

The PIOGA Press

The monthly newsletter of the
Pennsylvania Independent Oil & Gas Association
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TOP NEWS

- 0000c Updates
- State Budget Update
- PIOGA Event Updates
- Industry News

Powering the Future: Pennsylvania's \$90 Billion Tech Investment Highlights Oil & Gas Opportunity

Pennsylvania is poised to receive an unprecedented **\$90 billion in AI and energy infrastructure investments**, signaling a major shift in the state's economic trajectory. Much of this investment is tied to data centers and artificial intelligence platforms—industries that demand enormous, consistent, and affordable power. According to Dan Weaver, President and Executive Director of PIOGA, this signals a critical opportunity for Pennsylvania's oil and gas sector.

"Pennsylvania's emergence as a destination for AI and data center investment highlights its growing role as both an energy and innovation hub," said Weaver. "Data centers demand large quantities of reliable power—and the closer they are to the energy source, the more profitable and secure they become. For the oil and gas industry, this is more than an energy opportunity—it's a chance to be a foundational part of the digital economy. Energy is security, and Pennsylvania is positioned to deliver, if companies are willing to jump through the regulatory hoops. I am fearful that we are going to miss a lot of the opportunities unless we can address the perception of our business climate quickly."

A Moment of Irony—and Risk

The timing of this investment is not without irony. While bil-

lions are being funneled into energy-hungry tech infrastructure, the state's core energy producers—particularly in oil and gas—are under increasing regulatory and political pressure. Weaver points out the contradiction:

"There's real irony in seeing billions poured into energy-hungry tech infrastructure while Pennsylvania's core energy producers face growing regulatory and political pressure. These data centers and AI platforms can't run on ideology—they run on power. If we want these investments to succeed, we must support the energy production that makes it possible. You can't build the future on uncertain grounds. Reliability, affordability, and proximity matter—and that starts with backing our state's oil and gas industry."

The Role of Oil & Gas in Tech's Future

Far from being a legacy industry, natural gas is critical to the state's future as a tech and data powerhouse. Weaver emphasizes that these new industries don't succeed in a vacuum—they're powered by natural gas and the infrastructure that supports it.

"If Pennsylvania wants to be a long-term home for AI and tech infrastructure, continued investment in oil and gas isn't optional—it's foundational," he stated. "These industries need massive, reliable energy, and natural gas is what makes that possible here. Without firm support for local production, we risk undermining the very energy advantage that brought these tech investments in the first place. You can't power the future by sidelining the source."

Balancing Energy and Environmental Goals

As debates around regulation continue, Weaver makes



Continued on page 3

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PIOGA Member Spotlight T&F Exploration, L.P.

Headquartered in Bethel Park, Pa., T&F Exploration, L.P. is a family-owned, independent oil and gas production and marketing company with deep roots in the Appalachian Basin. Founded in 1990, the company brings almost three decades of experience in responsibly developing Pennsylvania's natural resources.

T&F Exploration has built its reputation on integrity, operational excellence, and a commitment to environmental stewardship. Their work spans the full lifecycle of oil and gas operations—from leasing and permitting to drilling, production, site reclamation and selling natural gas to Pa consumers. With a focus on conventional oil and gas wells, T&F Exploration takes pride in supporting local economies while helping to meet the region's energy needs with low cost, reliable supply.

One of the company's defining strengths is its long-term view. As a privately held operator, T&F Exploration makes decisions based on sustainable growth, not shareholder pressure—allowing them to invest in their communities, landowners, and environmental practices. Their team is hands-on, responsive, and dedicated to maintaining strong relationships with stakeholders across the Commonwealth.

As an active member of PIOGA, T&F Exploration is engaged in advocacy efforts that promote a balanced regulatory environment and protect the future of Pennsylvania's oil and gas industry. Their leadership understands that responsible development and thoughtful policy go hand-in-hand.

We're proud to highlight T&F Exploration, L.P. as this month's Member Spotlight and thank them for their continued investment in Pennsylvania's energy future.

Learn more at: www.tandfexploration.com

Investment *Continued from page 1*

clear that PIOGA is not opposed to oversight—but that regulation must be rooted in practicality and partnership.

“Our industry isn’t afraid of regulation—we’ve proven we can operate safely, efficiently, and responsibly,” he said. “But for Pennsylvania to succeed as both an energy producer and a tech destination, regulations need to be grounded in reality. Striking the right balance means supporting environmental goals and ensuring the energy that powers AI, data centers, and everyday life remains affordable and reliable. We can lead the way on both fronts—but only if policy is built on partnership, not pressure.”

PIOGA's Role in Shaping Pennsylvania's Energy Future

With the scale of investment coming into the state, PIOGA sees a unique role for itself at the intersection of industry, policy, and innovation.

“PIOGA is uniquely positioned to be the bridge between policymakers, industry leaders, and now the emerging tech sector,” Weaver concluded. “With billions in AI and data center investments coming to Pennsylvania, we have a responsibility to ensure the energy policies driving our state forward are practical, informed, and balanced. Our role is to advocate for the producers who power these innovations, while working with lawmakers to craft regulations that

make energy security and economic growth a shared priority. We’re not just part of the conversation—we’re essential to its success.”

As the state navigates this pivotal moment, one thing is clear: Pennsylvania’s energy future—and its place in the digital economy—will be shaped by how it treats the very industry that has long powered its progress. ■

Links to articles:

Pennsylvania is getting \$90 billion in energy, AI investments. See the full list of projects announced by Trump, McCormick¹

\$90 Billion in Investment Announced For AI and Energy in Pennsylvania | Pittsburgh Magazine²



¹ <https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/news/pennsylvania-is-getting-90-billion-in-energy-ai-investments-see-the-full-list-of-przoomects-announced-by-trump-mccormick/ar-AA11FWQm?ocid=BingNewsVerp>

² <https://www.pittsburghmagazine.com/90-billion-in-investment-announced-for-ai-and-energy-in-pennsylvania/>



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Committee Tour Recap: Carrie Blast Furnace - A Walk Through Industrial History

On August 5, members of PIOGA's Market Development Committee, Environmental Committee, and Board of Directors took part in a Committee Tour—an exclusive, behind-the-scenes visit to the Carrie Blast Furnaces in Rankin, PA.

This guided experience offered a powerful look into Pittsburgh's industrial past, exploring the iconic iron-making structures that once fueled the steel industry in the Monongahela Valley. Now designated a National Historic Landmark, the Carrie Furnaces stand as a rare surviving example of pre-World War II blast furnace technology.

