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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Dec. 20, 2019

Air Quality Control Commission approves first phase of rules to reduce oil and gas emissions

DENVER: The Colorado Air Quality Control Commission approved the first set of ambitious rules designed to minimize emissions from oil and gas operations state-wide yesterday. The rules will help reduce ozone pollution and protect the health of Coloradans and the air they breathe.

"Yesterday was a milestone, and we are already looking ahead to achieve further reductions of emissions at oil and gas sites through our next rulemaking. The department intends to build on this momentum," said **Jill Hunsaker Ryan**, executive director of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

The commission's Thursday vote came after a thorough rulemaking process in which the Air Pollution Control Division worked closely with local governments, the public, and other stakeholders to craft new rules that meet the needs of Colorado's diverse communities. In addition, the Commission held meetings in Rifle, Durango, and Loveland at which commission members heard hundreds of comments from the public.

The rules approved by the Commission on Thursday include:

- Eliminating the existing 90-day permitting deferral on new oil and gas facilities - under the new rule, these facilities must be permitted before they can begin exploration and production activities.
- Requiring at least twice-a-year leak detection and repair at well production facilities throughout the state with volatile organic chemical (VOC) emissions of greater than two tons per year.
 - Requiring either quarterly or monthly leak detection, depending on the size of the facility, at sites within a 1000 feet of occupied structures.
- Requiring oil and gas operators to provide a comprehensive annual emissions report for oil and gas facilities.
- Further reducing emissions of VOCs and from storage tanks by setting more stringent control requirements across the state.
- Requiring new oil and gas facilities to control hydrocarbon emissions from sampling and measurement activities and from the loadout of storage tanks to trucks.
- Enhancing recordkeeping requirements for emissions at wells across the state.
- Expanding new inspection requirements - currently in place within the ozone nonattainment area - for pressure valves or "pneumatic controllers" at oil and gas sites across the state.

The division estimates that the new rules will reduce methane and volatile organic compound emissions by thousands of tons a year.

"The objective is simple-- minimize emissions at the source," said **Ga** [Colorado.gov Chatbot](#)

Pollution Control Division. “These new rules represent months of hard work and communication with affected communities. They will slash emissions, make Colorado’s air cleaner and improve the quality of

life for Coloradans across the state, including those citizens that live or work near oil and gas sites. They’re reasonable, cost effective, innovative, and absolutely necessary. And we’re just getting started.”

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