



## **RPSEA to Initiate Study to Determine Emissions Profile of Marginal Wells**

### ***New Data Needed to Replace Modeled Data Used by EPA in Developing Methane Rule***

HOUSTON, TX – August 21, 2017 – The [Research Partnership to Secure Energy for America \(RPSEA\)](#) is initiating a joint industry project with U.S. oil and gas industry partners to conduct and manage a real-world survey that will determine the precise levels of methane emitting from marginal wells in the U.S.

RPSEA officials say the survey is needed to demonstrate if the contribution of methane emissions from marginal oil and gas wells are much lower than what the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined and used when it updated its New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) under former President Barack Obama.

As part of that rule, the EPA did not provide an expected exemption of marginal wells from Leak Detection and Repair (LDAR) requirements, RPSEA says, consequently adding a significant economic burden to oil and gas producers, particularly those which are independent or smaller.

The need to complete this research, RPSEA says, was brought to light after the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit this month ordered the EPA to lift a stay on the rule, reversing a Trump administration order to delay its implementation.

“The data that EPA used to develop this rule were assumptions, with limited accurate and defensible data from marginal wells to base this ruling,” said RPSEA President Tom Williams. “It is absolutely imperative that we provide EPA with data that shows the accurate methane emissions contributions made by marginal wells.”

The Independent Petroleum Association of America (IPAA) and U.S. Oil and Gas Association (USOGA) support the proposed study and RPSEA will be working with their members, plus state and regional associations and member companies of both organizations, to conduct it. Work will commence when adequate funding is secured. Parties interested in participating or learning more should visit the RPSEA website or contact Business Development Program Director Jack Belcher at the number below.

RPSEA has previously funded several projects on air emissions and is teaming up Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC), GSI Environmental Inc. and advisory teams from academia, industry and state and federal governments to perform this research and other RPSEA members to assure there will be broad local presence and expertise in the various regions of the study.

Marginal oil wells are those with an average production of no more than 15 barrels per day, those producing heavy oil or those wells producing not less than 95 percent water, with average production of not more than 25 barrels per day of oil. Marginal gas wells are those producing not more than 90 Mcf a day. There are more than 1.1 million oil and natural gas wells in the U.S., accounting for up to 20 percent of the U.S. oil production and about 13 percent of the U.S. natural gas production.

### **About RPSEA**



Founded in 2002, RPSEA is a unique 501(c)(3) non-profit, national consortium that provides focused research and development to deploy safe and environmentally sensitive technology that can deliver hydrocarbons from domestic resources to the citizens of the United States. Its membership consists of nine of the nation's premier research universities, five national laboratories, other major research institutions, large and small energy producers, and energy consumers.

**Contact:**

Jack Belcher  
(832) 248-2914