Participants walked the sprawling industrial site—navigating catwalks, towering furnaces, and rusted relics—while learning about the workers, processes, and innovations that helped define the region's legacy. The rugged terrain and immersive storytelling made for a memorable, educational experience.

Thanks to everyone who joined us—and to Rivers of Steel for providing such a thoughtful and informative tour. We look forward to more hands-on opportunities like this in the future!

For questions or future tour ideas, contact Deana McMahan at deana@pioga.org or (724) 933-7306 ext. 23.



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ARG's roots are deep in the Pennsylvania oil fields. In 1881, the Bradford oil refinery was established in Northwestern PA, the birthplace of the domestic oil industry. 140 years later, ARG remains committed to supporting the Commonwealth's conventional oil and gas producers.

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PIOGATech Recap: PFAS, Water & Waste Management

On July 30, PIOGA's Environmental Committee successfully hosted its 8th annual Water and Waste Management PIOGATech training, bringing together experts, regulators, and operators for a robust day of learning, discussion, and collaboration on critical water, wastewater, and solids management topics impacting both conventional and unconventional oil and gas operations. This year's event placed a continued emphasis on PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances)—a growing concern across the energy industry. The day kicked off with an excellent overview from Dr. Kaylin McDermett of Geosyntec Consultants, who set the stage with a foundational session on PFAS and its implications for oil and gas operations.

Matthew Wood of Babst Calland followed with a legal perspective on PFAS, detailing its evolving regulatory landscape and the potential liabilities companies should be aware of. We were also fortunate to welcome our colleagues from PA DEP, Kevin Masok and Stephen Brokenshire, who provided agency updates and insights into the state's ongoing environmental policy approach.

The morning continued with technical presentations, including Joe Tarsavage from Battelle discussing PFAS treatment technologies and John Gisleson of Morgan Lewis providing an update on new environmental policies emerging under Pennsylvania's current administration.

In the afternoon, attendees participated in a dynamic, interactive session on spill remediation scenarios, led by Lisa Raffle of Diversified Energy and Jessie Bobrzynski of Moody and Associates. The session encouraged group engagement and practical application of remediation strategies.

Alex Lopez from Perma-Fix Environmental Services brought important updates on NORM and TENORM, sharing his expertise on radiation management and current compliance trends.

The day concluded with an Operator Panel Discussion, moderated by Angelo Albanese of CNX Resources. Panelists included Joe Harrick (JKLM Energy), Stephen Brokenshire (PA DEP), Chad Eisenman (CNX Resources), and Hannah McAvoy (Range Resources). Their discussion on water management trends and future outlooks was met with active Q&A and thoughtful dialogue from a highly engaged audience.

Thank You to Our Presenters and Planning Team

PIOGA extends sincere thanks to our presenters for sharing their time and expertise: **Dr. Kaylin McDermett, Geosyntec Consultants; Matthew Wood, Babst Calland; Kevin Masok, PA DEP; Joe Tarsavage, Battelle; John Gisleson, Morgan Lewis; Lisa Raffle, Diversified Energy; Jessie Bobrzynski, Moody and Associates; Alex Lopez, Perma-Fix Environmental Services.**

A special thank-you to **Angelo Albanese (CNX Resources)** for his leadership in moderating the panel and helping to organize this year's training, along with fellow planning committee members: **Paul Hart (Diversified Energy), Matt Wood (Babst Calland), and John Gisleson (Morgan Lewis).**

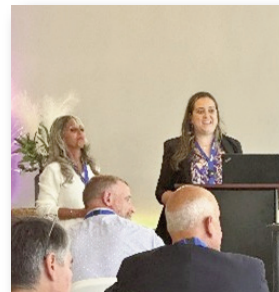
Once again, PIOGATech proved to be a valuable forum for addressing real-time challenges and fostering solutions at the intersection of environmental responsibility and energy development.



Matt Wood - Babst Calland



John Gisleson - Morgan, Lewis & Bockius



*Lisa Raffle, Diversified Energy and
Jessie Bobrzynski, Moody and Associates*

Industry Pulse: What's Shaping Oil & Gas in 2025?

The oil and gas industry is navigating a dynamic landscape in 2025, with market pressures, technological innovation, and energy security dominating conversations across boardrooms and conference tables. Here's what PIOGA members should have on their radar:

1. Oversupply Concerns & Price Pressures

Global producers, including TotalEnergies, are warning of an oil supply glut, driven by higher output and slowing global demand. Analysts anticipate crude prices may remain in the \$60–\$70 per barrel range for the foreseeable future, a factor that could influence drilling decisions and investment strategies.

2. Rig Counts Falling

U.S. rig counts have dropped for the 12th time in 13 weeks, signaling an industry-wide slowdown. While U.S. crude production continues to grow, the pace is slower than expected—a reflection of both price volatility and capital discipline.

3. Technology & Carbon Reduction Are Front and Center

Artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and carbon capture technologies are rising priorities. Nearly 70% of energy companies are evaluating AI solutions to streamline operations, but fewer than half are moving forward with carbon reduction strategies such as electrification or emissions monitoring.

4. Grid Reliability & Natural Gas Demand

With coal retirements and renewable intermittency straining the power grid, natural gas is stepping into the spotlight as the critical fuel for reliable electricity generation. Grid operators warn of potential rolling blackouts and brownouts without increased generation capacity, making Pennsylvania's natural gas production a cornerstone of energy stability.

5. Workforce & Talent Gap

A shortage of skilled workers remains a pressing challenge. According to a recent survey, only 29% of energy companies are actively investing in workforce training, despite executives ranking talent development as a top priority. For PIOGA members, workforce development is key to maintaining a competitive edge.

What It Means for PIOGA Members

- **Market Awareness:** Price volatility may continue to affect project economics.
- **Technology Advantage:** Embracing AI, automation, and safety tech can improve efficiency and compliance.
- **Natural Gas Opportunity:** Pennsylvania's resources are central to national energy security.
- **People Power:** Investing in talent and training ensures long-term success.

Want to Learn More?

PIOGA is committed to keeping our members informed and equipped with the latest insights, tools, and advocacy efforts. Stay tuned for upcoming PIOGA events and workshops focused on technology, workforce, and policy issues.



