



## DEP ISSUES ITS PRELIMINARY STATE PLAN FOR METHANE REDUCTION AT OIL AND GAS FACILITIES

On May 31, 2025, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) released its long-awaited preliminary state plan for implementation of the federal OOOOc methane emission regulations in Pennsylvania. For months, PIOGA, has been preparing for the State Plan's release, including having meetings with state and federal leaders and participating in industry-wide conferences with other state and national trade associations.

With the release of the preliminary State Plan, DEP has now kicked off a fast-paced timeline that will end with the potential issuance of the final State Plan, which must occur no later than March 9, 2026.

PIOGA knows that many are extremely concerned about what OOOOc means for the Pennsylvania oil and gas industry. This fact sheet will be the first of many communications and seminars that PIOGA will host over the coming months to keep its members, and the oil and gas industry as a whole, prepared for the 2026 deadline and what's to come after that.

**The preliminary State Plan is 193 pages long; this fact sheet will help answer the most pressing questions as PIOGA's dialogue with state and federal leaders continues over the coming months.**

### WHAT IS OOOOC?

Formally known as Title 40, Chapter I, Subchapter C, Part 60, Subpart OOOOc – “Emissions Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Existing Crude Oil and Natural Gas Facilities”, OOOOc is an extensive federal regulation prepared and issued by the Biden Administration emission guidelines and compliance schedules for the control of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from designated facilities in the crude oil and natural gas source category. The rule applies to essentially any oil and gas facility constructed, modified, or reconstructed on or **before** December 6, 2022 (a different rule, known commonly as Subpart OOOOb, deals with facilities constructed after December 6, 2022). **It is estimated that over 95% of active oil and gas facilities in Pennsylvania were constructed prior to December 6, 2022.**

### OOOOC IS A FEDERAL RULE; WHY IS DEP INVOLVED?

OOOOc is essentially divided into two parts. The first part requires state environmental agencies to develop a state plan for the control and reduction of GHGs in that state. The second part is an extensive model rule that provides states the basis for creating their model rule.

### WHAT IS IN DEP'S PRELIMINARY STATE PLAN?

The preliminary State Plan is 193 pages long (single spaced!) and is divided into sixteen different sections with a few appendices. Sections I, III, X, XI, XIII, XIV and XV were written by DEP to introduce OOOOc and explain how OOOOc will be implemented and enforced in Pennsylvania.

The remainder of the preliminary State Plan, which comprises the vast majority of the document, is the federal model rule essentially word for word.

## **I HAVE AN OIL OR NATURAL GAS FACILITY CONSTRUCTED OR MODIFIED BEFORE DECEMBER 6, 2022. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?**

Unless something changes, you will have to ensure that your impacted facilities are compliant with OOOOc likely no later than **March 2029**. Obviously, there are various questions such as: What are impacted facilities? What do you mean by compliance? How will DEP enforce this?

It's important to note that no one will have final answers to any of this until the final State Plan is released in 2026. However, PIOGA does not expect much to change between the preliminary and final State Plans. So, as of now, here are some answers to the most pressing questions.

### What facilities are covered by OOOOc?

- Wells, Compressors (both centrifugal and reciprocating), Pneumatic Equipment, Storage Vessels, and Fugitive Emission Components

### What does OOOOc actually require?

- The goal of OOOOc is to significantly reduce methane emissions from oil and gas facilities. OOOOc requires:
  - o Fugitive emissions monitors (LDAR) be implemented on all components of facilities using Optical Gas Imaging (OGI) or equipment permitted under EPA Method 21 on a quarterly basis. **Audio, Visual, Olfactory (AVO) monitoring will no longer be permitted except for (1) continuous cover and closed vent systems; (2) single or small well sites; and (3) during leak repair.**
  - o Pneumatic controllers either be zero-emission devices OR have their emissions routed to a control device with at least 95% emission reduction
  - o Stop all venting of liquids and associated gases except in emergency situations
  - o Enhanced performance requirements for flaring, including prohibiting flaring as a routine control method in a better alternative exists
  - o Implement vent, cover, and control devices on storage vessels that emit more than 20 metric tons of methane per year.
- Operators must also maintain records for five years on a rolling basis for inspection and reporting on a regular basis to EPA

### How will DEP enforce the State Plan?

- DEP will enforce the State Plan through air quality general permits and inspection of impacted facilities. Those with impacted facilities will be required to obtain air quality general permits to continue operating, with the permits mandating compliance with the OOOOc requirements.
- The air quality general permit has yet to be developed by DEP. It will be separately subject to public comment.

