

EPA and BLM Easing Methane Rules for the Oil and Natural Gas Industry

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The Trump Administration took two actions this month in its efforts to reverse the Obama administration's climate change agenda: the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed amendments to scale back the 2016 New Source Performance Standards for the oil and natural gas sectors, and the Bureau of Land Management's final rule revising the 2016 Waste Prevention, Production Subject to Royalties, and Resource Conservation Rule. Both rules targeted by these actions aimed at reducing emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas which traps 87 times the heat of carbon dioxide. These actions follow other EPA efforts aimed at reversing the prior administration's regulatory initiatives targeting climate change, including less stringent greenhouse gas rules applicable to vehicles and coal- and oil-fired power plants. And these efforts are expected to continue: the EPA plans a broader rulemaking later this year which may end direct regulation of methane emissions from the oil and gas sector entirely as well as reversing rules requiring new coal-fired power plants to install expensive greenhouse gas carbon capture and sequestration technology. The full text of our memo describing the rule, likely legal challenges and practical implications for business is available [here](#).

If you have any questions regarding the matters covered in this publication, please reach out to any of the lawyers listed below or your usual Davis Polk contact.

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