

Oil & Gas Industry To Be Affected by EPA's Reconsideration of Rules and Enforcement Priorities

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The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA or Agency) recently announced it will reconsider a series of rules and enforcement priorities that could impact the oil and gas industry. The move is consistent with Administrator Lee Zeldin's Feb. 4, 2025, announcement of EPA's "[Powering the Great American Comeback](#)" Initiative, which outlines the Agency's new priorities. In March, the [Agency announced](#) it will undertake 31 actions in the coming months, seven of those are grouped under the initiative's second pillar titled "Restoring American Energy Dominance."

Haynes Boone previously authored an article about four of the seven actions, which may impact [power plants](#). In this article, we highlight three additional actions that may impact the oil and gas industry. EPA has announced that it plans to reconsider the following rules:

1. Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program (GHGRP) – The GHGRP requires large GHG emission sources, fuel and industrial suppliers, and CO2 injection sites to report GHG data and other relevant information. The Agency recently extended the reporting deadline for Reporting Year 2024 from March 31, 2025, to May 30, 2025;
2. Quad O b/c – The Quad O rule established emission standards and compliance schedules for the control of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and sulfur dioxide (SO2) emissions from certain oil and gas facilities;
3. Oil and Gas Effluent Limitation Guidelines – The guidelines regulate wastewater discharges from field exploration, drilling, production, well treatment and well completion activities.

The EPA Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) also issued a [memorandum](#) to provide guidance on implementing the National Enforcement Compliance Initiatives (NECIs) consistent with the "Powering the Great American Comeback" Initiative. Broadly, the memorandum directs that "enforcement and compliance actions shall not shut down any stage of energy production (from exploration to distribution) or power generation absent an imminent and substantial threat to human health or an express statutory or regulatory requirement to the contrary." The memorandum also makes changes to specific NECIs of special relevance to oil and gas exploration and production:

1. Not focusing the Mitigating Climate Change NECI on methane emissions from oil and gas facilities and focusing hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) enforcement on "the unlawful import and subsequent sale of HFCs."
2. Not focusing the Chemical Accident Risk Reduction NECI on facilities with hydrogen fluoride. The memorandum notes that "[f]uture inspections should prioritize high-risk facilities regardless of the regulated chemicals utilized at the facility."

Industry operators should monitor the Agency's reconsideration of the above listed rules and evolving priority enforcement actions. Early planning for stakeholder engagement and collaboration with industry associations can help prepare operators for the impact of potential changes. Haynes

Boone attorneys have vast experience navigating complex regulatory changes and have assisted industry operators to evaluate their risk and develop mitigating strategies.

If you have questions or need assistance in navigating this transition period, please contact one of the attorneys listed below, or a member of Haynes Boone's [Environmental Practice Group](#).