

Southwest Journal of Pulmonary, Critical Care & Sleep

Journal of the Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and California Thoracic Societies

www.swjpcc.com

SWJPCCS Associate Editor has Essay on Reining in Air Pollution Published in NY Times



Dr. Dona Upson

Dona Upson MD, an associate editor of the SWJPCCS from Albuquerque, recently had a [Guest Essay](#) published in the NY Times (1). In the opinion piece titled “The Government Is This Close to Reining in Some of the Worst Air Pollution” Dr. Upson states that the science is clear that when oil and gas are extracted and transported from wells, methane and other pollutants, including volatile organic compounds, leak out. These form ozone and may exacerbate asthma and COPD, cause cancer and birth defects, and affect the nervous system. Emissions from oil and gas production also produce nitrogen oxides, which can exacerbate lung disease. Methane is also a powerful greenhouse gas, over 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide in its warming power, though its life span in the atmosphere is much shorter. One of the fastest and

cheapest ways to reduce these emissions and improve health is to prevent methane leaks, venting and flares, which would also go a long way in reducing ozone pollution. According to Dr. Upson the federal government has a huge opportunity to reduce methane emissions, improve health and slow climate change. The first and most important way is through a rule proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to cut pollution, including methane, from new and existing oil and gas operations nationwide. Outside of the EPA the Bureau of Land Management has proposed a rule to limit venting, flaring and leaks of natural gas on public lands. Dr. Upson argues in her essay for support of both these rules.

Reference

Upson DJ. The Government Is This Close to Reining in Some of the Worst Air Pollution. NY Times. March 14, 2023. Available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/14/opinion/air-pollution-oil-gas-methane.html?unlocked_article_code=LsW56AyPBUFnQsdIIRFwy1HaNHxISpGdOo0FpzCnqqqP1YfKdSWQWrYoySV01-SQEQyrA5w2wi-sVQGEROE0EwLWjE-

[3BChLi8DB4Oe5oxhLRyMnMMG7MpddaOr7EGGc_U-aqOX8XbiFd65ISJze9VOeElVgCqstnghXBz6Q2-H0DE1GBXPOniX-vrTep6gnAwAykHSM8zOkCBLmW95ctQT6HSKVyDO9ucEUFkvD_3njOYXmq6eCS4ZajhnvvO02qZQ2kUnw8E8bu72-MBdexXamik2wvUkk7gtc_nJMaVWhHiBLWGV33W2EE635C8xGF9TLtA0MvjDNm4mdYsq1-iP6O4Jqkw&smid=em-share](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/14/opinion/air-pollution-oil-gas-methane.html?unlocked_article_code=LsW56AyPBUFnQsdIIRFwy1HaNHxISpGdOo0FpzCnqqqP1YfKdSWQWrYoySV01-SQEQyrA5w2wi-sVQGEROE0EwLWjE-3BChLi8DB4Oe5oxhLRyMnMMG7MpddaOr7EGGc_U-aqOX8XbiFd65ISJze9VOeElVgCqstnghXBz6Q2-H0DE1GBXPOniX-vrTep6gnAwAykHSM8zOkCBLmW95ctQT6HSKVyDO9ucEUFkvD_3njOYXmq6eCS4ZajhnvvO02qZQ2kUnw8E8bu72-MBdexXamik2wvUkk7gtc_nJMaVWhHiBLWGV33W2EE635C8xGF9TLtA0MvjDNm4mdYsq1-iP6O4Jqkw&smid=em-share) (accessed 3/28/23).