- **Importantly, DEP is bypassing any formal rulemaking. This means that no independent regulatory review will occur for the OOOOc State Plan or the general permit. NOW IS YOUR ONLY TIME TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

What happens if I can't afford to comply or can't get a permit?

- DEP is welcoming public comment and testimony on whether it should apply to EPA for exceptions for oil and gas facilities that are nearing the end of their remaining useful life (RULOF).
- As currently written, however, any facility that does not comply with OOOOc and receive an air quality general permit by March 2029 will be forced to be shut down.

Are there differences for oil, conventional natural gas, and unconventional natural gas production?

- No, and there are not even exceptions for low producing, marginal, or stripper wells. The rules apply universally across all types of oil and gas facilities.

### **THIS IS ONLY A PRELIMINARY STATE PLAN. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

DEP is required by the federal OOOOc rule to hold public hearings and accept public comments for the next sixty days.

Public comments must be received no later than **July 30, 2025** using the Department's eComment system at <https://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/eComment/>, by e-mail to [ecomment@pa.gov](mailto:ecomment@pa.gov), or by mail to Policy Office, Department of Environmental Protection, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P.O. Box 2063, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2063.

Public hearings will be held both virtually and throughout the Commonwealth in June and July. Testimony is permitted at these hearings, limited to five minutes in length, and must be submitted a week in advance to Amanda Rodriguez at P.O. Box 8468, Harrisburg, PA 17105, (717) 787-7677 or [amarodrigu@pa.gov](mailto:amarodrigu@pa.gov).

Date	Time	Location	Address
June 30, 2025	6:30pm	Yost Auditorium, Washington and Jefferson College	60 S Lincoln Street, Washington, PA 15301
July 1, 2025	6:30pm	Drake Well Museum	202 Museum Ln, Titusville, PA 16354
July 7, 2025	12:00pm	Rachel Carson State Office Building, Room 105	400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101
July 9, 2025	6:30pm	DEP's North Central Regional Office	208 West Third Street, Suite 101, Williamsport, PA 17701

July 10, 2025	12:00pm	Virtual via Microsoft Teams	<b>Meeting ID:</b> 216 430 979 064 1 <b>Passcode:</b> ui2vU70y, <b>Dial in:</b> +1 267-332-8737 <b>Phone conference ID:</b> 358 355 142#
July 14, 2025	6:30pm	Susquehanna County Public Safety Center	210 Public Way, New Milford, PA 18834
July 16, 2025	6:30pm	College Hall 144/148, Montgomery County Community College, Blue Bell Campus	340 Morris Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422

**PIOGA will be preparing and submitting a public comment, as well as attending several of the public hearings and presenting testimony. We strongly encourage anyone impacted by OOOOc to get involved, ask questions, and submit comments and/or give testimony at a public hearing.**

### **DIDN'T THE EPA ANNOUNCE THAT IT WAS DEREGULATING THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY? WHY IS THE OOOOc RULE STILL IN EFFECT? AND WHY IS PENNSYLVANIA STILL IMPLEMENTING IT?**

In March of 2025, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin announced that EPA was going to begin the processes of reconsidering whether GHGs should continue to be considered endangering the environment and deregulating the oil and natural gas industry. Unfortunately, this takes time; and, the Biden-era GHG rules such as OOOOc remain fully in effect. Neither EPA nor DEP have any choice but to continue to develop, review, and approve State Plans until the extensive and lengthy deregulation process can occur and be completed.

Industry groups, such as PIOGA and IPAA, are constantly communicating with EPA and other federal leaders to delay implementation of OOOOc until more sensible methane reduction regulations can be considered and enacted.

The biggest unknown today is this: if EPA rolls back or lessens the Biden-era OOOOc requirements, will DEP follow that roll back, or will it continue full steam ahead with OOOOc as it exists today? **Let's make no mistake: OOOOc will irreparably strangle Pennsylvania's oil and gas industry, take hundreds of small businesses under, and put thousands of Pennsylvania citizens out of work.**

In the coming days, weeks, and months, PIOGA will not just be on the front lines of this battle but will keep its members constantly and consistently informed. This will start with two virtual seminars that PIOGA will hold for its members on **June 17 and June 25, both at 11:00 a.m. You must register for these seminars, and registration information will be sent out soon.**

**Link to input/comment form:**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=f32xQlj5cEybvUjrcmbYpfGrhUU3PHdPnb62gLE7EftUMzEzT1o3RTMxWEFLVUoiTKiaSEIHNo8yRS4u>