. The Permian Basin in Texas reduced methane emissions by more than 76 percent from 2011 to 2021, according to the Texas Methane & Flaring Coalition, while simultaneously increasing production over 345 percent during the same time period.

Texas is the highest producer of both oil and natural gas in the country, bringing countless jobs and a booming economy to our great state. The EPA's new methane rule will only force the U.S. to usher in foreign imports of these vital resources and drastically reduce the production of domestic oil and gas. Thus, increasing the very emissions that the EPA proposes to reduce on a global scale by boosting the need for these resources from other countries that typically do not produce clean energy at the level Texas has.

“Texas is taking action against the federal government’s egregious overreach,” said RRC Chairman Christi Craddick. “The latest attack on oil and gas is nothing more than an attempt to shut down the industry that creates hundreds of thousands of jobs, funds 1/3 of our state’s economy, and produces clean and reliable energy for



the world. I appreciate the Office of the Attorney General for filing suit against the EPA's methane rule and look forward to protecting our state's jobs and economy by providing reasonable and consistent regulation to the oil and gas industry."

"The real victim of President Biden's methane rule isn't Big Oil, it will be the small oil and gas producers, who do most of the nation's oil exploration and produce more than 83% of oil and 90% of natural gas," said RRC Commissioner Wayne Christian. "This methane rule will target 50% of U.S. marginal wells and likely 70% of Texas' marginal wells. Keeping these wells in production not only reduces waste and the state's plugging liability but also provides funding for our schools, protects the stability of our electricity grid, and puts food on the table for thousands of Texans."

"I applaud the Office of Attorney General for moving forward against the Biden Administration's harmful methane rule," said RRC Commissioner Jim Wright. "This rule is yet another attempt to harm domestic oil and gas production by forcing small, independent operators, who are the backbone of the industry and the communities they represent, out of business."

The RRC will continue to place the safety of Texans and the protection of the environment as its highest priority, while leading the nation in the production of essential resources like oil and gas.

[READ A COPY OF THE LAWSUIT FILED BY THE OAG](#)



Preparations Helped Oil & Gas Industry Withstand Damaging Wildfires

A welcome update came in March when the Texas Forest Service announced the damaging wildfires in the Panhandle were once and for all completely contained thanks to the ceaseless efforts of state and local emergency teams.

Railroad Commission staff and operators worked to ensure safety in the communities affected, and ensure there were no major disruptions in oil and gas production during the perilous fires that tore through the area.

Operators in the Panhandle took precautions that proved crucial in safeguarding oil and gas leases from the threat of fire. Steps taken included mowing grass and treating weeds in their area to keep fuels for fires off leases and well pads. The aerial photo shown below is a perfect example of how rigorous safety measures helped save a gas lease in Carson County. You can see where land near the well site burned, as shown by the blackened area, but the fire did not affect the well pointed out in the center.



Gas Well in Carson County, Texas Panhandle



Cleared well site in Moore County

RRC safety officers also joined the state's coordinated response to the wildfires, manning the State Operations Center to be in direct contact with other emergency responders while maintaining communications with regulated entities in the Panhandle including gas utilities.

After releasing a public statement about our work on Feb. 28, the RRC also sent a **notice to operators** during the wildfire

threat advising them of precautions they could take.

The wildfires in the Panhandle serve as another reminder of how the Railroad Commission is committed to protecting public safety and the environment and works to minimize potential disruptions to production of oil and gas during an emergency.

Chairman Craddick

COMMISSIONERS' CORNER



In March, Chairman Christi Craddick visited with numerous business groups across the state to discuss the Railroad Commission and the oil and gas industry. These groups included Leadership classes from Kaufman and Sweetwater, industry trade associations like TIPRO and TXOGA, and business leaders from the Texas Business Leadership Council.

Additionally, the Chairman met with her counterparts at the National Petroleum Council to produce a report on air emissions from the oil and gas industry. While still underway, this report aims to provide facts and data about the state of greenhouse gas emissions in the oil and gas industry and includes input from industry leaders, stakeholders, and regulators.



Commissioner Christian

COMMISSIONERS' CORNER



Listen to Commissioner Christian's "Wayne's World" podcasts.

<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/wayne-christian>





Commissioner Wright

COMMISSIONERS' CORNER

In March, Commissioner Wright spent time at the University of Texas, where he spoke to a Petroleum Engineering class about the important role energy plays in our modern society and how the Railroad Commission of Texas works to ensure the safe development of Texas natural resources for the benefit of our citizens.

“I always enjoy speaking to students who are interested in pursuing a career in the oil and gas industry,” said Commissioner Wright. “Today’s students will be tomorrow’s leaders, and they will be responsible for securing our nation’s future energy needs. Based on my conversations today, I believe our future to be very bright indeed.”



Prior to speaking to the class, Commissioner Wright issued a “pop-quiz” which, as expected, the students aced. Take a look at some of the questions and see how you do!

1. How many active, producing oil and gas wells are in Texas?
 - A. 96,563
 - B. 28,745
 - C. 450,232
 - D. 287,450

2. If Texas were its own country, we would currently rank ___ in the world for oil production.
 - A. 5th
 - B. 13th
 - C. 4th
 - D. 7th

3. Which of the following is NOT within the Railroad Commission’s jurisdiction?
 - A. Coal & Uranium Mining Operations
 - B. Intrastate Pipelines
 - C. Natural Gas utilities
 - D. Railroads

4. What year was the Railroad Commission established?
 - A. 1836
 - B. 1891
 - C. 1923
 - D. 1876

5. How many steers were born in Texas in the last 12 months?
 - A. 531,680
 - B. 2,236,481
 - C. 256,181
 - D. 0

Answers: D,C,D,B,D

Oil & Gas Production Statistics

View monthly production totals of crude oil, condensate and total oil; and of gas well gas, casinghead gas, and total natural gas.

[VIEW CURRENT PRODUCTION STATISTICS ▶](#)

Enforcement Actions

The Commission has primary oversight and enforcement of the state's oil and gas industry and intrastate pipeline safety. View RRC's Latest Enforcement Actions here.

[VIEW LATEST ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS ▶](#)

Public GIS Viewer

The Public GIS Viewer allows users to view oil, gas and pipeline data in a map view.

[LAUNCH THE PUBLIC GIS VIEWER ▶](#)