



Public Interest Center | P.O. Box 1049 | Columbus, OH | 43216-1049

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## **Ohio EPA Seeks Public Comments on Draft General Permit To Protect Air Around Shale Gas Production Sites**

With shale gas production from Ohio's Marcellus and Utica shale deposits projected to increase, Ohio EPA wants to make sure the air around production sites is safe while providing business with the most efficient option to get operations up and running. To meet this objective, the Agency has developed a draft general air permit for shale gas production sites and is seeking public comments prior to finalizing the permit.

The draft general permit covers a variety of emissions sources found at most shale gas production sites including internal combustion engines, turbine-powered generators, dehydration systems, storage tanks, flares and unpaved roadways. It contains emissions limits, operating restrictions, and monitoring, testing and reporting requirements.

The draft general permit does not cover activities that occur during the drilling and fracturing phases as the resulting air emissions are considered temporary and exempt from air pollution permit regulations. The drilling and fracturing phases are regulated under federal rules. In addition, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (Division of Mineral Resources Management) is the primary regulatory authority over oil and gas drilling activity in Ohio, including regulations for well construction, siting, design and operation.

The draft general permit contains air pollution control standards applicable to most shale gas production sites, providing consistency and efficiency to the permitting process. Once finalized, applicants will apply for and receive the permit in as little as two weeks. Ohio EPA's air division currently offers 47 general permits which serve a variety of business sectors.

In July, an initial draft of the general permit was provided to interested parties for review and comment. Ohio EPA considered all comments received and modified the draft to better define the types of equipment covered under the permit (natural gas-fired turbine generators were added, truck-loading racks were removed) and increase the allowable number of on-site storage tanks and size of natural gas-fired compressor engines.

The draft general permit's terms and conditions, qualifying criteria and related information are available [online](#). Public comments may be submitted to Ohio EPA Division of Air Pollution Control, attn: Cheryl Suttman, P.O. Box 1049, Columbus OH 43216-1049 or emailed to [cheryl.suttman@epa.state.oh.us](mailto:cheryl.suttman@epa.state.oh.us). The public comment period ends November 28, 2011.

The permit is expected to be finalized and made available to applicants by the end of the year.

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