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Historical Figure in Oil & Gas

Ida Tarbell: Pioneering Journalist Who Shaped the Oil and Gas Industry

Ida Tarbell stands as one of the most influential figures in American history—and a key figure in the early development of the oil and gas industry. Born in 1857 in Pennsylvania's oil region, Tarbell witnessed firsthand the impact of the oil boom and the ruthless business practices that accompanied it. Her deep connection to the industry's roots gave her unique insight into the dynamics shaping its rapid expansion.

Tarbell is best known for her groundbreaking investigative journalism series, *The History of the Standard Oil Company*, published in 1904. Her meticulous, well-documented exposé of John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil trust revealed the monopolistic tactics and backroom deals used to dominate the early oil market. Her reporting not only illuminated the darker side of industrial capitalism but also played a crucial role in public understanding of corporate power during the Gilded Age.

Tarbell's work helped spark national outrage and fueled calls for reform, eventually contributing to the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in 1911 to break up Standard Oil

under antitrust laws. Her legacy cemented the role of investigative journalism in holding powerful industries accountable and highlighted the need for transparency and ethical practices in energy markets.

Though often viewed as a critic of big oil, Tarbell was not anti-industry. She believed in fair competition and responsible enterprise. Her father, a small oil producer and refiner, influenced her belief that smaller businesses could and should thrive alongside larger players—if given a level playing field.

Ida Tarbell's legacy endures in today's oil and gas industry, particularly in ongoing conversations around regulation, competition, and corporate responsibility. She remains a historical figure who not only shaped journalism but helped redefine how Americans understood—and ultimately governed—one of the most powerful industries of the modern era.

In honoring her legacy, the energy sector continues to be reminded of the importance of ethical leadership, transparency, and the long-term value of earning public trust. ■



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Pennsylvania Budget Update

(As of August 7, 2025)

Overview

- Pennsylvania's fiscal year 2025–26 budget remains unresolved, with the legal deadline of June 30, 2025 already passed. Lawmakers are still negotiating amid a divided Legislature and no unified budget agreement.
- The budget stalemate has now extended into its second full month, threatening billions in delayed payments to schools, counties, human services, and other public programs.

Legislative Status

- The House of Representatives remains active, focusing on non-budget legislation such as transit funding.
- Meanwhile, the Senate Republicans have not scheduled sessions, returning only upon reaching a budget accord.

Key Issues in the Impasse

1. Transit Funding

- The House Transportation Committee (Democrats) recently advanced a bill that:
 - Raises the state's share of sales tax dedicated to public transit by 1.75 percentage points
 - Authorizes \$600 million in bonds for roads—half aimed at rural infrastructure
 - Includes accountability standards (e.g., enforcing fare evasion rules); non-compliance could jeopardize funding
- This action responds to SEPTA's warning: without new state aid by August 14, the agency will implement fare hikes and service cuts.

2. Medicaid & Human Services

- Rising Medicaid expenses remain a top dispute point. Shapiro's \$51.5 billion budget calls for considerable increases, while Republicans demand cost-control measures.

3. Revenue Proposals

- Contentious revenue tools include:
 - Skill games taxation (slot machine-style)—a continued focus for Republicans
 - Marijuana legalization—though approved in the House, it's stalled in the Senate
 - Other options (e.g., rental vehicle/tire taxes) remain undeveloped

4. Funding Delays & Impact

- Over \$2 billion in school funding, \$390 million for county child welfare, and substantial sums for universities, early education, libraries, and health departments are delayed.
- The delays have already begun to strain less affluent school districts and county support systems.

Newly Emerging Pressures

- SEPTA faces a critical juncture:
 - Failure to secure funding by August 14 may trigger fare increases starting September 1 and service reductions by early 2026.
- House Democrats' transit bill seeks to avoid this outcome by appealing directly to GOP priorities—but the Senate has yet to act.

Updated Summary Table

Topic	Current Status (August 7, 2025)
Budget Passage	Still not passed – beyond June 30 deadline
Spending Plan	\$51.5 billion proposed (9% increase, includes substantial Medicaid and transit funding)
Transit Funding Bill	House advanced a new bill; Senate yet to act; critical August 14 deadline looms
Revenue Issues	Stalemate persists; key items include skill games tax, stalled marijuana proposal
Delayed Payments	Over \$2 billion to schools, hundreds of millions to counties and services delayed
Impact Risk	Potential fare hikes, service cuts, borrowing by schools and counties

Bottom Line - As of early August 2025, Pa. remains without an approved FY 2025–26 budget. The conflict centers on Medicaid funding, transit support, and revenue generation, notably regarding skill game taxation and marijuana legalization. With SEPTA facing imminent cuts and schools/counties already feeling the financial strain, the stakes are increasingly urgent. A resolution—or a temporary short-term budget—may be essential in the coming days. ■

Links to article: *Schools and counties could suffer in Pennsylvania budget stalemate* | AP News¹

Pennsylvania governor anticipates a deal 'very soon' as lawmakers blow through the budget deadline | AP News²

SEPTA has one week to fill budget shortfall and avoid cuts - Axios Philadelphia³

¹ <https://apnews.com/article/pennsylvania-budget-stalemate-josh-shapiro-schools-0ab8e20cda6ce04bb5fcc5941ba6ce3e>

² <https://apnews.com/article/pennsylvania-budget-josh-shapiro-schools-taxes-medicaid-a748ed7f636eb75ec10684fac5f9bb6d>

³ https://www.axios.com/local/philadelphia/2025/08/06/septa-service-cuts-pennsylvania-budget-funding?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Derrick Docket: PIOGA Submits Comment to DEP in Opposition of Proposed Crippling State Plan

Todd Pappasergi, PIOGA General Counsel & VP of Government Affairs

Without any formal rulemaking or independent oversight, PA DEP intends to implement new emissions equipment and monitoring standards only on the oil and gas industry that will turn Pennsylvania from an energy leader to an energy nightmare.

Through oral testimony given by PIOGA's President and Executive Director Dan Weaver¹ and a written comment prepared by PIOGA's General Counsel Todd Pappasergi and Mr. Weaver, PIOGA² continued its industry leading charge against the proposed state plan by the PA DEP to implement methane reduction regulations for existing oil and gas facilities in the Commonwealth.

While recognizing that methane reduction in any form, whether from agricultural, industrial, or even naturally occurring sources, would have a positive effect on the environment, PIOGA strongly objects to the proposed state plan. As Mr. Weaver stated in his testimony, the plan as proposed "will obliterate Pennsylvania's status as a global leader in energy production, have crippling economic consequences, and endanger public safety" in a far greater way than any potential methane emission reduction that may occur under these new rules. Even more concerning, DEP intends to impose these multi-billion dollar requirements on the industry without any formal rulemaking, statutorily required independent oversight, or consideration of the vast differences between the different sectors of Pennsylvania's oil and gas industry.

