

Michigan Clinicians for Climate Action commends President Biden and EPA Administrator Regan for finalizing strong methane standards on Dec. 2, 2023. As practitioners who see the health impacts of our changing climate in our offices, clinics, and hospitals each day, we recognize the urgent need to quickly and justly transition to a healthy clean energy future, and this is a substantive step in the right direction.

Reducing fugitive leakage and flaring of methane, a greenhouse gas which is much more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>, is a necessary step to prevent the worst health impacts of our changing climate. These rules are projected to avert 58 million tons of methane over the next 15 years, a near-term climate equivalent of taking nearly a billion cars off the road for a year.

According to [Michigan Natural Gas Flaring and Venting Regulations](#), Antrim Shale in the lower peninsula is responsible for more than 80% of Michigan's natural gas production. In addition to the outsized global warming potential of methane, natural gas production generates dangerous ground level ozone-producing volatile organic compounds (VOCs) known to be correlated with a [host of health harms](#) including an increased incidence of asthma, other respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and [poor pregnancy outcomes](#). Fortunately, implementation of the new methane standards are projected to prevent the emission of 16 million tons of smog-producing VOCs over 15 years.

In addition to VOCs, reducing methane leaks and flares will avoid the release of 590,000 tons of hazardous air pollutants over that same time frame including hydrogen sulfide, toluene, xylene, and benzene, some of which are known carcinogens.

These standards are a clear win for human health as well as the climate! We applaud the EPA for taking this critical step towards curbing methane pollution from oil and gas production and we look forward to working with Michigan's Department of Energy, Great Lakes, and Environment to make sure Michigan communities realize the health benefits of these stronger methane rules.