

Thure Cannon

Attached please find comments from Thure Cannon with the Texas Pipeline Association regarding Rule Project Number 2023-116-115-AI; proposed revisions to 30 TAC Chapter 115. Thank you for the opportunity to comment and please reach out if you have any questions.



Texas Pipeline Association

Thure Cannon
President

January 16, 2024

Submitted via <https://tceq.commentinput.com/comment/search>

Gwen Ricco
MC 205
Office of Legal Services
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

RE: Comments on Rule Project Number 2023-116-115-AI; proposed revisions to 30
TAC Chapter 115

Dear Ms. Ricco:

The Texas Pipeline Association (TPA) provides the following comments regarding TCEQ's proposed revisions to 30 TAC Chapter 115, Rule Project Number 2023-116-115-AI, published at 48 Tex. Reg. 7290 (Dec. 15, 2023). TPA is an organization composed of 39 member companies who gather, process, treat, and transport natural gas and hazardous liquids materials through intrastate pipelines in the State of Texas. Our members own and operate equipment that is subject to the rules set forth in Chapter 115.

At the outset, we wish to express our appreciation to TCEQ staff for their efforts in this rulemaking, and in particular staff's openness and continued willingness to consider our points of view. We believe that the proposed rules largely address the issues in Chapter 115 with which we were concerned. We offer the following comments in an effort to help ensure that the rules as finalized are as effective as possible in providing efficiency and certainty to regulated parties.

1. TPA requests that TCEQ allow alternatives where conflicts will arise from compliance with newly finalized New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) Subpart OOOOb. For reciprocating compressor rod packing vents not routed to process or control, the proposed rules in §115.173 require rod packing replacement every 26,000 hours of operation (or 36 months). However, new NSPS OOOOb only requires monitoring every 8,760 hours of operation, and repair or replacement of rod packing when the vent rate exceeds an emissions threshold. This could lead to a situation where an operating compressor subject to NSPS OOOOb must replace the rod packing while it is still operating in good condition. To correct this conflict, TPA proposes that TCEQ should either exempt reciprocating compressors complying with NSPS OOOOb or allow NSPS OOOOb monitoring as an alternative to replacing the rod packing on a set interval. Air quality will not be impacted because the NSPS OOOOb reciprocating compressor

monitoring requirements should be at least as stringent as the requirements finalized in the Control Techniques Guidelines, as evidenced in the Background Technical Support Document for the proposed rule, Chapter 7.¹

2. Gas Plant LDAR should not apply to well sites and gathering and boosting stations.

In initially implementing Chapter 115, Subchapter B, Division 7 relating to Oil and Natural Gas Service in Ozone Nonattainment Areas, TCEQ combined the requirements for well sites and gathering and boosting (G&B) stations with the requirements for gas plants. At the time, these requirements mainly applied to natural gas processing plants as the emissions from well sites and G&B stations were generally below the applicability threshold. Now, however, with the lowering of the major source threshold, additional sites will be pulled in and will be subject to gas plant requirements. The requirements in proposed §115.177, including the alternate work practice in §115.358, go above and beyond the requirements proposed by EPA in the CTGs including leak monitoring frequency, repair timeline, annual Method 21 monitoring, and identification of components. These additional requirements will add significant burden to industry as more sites will be required to comply with these requirements in the future. Well sites and G&B stations are generally smaller, unmanned locations and operators will struggle to meet the monitoring frequency and repair timelines. Therefore, TPA urges TCEQ to revise these requirements to match the CTG OGI monitoring requirements.

3. The rule language regarding exemptions should be as clear as possible, so that regulated parties know exactly what provisions they may be exempt from. Some of the proposed language in proposed §115.172 provides that a company is exempt from rule requirements if certain conditions are met. While we appreciate the ability to qualify for such exemptions, we urge TCEQ to state the exemptions as precisely as possible, so that companies know the exact scope of the exemption. For example, proposed §§115.172(a)(9) and (a)(10) provide that, if listed conditions are met, specified components “are exempt from the instrument monitoring (with a hydrocarbon gas analyzer) requirements of §115.177(b) of this title (relating to Monitoring and Inspection Requirements) ...” We think it would be helpful if the final rule language provided more specificity here, so that there would be no question as to which provisions TCEQ has in mind when it refers to the “instrument monitoring ... requirements of § 115.177(b)” and when it refers to the “Monitoring and Inspection Requirements.” It would be best if the rules simply specified which exact rule provisions, by section and subsection references, a company would be exempt from. This would go a long way toward eliminating the possibility of misinterpretation or uncertainty in the future as the rules are applied in the field.

A similar comment applies to proposed §§115.172(e) and (f), which provide that, under certain circumstances, sites or components “are exempt from the monitoring requirements of §115.177.” Again, rather than risk the possibility that a company may be uncertain as to what is and is not a “monitoring requirement” in §115.177, the rule should simply provide that sites or components are “exempt from the requirements of §115.177” or, alternatively, the rule should specifically list the exact rule provisions, by section and subsection references, that such sites or components would be exempt from.

¹ See <https://www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OAR-2021-0317-0166>.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Thure Cannon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thure Cannon
President