Under the proposed state plan, any oil and gas facility constructed or modified prior to December 6, 2023 will need to be retrofitted with new equipment and the operators of those facilities will also be required to implement labor-intensive and cost-prohibitive emissions monitoring. Pennsylvania's oil and gas operators could now be faced with an impossible choice: either spend crippling amounts of money on equipment and labor costs or risk not receiving a new air quality permit to operate in the Commonwealth. The conventional natural gas industry alone could face upwards of \$325 million annually just in monitoring costs.

To lessen this unconscionable burden on the industry, PIOGA has proposed important modifications to DEP through its testimony and comment:

- Conduct economic-based remaining life (RULOF) analysis on various classes of oil and gas facilities;
- Develop tailored and cost-effective solutions for low-production and marginal well sites;
- Pause further development of the state plan in coordination with the U.S. EPA's recent announcement for extensions on methane emission compliance;
- Take advantage of these extensions to conduct a full and formal rulemaking process for methane regulation; and
- Consider expected new data and guidance from EPA that will create a more balanced regulatory program.

As Mr. Weaver has stated before, now is the time for action and involvement. ■

¹ https://pioga.org/publication_file/PIOGA_Testimony_0000c_DEP.pdf

² https://pioga.org/publication_file/PIOGA_Comment_0000c.pdf

PIOGA's 2025 Golf Outing

Get Ready for PIOGA's Upcoming Golf Outing at Lake Arthur Golf Club!

Save the Date: PIOGA Golf Outing – September 11th!

Join us for a great day of golf, networking, and fun at the Lake Arthur Country Club in Butler, PA on September 11th!

Whether you're a seasoned golfer or just out for fun, enjoy:

- **A scenic course** - **Great networking with fellow PIOGA members**
- **Prizes and giveaways** - **Delicious food and drinks**

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 Lake Arthur Country Club, Butler, PA

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Key Environmental and Energy Policies in the Second Trump Administration

An update on federal executive orders, policies and actions, and how businesses can navigate the rapidly changing legal and regulatory landscape

Announced through a record-breaking number of executive orders, memoranda and directives, new White House energy and environmental policy initiatives are resulting in a rapidly changing environmental regulatory climate affecting the business community.

To help clients keep pace with these new policy initiatives, and recent steps that EPA has taken to implement this broad deregulatory agenda, attorneys at the law firm Babst Calland offer advice on how businesses can adapt and thrive in a swiftly changing regulatory environment.

It will be some time before we get a clear picture on *“this administration’s policy objectives and how they’re all going to unfold,”* Gary Steinbauer, a shareholder working with the environmental law practice of Babst Calland’s Pittsburgh office, says.

One of the emerging energy policy themes is the Trump administration’s goal of “American energy dominance,” achieved through permitting reform and environmental deregulation in the energy sector. Other themes include de-emphasizing climate change-based regulatory initiatives, promoting domestic manufacturing and mineral extraction, and grid reliability.

Executive orders 101: An executive order is a written statement in which a president broadcasts a directive to implement a policy change.

Presidents have fairly broad authority in terms of the scope of what they can order, *“provided that that order is consistent with the applicable laws,”* Ben Clapp, shareholder and chair of the environmental section at Babst Calland’s Washington, D.C. office, says.

A president cannot, through executive order, revise a regulation or amend or revoke a law. However, a president can revoke a previous administration’s executive orders and use them to announce new policy initiatives. Sometimes, when undertaking specific activities that have been delegated to the executive branch by Congress or the Constitution, they can compel a specific, direct action through an executive order without further procedures. In other cases, such as when a president directs an agency to issue or rescind a regulation, the agency needs to comply with notice and comment rulemaking requirements under the Administrative Procedure Act before taking final action.

Of particular interest at present are a slate of executive orders directing agencies to undertake deregulatory and permitting reform regulatory actions in furtherance of the

promotion of domestic energy production. Among the most noteworthy, the Unleashing American Energy order directs agencies to identify those regulations that serve as an impediment to the production of American energy (in the context of this order – fossil-based resources, uranium, biofuels, hydroelectric power, geothermal energy and critical minerals but not including solar and wind energy sources), and develop and implement action plans to suspend, revise or rescind such actions. This order dovetails with a contemporaneous order Declaring a National Energy Emergency, which directs certain agencies to use emergency authority to facilitate energy development, transportation, refining, and generation.

Other executive orders of note relating to enhancing domestic energy production include:

- Immediate Measures to Increase American Mineral Production, which, in part directs the DOI to identify areas on federal lands that can be “immediately implemented for mineral production.”
- Ensuring National Security Through 232 Actions on Processed Critical Minerals, ordering the initiation of an investigation to determine the effects on national security of imports of processed critical minerals and their derivative products.
- Unleashing America’s Offshore Critical Minerals and Resources, aimed at seabed mineral development by developing domestic capabilities through streamlined permitting, enhancing coordination amongst agencies.
- Reinvigoration of America’s Beautiful Clean Coal Industry, which classifies coal as a mineral of the same level of importance as critical minerals, uranium, and copper, prioritizes coal leases on federal lands, promotes coal technology, including data center support, and directs agencies to identify regulations impeding coal production and consider revising or rescinding them.
- A trio of executive orders aimed at enhancing the domestic production of nuclear power.

In addition, *“the United States [issued executive orders] extracting itself from previous administrations’ climate change-based regulatory efforts, including removing itself from international climate agreements and rescinding executive orders that were in place to promote climate change-related regulation,”* Clapp says.

National Energy Policy Act (NEPA) law reform: Since 1970, NEPA has required that agencies closely examine the environmental impacts associated with major federal

Continued on page 12

actions. In the context of emerging production, it's important because the law's environmental review requirements can be triggered:

- In connection with the issuance of leases on federal lands for domestic energy production.
- By the issuance of certain environmental permits, including those issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, allowing the dredging and filling of wetlands.
- By certain federal funding initiatives supporting energy projects.

