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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**EMNRD marks major milestone in program to reduce methane waste from oil and gas operations**

*New Data Portal Provides Additional Details on Operator Gas Capture Baselines & Compliance Schedules to Achieve 98% Gas Capture by December 31, 2026*

**SANTA FE, NM** -- The New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) has sent a reminder to oil and gas operators across the state that February 28, 2023 is the first deadline to certify that they are on track to be in full compliance with the state's methane waste rules.

The department also launched a web portal for operators to submit their compliance certifications. Members of the public can access the portal to review operators' compliance information, which is available [here](#).

The methane waste rules, enacted on May 25, 2021, require all operators to capture 98 percent of their produced natural gas by December 31, 2026. The rules also prohibit routine venting and flaring of natural gas.

The rules set out a schedule—and a series of steps—for operators to reach that 98 percent capture rate in graduated fashion. Phase 1 of the program required operators to do robust data collection and reporting to identify natural gas loss at every stage of the oil and gas production and midstream processes.

**Working from established baselines**

The reports operators submitted during Phase 1 were used to establish baseline capture rates for individual operators. EMNRD's Oil Conservation Division notified each operator of their baseline and gave them schedules for increasing their individual capture rates during subsequent reporting cycles until they reach the 98 percent capture rate by 2026.

Operators are now in Phase 2 of the graduated compliance program, in which they must certify that they are on track to reach the full 98 percent capture by 2026.

Starting from the baselines established in Phase 1 of the program, operators are now required to certify that they are meeting or exceeding their established schedules for gas capture each year. February 28, 2023 is the first certification deadline. OCD's Notice to Operators explaining this new database and the upcoming certification requirement is available [here](#).

“We are focused on this important milestone and will continue to reconcile any data integrity issues and anomalies in operator reports,” said Acting OCD Director Dylan Fuge. “We will take enforcement action when necessary and appropriate to ensure operators are complying with these requirements.”

OCD encourages operators to continue reaching out if they have complications with submissions as well questions or feedback about the program to [OCD.engineer@enmrd.nm.gov](mailto:OCD.engineer@enmrd.nm.gov). Individuals also can contact the OCD at [OCD.enviro@enmrd.nm.gov](mailto:OCD.enviro@enmrd.nm.gov) for any compliance concerns.

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