

## Obama's EPA Gets One More Shot At Oil And Gas Industry

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) delivered a Christmas present to some 15,000 owners of oil and gas wells across the nation last week in the form of certified letters demanding that the companies send EPA detailed information regarding wells they own.

The Information Collection Request, also called the ICR, isn't really a request, because EPA warns owners that if the information isn't received within 60 days they could be fined up to \$90,000 per day.

The survey comes in two parts. Part 1 requires "comprehensive information from onshore petroleum and natural gas production facilities to better understand the number and types of equipment at production facilities." Part 2, the "facility survey," seeks information on production, gathering and boosting, processing, compression/transmission, pipeline, natural gas storage, as well as LNG storage and import/export facilities. There is a 180-day deadline for Part 2.

The ICR is part of EPA's new methane regulation, which was adopted this summer. Many observers thought that EPA would not send out the ICRs, and wait to determine if anything should be done after the new administration comes into office.

President-elect Donald Trump will take office on Jan. 20, just about 30 days from the ICR filing deadline. Trump has vowed to reduce regulations on industry, and there was speculation that the massive information exchange would not happen.

Additionally, oil and gas well owners are puzzled and upset because there has been a lawsuit filed against the methane rule by many states, including Texas, and several oil and gas industry organizations.

Industry had requested that EPA exempt marginal wells, but environmental groups demanded that all wells be required to submit information to EPA.

The Obama administration hurriedly put the survey together and got the certified letters in the mail just before Christmas.



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