Given the lengthy environmental review periods involved in the NEPA process and the propensity for project opponents to employ legal challenges to the NEPA process in attempts to delay or block energy projects, NEPA is viewed by the Trump administration as an *"impediment to energy production,"* Clapp says. In furtherance of the Trump administration's Unleashing American Energy Executive Order, in February 2025, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), which is the agency tasked with overseeing the implementation of NEPA, issued a memorandum directing agencies to revise or establish their NEPA implementing procedures to expedite permitting approvals in accordance with NEPA statutory timeframes. The CEQ followed that up with an interim final rule issued in April 2025 rescinding its own NEPA regulations that had been binding on other federal agencies. The current outlook for NEPA reviews remains unclear while we wait for agencies to develop their own NEPA regulations and implement the EO directives to make the approval process more efficient. Under the statute, however, agencies still have up to two years to complete the most detailed form of environmental review.

We are beginning to see early examples of agencies expediting NEPA reviews pursuant to the mandates contained in the executive orders and the CEQ February 2025 memorandum. For example, the Bureau of Land Management recently announced that they were rescinding its notice of intent to prepare Environmental Impact Statements – the most comprehensive and lengthy form of NEPA review, often taking more than two years – for more than 3,200 oil and gas leases in Western states on the grounds that it conflicted with its mandate to reduce regulatory barriers for oil and gas companies and expediting domestic energy development.

Emergency Permitting: Agency efforts are also underway to implement the emergency permitting directive issued in the Declaring a National Energy Emergency Executive Order, which requires that federal agencies, including the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior, to use their emergency permitting powers to fast track energy projects requiring permits under Section 404

of the Clean Water Act, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, and the Endangered Species Act. The issuance of these permits trigger NEPA reviews, and therefore, the emergency permitting procedures are entwined with the administration's efforts to expedite NEPA reviews.

In response to this directive, the Army Corps of Engineers is actively fast-tracking more than 600 energy projects. For example, in February, the Army Corps committed to issuing its Record of Decision, approving a pipeline underneath the Mackinac Straits in Michigan, in the fall of 2025 – a remarkably quick time frame for completing a NEPA review and issuing required permits.

In May, the DOI issued a memorandum stating they were going to conduct the permitting process for energy projects, using emergency permitting approvals, in no more than 28 days.

"That is an extraordinarily fast amount of time. It can only result in administrative records that are fairly thin," Clapp says. *"These projects are going to receive a lot of attention" from opponents of fossil fuel energy production. I think there's a significant litigation risk there."*

Key deregulatory actions: In March 2025, the EPA announced a sweeping deregulatory initiative identifying 31 regulations and agency actions that will be reconsidered in response to the Trump administration's executive orders. *"The plan likely will take years to implement and execute,"* Steinbauer says.

The EPA has begun implementing its deregulatory plan, with the issuance of two significant deregulatory actions that were published in the Federal Register on June 17.

The first proposal is to repeal the Biden administration's greenhouse gas emission standards for the power sector based on a new statutory interpretation. *"Here, the Trump administration is taking the position that to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, or any new pollutant under this Clean Air Act Section, EPA needs to find that that pollutant contributes significantly to dangerous air pollution,"* Steinbauer says. The EPA is also proposing an alternative basis for repealing the Biden-era power sector greenhouse gas emission standards. This alternative proposal takes a "more surgical" approach to repeal by finding that carbon capture and sequestration technology is not "adequately demonstrated" and the co-firing of natural gas and low greenhouse gas hydrogen at certain coal fired power plants is an inefficient use of natural gas.

The EPA's second proposal also affects the power generation sector and focuses on mercury emissions standards from coal-fired stations. The Trump EPA is proposing to repeal the Biden administration's 2024 Mercury and Air Toxic Standards (MATS) rule that regulated mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants and set filterable particu-

late matter emission standards, requires continuous emission monitoring systems to demonstrate compliance, and includes first-time mercury emissions standards for lignite coal plants. The Trump administration now seeks an outright repeal of the 2024 MATS rule, contending that the costs to comply with the Biden administration's MATS rule are too high, there are other means to demonstrate compliance, and there is too much variability in monitoring lignite coal plants to justify those standards.

The Trump administration *"took very broad positions"* aimed at striking down the Biden-era power sector greenhouse gas emission standards and the MATS rule *"at their core and in their entirety,"* Steinbauer says. This could be a sign that we may see more of *"a chainsaw approach"* when it comes to deregulation.

On the proposed repeal of the Biden administration's power sector greenhouse gas emission standards, the EPA issued its proposed repeal in June and has pledged to finalize that rule, six months later, in December. *"I don't think a rulemaking of this significance has ever proceeded at that pace,"* Steinbauer says. *"Everyone will be watching carefully to see whether the administration follows through on that anticipated timeline."*

Beyond the use of executive orders, the President is also using available statutory authorities to advance his goals. In April, President Trump gave roughly 50 coal-fired power plants a two-year compliance extension for the 2024 Mercury Air Toxic Standards using a never-before-used Clean Air Act provision. *"Litigation has already been filed challenging this presidential compliance extension,"* but it could be *"a signal that the president is willing to be big and bold and utilize statutory authorities in ways that haven't been contemplated or used [] before to advance his goals,"* Steinbauer says.

Congress has also been involved in deregulation through its Congressional Review Act, a statute that allows Congress to nullify agency rules that were sent to it within the last 60 legislative days. Before 2017, the Congressional Review Act was only used once since it was enacted in 1996, Steinbauer says. In the first year of President Trump's first term, *"it was used 16 times by Congress,"* Steinbauer says, and the act has been used more frequently since that time, by Congress during the Biden administration and now in President Trump's second term.

Recently, Congress has used the act to strike down a Biden-era EPA regulation implementing the so-called methane tax regulation. Congress has also used the statute to eliminate Clean Air Act waivers that the Biden administration issued to California, relating to motor vehicle and engine emission requirements.

Inevitable litigation: Recent Supreme Court precedent

likely will feature prominently in lawsuits challenging the Trump administration's deregulatory actions. As an example, the Loper Bright case overturned the long-standing Chevron deference doctrine. Now, courts are obligated to exercise independent judgement in interpreting statutes, rather than deferring to an agency's reasonable interpretation of a statute. The Trump administration is aware of Loper Bright and other recent Supreme Court decisions, as its deregulatory proposals are using language intended to address these changes.

Litigation is also being used as a *"sword"* to achieve the administration's domestic energy policy initiatives, explains Steinbauer, referring to the executive order in which President Trump directed the Attorney General to challenge state laws addressing climate change and environmental justice, and those imposing carbon taxes or carbon penalties. The order singles out California, Vermont and New York, and there are now four pending lawsuits filed by the Attorney General against Hawaii, Michigan, New York and Vermont stemming from this executive order.

