

Methane Emissions from Natural Gas Distribution Pipelines in California

Methane emissions from natural gas pipelines are of growing interest to federal, state, and local organizations. Pipeline leaks are one of the major sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the natural gas transmission and distribution sector. Currently, emissions are calculated and reported based on emission factors that were developed in 1996 by the Gas Research Institute and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Field measurement instruments and utility practices have changed since the completion of that study. This project sought to improve emission factors with the collection and analysis of additional field data in California. The data collection for this study focused on non-hazardous leaks from unprotected steel mains and services as well as plastic mains and services. The results of the study are presented and compared to other recent data from distribution pipelines.