

Valentine, Velvet, EMNRD

From: Davidson, Florene, EMNRD
Sent: Friday, January 8, 2021 3:05 PM
To: Valentine, Velvet, EMNRD
Subject: FW: Methane rule comments
Attachments: Al Bennett Methane Rule Comment.docx

Case 21528

From: al bennett <alfredbennett45@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 8, 2021 2:59 PM
To: Davidson, Florene, EMNRD <florene.davidson@state.nm.us>; Hearings, OCC, EMNRD <OCC.Hearings@state.nm.us>
Subject: [EXT] Methane rule comments

Please see the attached.

Thank you,

Alfred Bennett III
Shiprock, NM
srriverrat3@gmail.com
505.357.2141

Oil Conservation Commission
3rd Floor, Wendell Chino Building,
1220 South St. Francis Drive,
Santa Fe, New Mexico, 87505

Jan 7, 2020

Dear Oil Conservation Commissioners,

My name is Alfred Bennett III. I am from Shiprock, New Mexico. I am a longtime resident of the Four Corners area.

As a youth, I grew up herding sheep in the canyons and mesas northeast of Shiprock. I remember walking by oil and gas wells and the smell they gave off. It would irritate my eyes, so I tried to stay away from them. I didn't know what this was at the time, but I had the sense it was not good for my body.

Later in 1983, I was hired by the Navajo Nation, Office of Navajo Labor Relation (ONLR), as a Compliance Officer and was assigned to Eastern Agency. During my job traveling in those communities, there were times I noticed the smell of gas and it was very unpleasant.

In the 1990s, I used to hunt deer and elk every year in the Carson Nation Forest and would be among gas wells there that affected me. Over the years, I have noticed the change in air quality of the Four Corners region. I've also noticed the old oil well casings have corroded and contaminated water in some areas. Our communities have this to deal with.

I also recall, Operation Gas Buggy. Imagine people's natural gas, having been irradiated and many households were sold contaminated gas, not knowing the dangers of radiation exposure when they used their gas heating systems and ovens. Radiation in pipes go forever and take a long time to break down. A few years ago, I heard about the methane hot spot over the Four Corners. This has made me wonder if this is why there are many health problems among our people.

I urge the OCC members to **strengthen** the OCD's proposed methane waste rule to reduce waste and pollution.

- The rule should require oil and gas companies to capture 98% of methane emissions by 2026.
- The rule should require operators to immediately notify communities when methane releases threaten public health and safety.
- The rule should deny new drill permits when operators are out of compliance.
- The rule should also prohibit routine venting and flaring and only allow for emergency flaring.

Thank you,
Alfred Bennett III
Shiprock, NM
srriverrat3@gmail.com
505.357.2141