The EPA is also managing several pending challenges to Biden-era EPA regulations, many of which challenge regulations that the Trump administration has vowed to reconsider. In such cases, the EPA files motions *"to hold those lawsuits in abeyance while it undertakes its review and evaluation of the rules that are being challenged,"* Steinbauer says.

How the Trump administration is shaping EPA: The administration is also making structural changes at EPA, and through other efforts is seeking to change how agencies operate and optimize their workforce.

There are EPA workforce reorganizations occurring that could have lasting effects. For example, the EPA is proposing to eliminate its Office of Research and Development and to create a new Office of Applied Science and Environmental Solutions. The new office's purpose is described as guiding the agency in using science in the regulatory context, and it will be housed in the EPA Administrator's office.

Regarding EPA employees, the agency has incentivized multiple opportunities for deferred resignations or early retirements. There are reports that more than 3,000 EPA employees – or 20 percent of its workforce – took this offer in May. Reports suggest that 1,400 more EPA employees may have participated in this program in June. These workforce reduction efforts are significant because fewer EPA employees will be tasked with implementing the Trump administration's ambitious deregulatory plan, Steinbauer says.

Continued on page 14

Keeping pace with ongoing policy developments: We are beginning to see concrete steps EPA is taking to advance its sweeping deregulatory plan. The business community needs to stay abreast of these new developments, and there will be opportunities for strategic advocacy when the agency asks for input from the regulated community or other stakeholders, explains Steinbauer.

“The success of those deregulatory efforts depends often on the legal footing and the factual footing,” he says. “The factual footing is based on the administrative record, and EPA only has access to certain data and information about a regulated industry.” Strategically engaging with the EPA on its deregulatory proposals, whether in support of or against the specific proposal, will be key for businesses navigating the rapidly changing legal landscape.

Despite the EPA’s deregulatory plans, many complex environmental regulations remain on the books, and maintaining compliance with those requirements is important. Steinbauer encourages the regulated community to perform audits to assess the strength of their compliance programs and consider using agency self-disclosure policies and laws to mitigate liability and civil penalty exposure.

Finally, Steinbauer says, be patient and adapt as necessary, as the next several years certainly will be eventful. ■

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Gary E. Steinbauer, Esq.



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Oil & Gas Dashboard

Sources

American Refining Group:

www.amref.com/Crude-Prices-New.aspx

Ergon Oil Purchasing: www.ergon.com/crudeoil

Gas futures: quotes.ino.com/exchanges/

?r=NYMEX_NG

Baker Hughes rig count:

bakerhughesrigcount.gcs-web.com/na-rig-count

NYMEX strip chart: Mid American Natural Resources

Basis futures values: IGS Energy, Inc.

Penn Grade Crude Oil Prices

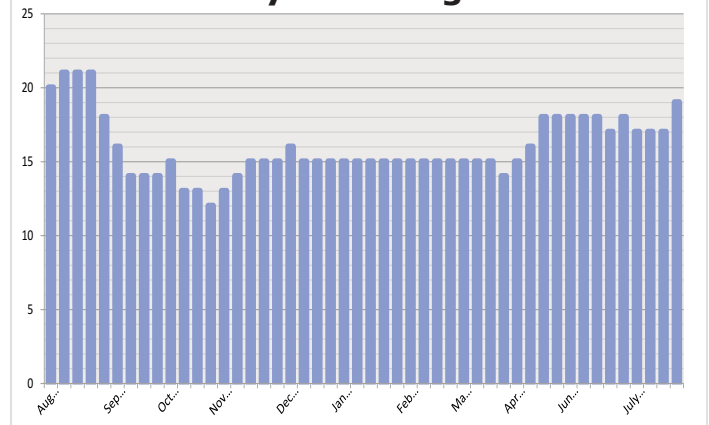


Natural Gas Futures Closing Prices

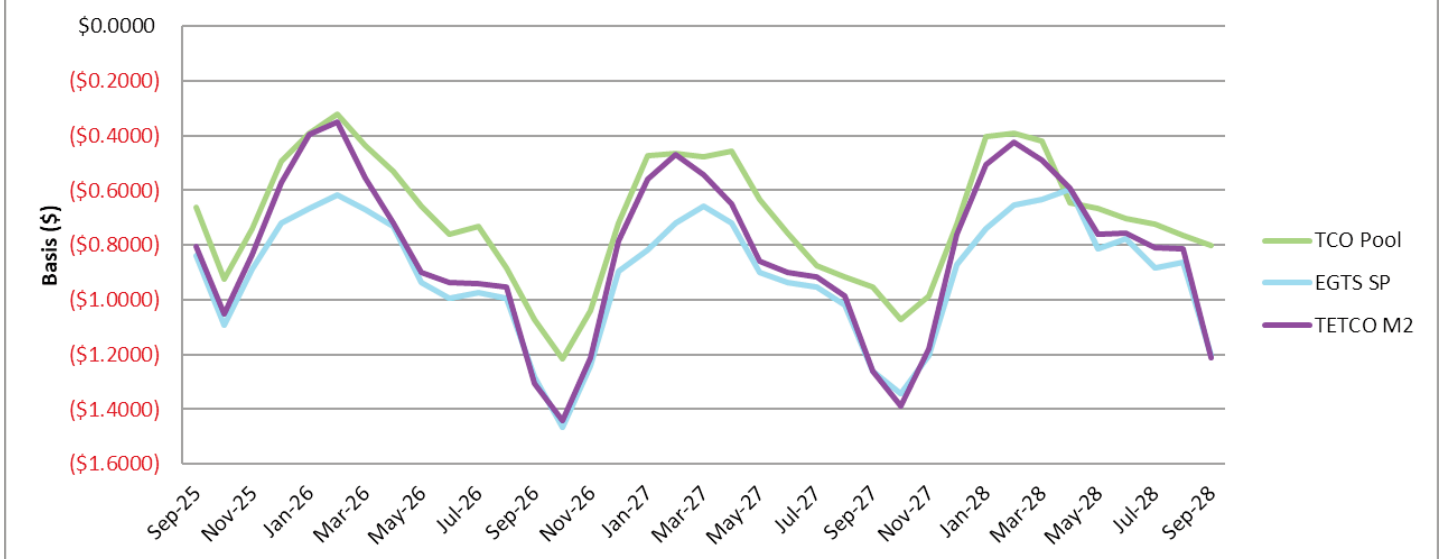
September 2025	3.067
October	3.168
November	3.553
December	4.149
January 2026	4.474
February	4.204
March	3.762
April	3.563
May	3.574
June	3.714

