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State agencies begin stakeholder process on methane regulatory strategy

Outreach events planned in Farmington, Carlsbad and Albuquerque

SANTA FE — The New Mexico Departments of the Environment (NMED) and Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources (EMNRD) are beginning stakeholder outreach efforts as work continues to develop the state's first methane reduction regulations per Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's executive order on climate change.

A key component of the [executive order](#) is the development of an enforceable regulatory framework to ensure methane reductions from the oil and natural gas sector and to prevent waste from new and existing sources.

"In undertaking this regulatory effort, collaboration between regulators, communities, industry and environmental groups is imperative to enacting lasting changes to methane regulations in New Mexico," said Environment Department Secretary James Kenney. "EMNRD Sec. Cottrell Propst and I look forward to meeting with stakeholders to gain ideas, perspectives, concerns and innovative ideas throughout this regulatory effort."

"The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department looks forward to kicking off our stakeholder engagement in the coming weeks as we continue our important partnership with the New Mexico Environment Department to develop rules to curb methane," EMNRD Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst said. "Our departments will create cutting-edge rules and regulations pursuant to the climate executive order. Collaborating with stakeholders and gaining expert insights is a crucial step in this process."

Public stakeholder engagement events will take place throughout the state:

- 1-5 p.m. July 29, San Juan Community College, Farmington
- 1-5 p.m. July 30, University of New Mexico School of Law, Albuquerque
- 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Aug. 7, Nuclear Waste Partnership Building, Carlsbad

More information on these events will be available on the NMED and EMNRD websites as details are finalized. Following the meetings, a summary and presentation materials will be posted online.

During the stakeholder meetings, NMED and EMNRD will provide an overview of their authorities to regulate methane from the oil and natural gas industry. Ultimately, two separate rulemakings will be necessary. One proceeding will take place before the New Mexico Oil Conservation Commission for the regulation of methane as a wasted resource. The other will take place before the Environmental Improvement Board for the regulation of methane and volatile organic compounds related to air quality impacts. NMED and EMNRD are working together to ensure these rules are complementary and do not result in redundant requirements.

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas with a 20-year global warming potential of more than 84 times that of carbon dioxide, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Nearly one-third of methane emissions in the U.S. come from oil and natural gas production, transmission and distribution.

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