

MOMS
clean air
FORCE



PRESS STATEMENT

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MOMS CLEAN AIR FORCE OPPOSES TRUMP'S PLAN TO GUT CRITICAL EPA METHANE SAFEGUARDS FOR NEW MEXICO FAMILIES

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler today **proposed** to eliminate direct regulation of methane pollution from new and modified oil and gas facilities. This proposal would be a major step backward in the effort to address climate change and a thinly veiled attempt to shield oil and gas facilities from national standards for years to come while ignoring EPA's core mission to protect public health and the environment.

"Oil and gas operations are leaking, venting, and flaring dangerous climate pollution at alarming rates. This industry needs to clean up its act. Voluntary measures are not working, and children are already being exposed to harmful air pollution. **EPA should be following the lead of states like New Mexico under Governor Lujan Grisham and stepping up to enact more protective methane rules, not running in the wrong direction. Today's proposed methane rule rollback is a direct threat to our children's health and future,**" said Celerah Hewes, Field Consultant in New Mexico for Moms Clean Air Force.

"Climate change is a public health emergency. It is degrading air quality and fueling extreme weather. Families in New Mexico are experiencing increasingly devastating wildfires; an increase in extreme droughts; and more extreme heat. **Extreme heat poses severe health risks such as heat related illness. This threat is especially acute for those without access to electricity, including 40 percent of residents in the Navajo Nation in New Mexico,**" said Hewes, who lives in Albuquerque with her six year old daughter.

"In addition, families and children living closest to oil and gas operations are not only exposed to the health risks from climate change but are also at a higher risk of being exposed to harmful air pollution from the oil and gas industry that can exacerbate asthma, worsen respiratory diseases, and cause cancer.

According to new analysis by the Environmental Defense Fund, there are **nearly 9,000 children under the age of five living in San Juan County (home to New Mexico's infamous methane hot spot) and over 78% of these young kids live within one mile of an active oil or gas well. In Southeastern New Mexico the numbers are equally striking: 80% of young children in Eddy County and 68% in Lea County also live within one mile of a well.** Moms across the country strongly oppose today's proposal from Trump's EPA, and we plan to fight for vital methane safeguards to reduce climate pollution and clean up the air for families like mine who are living, learning, and playing near oil and gas operations."

Oil and gas operations across the U.S. release over **13 million metric tons of climate-warming methane a year.** This pollution accounts for **25 percent** of the global warming we are experiencing today. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas more than 80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide in the near term.

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Moms Clean Air Force is a community of over one million moms—and dads—working together to fight air pollution, including the urgent crisis of our changing climate. For more information, go to www.momscleanairforce.org or follow us on Twitter [@CleanAirMoms](https://twitter.com/CleanAirMoms), Instagram [@cleanairmoms](https://www.instagram.com/cleanairmoms), or Facebook.