Prices as of August 8 2025

Pennsylvania Rig Count




Basis Futures Values



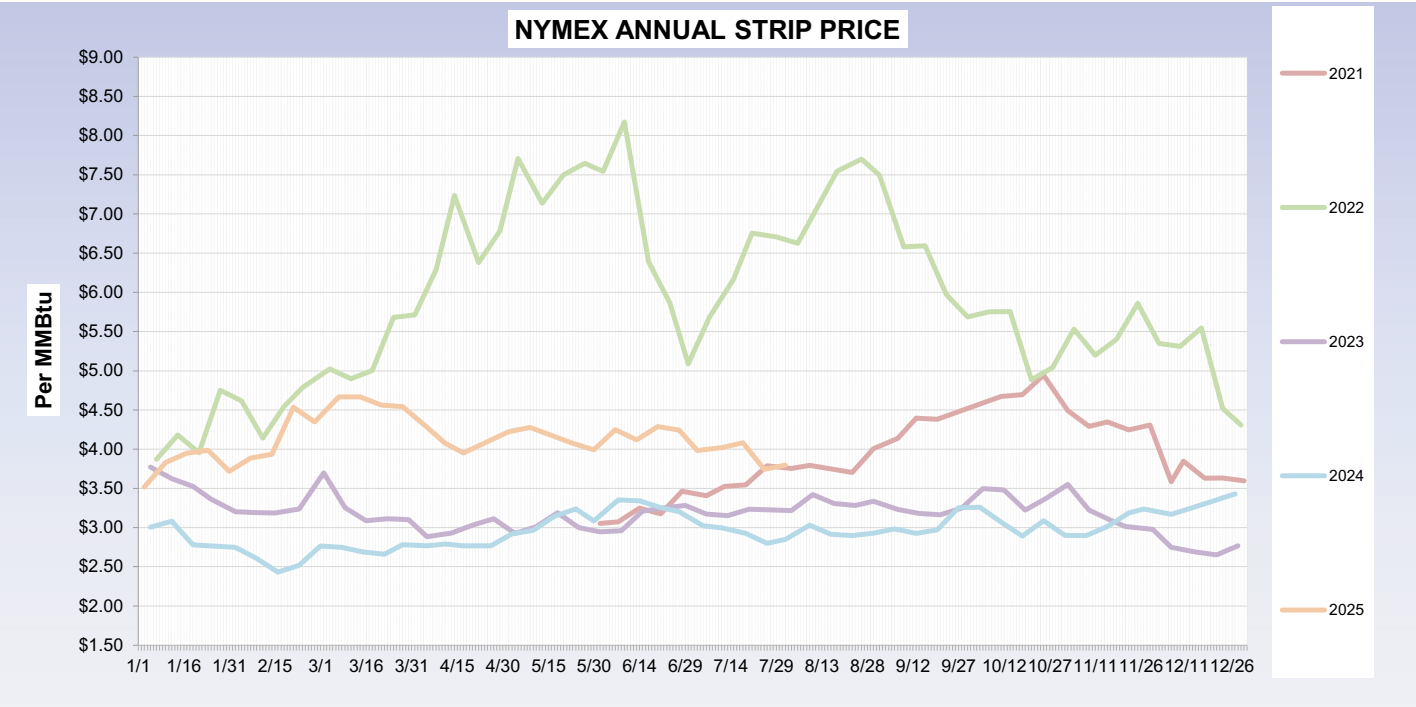
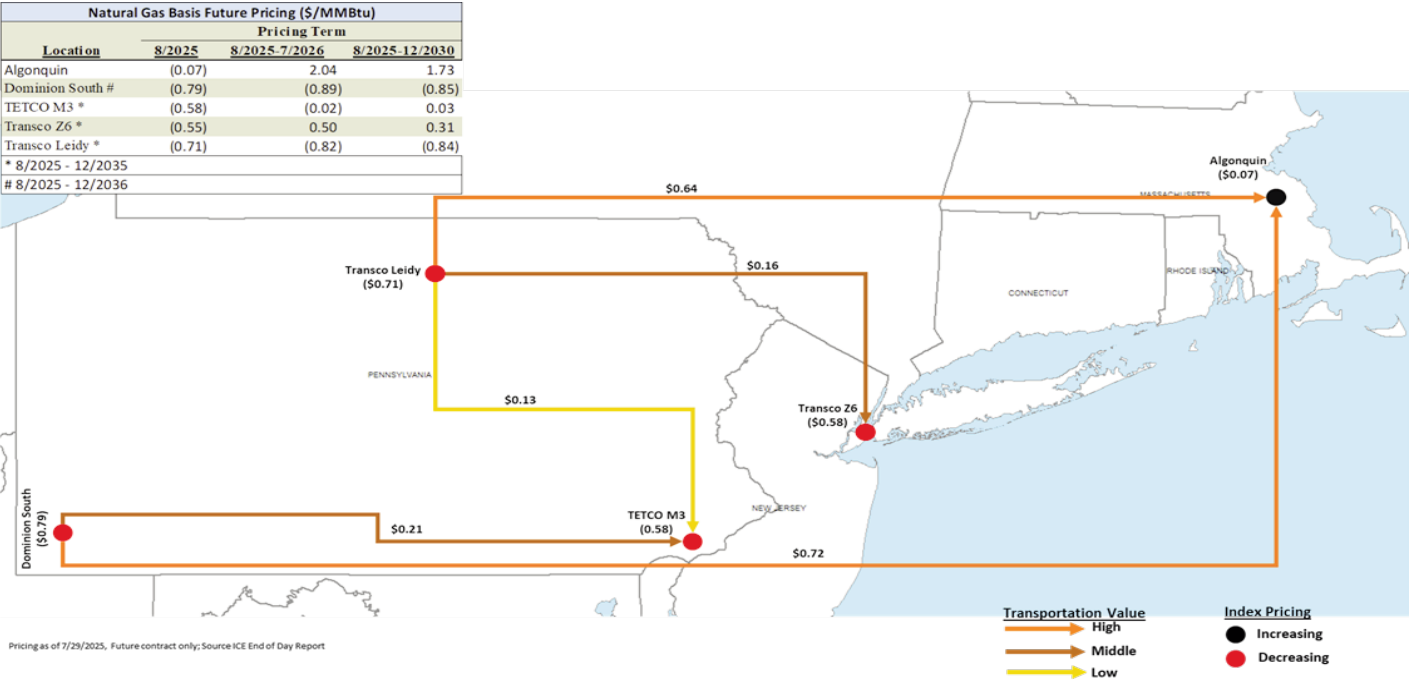
Northeast Pricing Report – August 2025

Natural gas prices closed above \$3.050, forming the head and shoulders neckline and gaining positive momentum as stochastic indicators rebounded. Staying above \$3.050 reduces bearish risk and could see prices rise to \$3.320 and \$3.450. However, a drop below the neckline may lead to losses toward \$2.710.

Throughout July 2025, natural gas prices in the Marcellus region experienced a notable decline, mirroring broader market softness. This price erosion was driven by, above-average storage injections, which pushed inventories well above the 5-year average, muted power sector demand, despite summer heat, due to economic switching and efficiency gains, and steady production levels, especially in Appalachia, which kept supply elevated. Despite the dip, Marcellus producers remain competitive thanks to low break-even costs.

Transportation Value Market Indicator


Provided by Bertison-George, LLC
www.bertison-george.com



Spud Report: July



The data shown below comes from the Department of Environmental Protection. A variety of interactive reports are available by going to the Office of Oil and Gas Management page at www.dep.pa.gov and choosing Report from the menu. The table is sorted by operator and lists the total wells reported as drilled last month. Spud is the date drilling began at a well site. The API number is the drilling permit number issued to the well operator. An asterisk (*) after Operator indicates a conventional well.

Operator	Wells	Date	API#	County	Municipality	Operator	Wells	Date	API#	County	Municipality
Bald Hill Oil *		7/21/25	053-31129	Forest	Howe Twp	Repsol Oil & Gas	6	7/21/25	117-22295	Tioga	Liberty Twp
Branch, John D. *		7/2/25	123-49124	Warren	Warren City			7/21/25	117-22259	Tioga	Liberty Twp
Cameron Energy *	3	7/9/25	123-49057	Warren	Sheffield Twp			7/21/25	117-22296	Tioga	Liberty Twp
		7/15/25	123-49051	Warren	Sheffield Twp			7/21/25	117-22297	Tioga	Liberty Twp
		7/25/25	123-49056	Warren	Sheffield Twp			7/21/25	117-22298	Tioga	Liberty Twp
Chesapeake App.	5	7/7/25	113-20489	Sullivan	Colley Twp			7/21/25	117-22299	Tioga	Liberty Twp
		7/7/25	113-20490	Sullivan	Colley Twp	Rice Drilling	7	7/6/25	059-28454	Greene	Springhill
		7/7/25	113-20491	Sullivan	Colley Twp			7/6/25	059-28455	Greene	Springhill
		7/7/25	113-20492	Sullivan	Colley Twp			7/6/25	059-28456	Greene	Springhill
		7/7/25	113-20488	Sullivan	Colley Twp			7/6/25	059-28457	Greene	Springhill
DT Energy *		7/10/25	123-49146	Warren	Cherry Grove			7/7/25	059-28458	Greene	Springhill
Elder Oil & Gas *		7/22/25	031-25875	Clarion	Perry Twp			7/7/25	059-28459	Greene	Springhill
EQT Prod	3	7/3/25	125-29220	Washington	Union Twp			7/7/25	059-28460	Greene	Springhill
		7/3/25	125-29219	Washington	Union Twp	Scorpio Energy*		7/30/25	053-31120	Forest	Howe Twp
		7/3/25	125-29218	Washington	Union Twp	Snyder Bros	4	7/7/25	005-31541	Armstrong	East Franklin
INR Opr.	3	7/5/25	063-37566	Indiana	Armstrong			7/7/25	005-31542	Armstrong	East Franklin
		7/5/25	063-37567	Indiana	Armstrong			7/7/25	005-31543	Armstrong	East Franklin
		7/26/25	063-37568	Indiana	Armstrong			7/8/25	005-31540	Armstrong	East Franklin
Minard Run Oil	4	7/18/25	053-31137	Forest	Howe Twp	Vanderhoof Energy *		7/22/25	083-57707	McKean	Keating Twp
		7/25/25	053-31145	Forest	Howe Twp						
		7/3/25	053-31141	Forest	Jenks Twp						
		7/11/25	053-31144	Forest	Jenks Twp						
Plesant Oil & Gas *	2	7/22/25	123-48805	Warren	Pleasant Twp						
		7/25/25	123-48803	Warren	Pleasant Twp						
Range Resources	5	7/10/25	125-29210	Washington	Donegal Twp						
		7/11/25	125-29213	Washington	Donegal Twp						
		7/11/25	125-29214	Washington	Donegal Twp						
		7/12/25	125-29215	Washington	Donegal Twp						
		7/12/25	125-29216	Washington	Donegal Twp						

	July	June	May	April
Total Wells	48	48	22	67
Unconventional Gas	33	30	13	62
Conventional Gas	0	0	0	0
Oil	11	13	8	5
Combination Oil/Gas	4	5	0	0
Waste Disposal	0	0	1	0

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Calendar

PIOGA events

Information: www.pioga.org > PIOGA Events

PIOGA 2025 Events

PIOGA's - Producers Golf Outing
August 14th

PIOGA - Lake Arthur Golf Club Event
September 11

PIOGA - Annual Meeting
October 23

Other events

Appalachian STEPS Meeting
August 14
(<https://appalachiansteps.com/>)

DUG Appalachia Conference 2025
August 27
(<https://pioga.org/event/dug-appalachia-conference-2025/>)
**** PIOGA Member Discount Code: HEDA25-PIOGA**

WEN Gala
August 15
(<https://pioga.org/event/wen-gala/>)

GO WV - Oil & Gas Festival
September 11-13
(<https://pioga.org/event/go-wv-oil-gas-festival/>)

Appalachian Hydrogen & Carbon Capture Conference
October 16
(<https://pioga.org/event/appalachian-hydrogen-carbon-capture-conference-2/>)

2025 Society of Petroleum Engineers Eastern Regional Meeting
October 28-30
(<https://pioga.org/event/2025-society-of-petroleum-engineers-eastern-regional-meeting/>)

Full Calendar - PIOGA Event & Meeting Schedule -
(https://pioga.org/publication_file/2025-PIOGA-Calendar.pdf)

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