



Air Resources Board
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**Office of Environmental
Health Hazard Assessment**
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Update on Activities to Support Development of Biomethane Standards

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Background

AB 1900, authored by Assemblyman Mike Gatto and chaptered into law on September 27, 2012 (Chapter 602, Statutes of 2012), requires the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to develop standards for constituents in biogas to protect human health and pipeline integrity and safety. In support of the CPUC standards development efforts, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and the Air Resources Board (ARB), in consultation with other State agencies, are to undertake certain actions.

Specifically, OEHHA is tasked with compiling a list of constituents of concern (constituents) found in biogas that could pose a health risk and that are at levels that significantly exceed the concentrations of those constituents in natural gas. OEHHA is also to determine health protective levels for these constituents. ARB is tasked with developing realistic exposure scenarios and identifying the associated health risk to utility workers and gas end users; determining the concentrations of these constituents in biogas necessary to protect public health; and identifying monitoring, testing, reporting, and recordkeeping requirements necessary to ensure that health protective levels are maintained.

Activities

ARB and OEHHA are currently working on the following tasks:

- Identifying sources of information (e.g., test data) on constituents in both untreated biogas and treated biomethane from landfills, publicly owned treatment works/POTWs (sewage treatment plants), and dairy manure digesters.
- Identifying sources of information (e.g., test data) on constituents found in natural gas in the common carrier pipeline.
- Identifying health risk values (cancer, acute and chronic) for the constituents in biomethane and natural gas.

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- Developing realistic exposure assessments to residential users and utility workers from exposure to potential constituents in biomethane.
- Determining health protective concentrations of constituents in biomethane based on exposure assessments.
- Identifying biomethane standards currently used by utilities in California, other states, and internationally.
- Identifying monitoring, testing, and recordkeeping procedures used by utilities accepting biomethane in the common carrier natural gas pipeline.

Timeline

The tasks identified above must be completed on or before May 15, 2013. By this date, ARB and OEHHA will provide the CPUC with a report summarizing the information and recommendations as required by AB 1900.

On or before December 31, 2013, the CPUC will by rule or order adopt standards for constituents that are reasonably necessary to ensure the protection of human health and pipeline safety and integrity, giving due deference to the recommendations developed by ARB and OEHHA.

Opportunities for Input

ARB and OEHHA staff welcomes your comments, suggestions or information that would help us complete the requirements specified in AB 1900. Please contact the technical staff below to provide information, or to request a meeting. In addition, we encourage you to participate in the upcoming CPUC public regulatory process to adopt standards for biomethane.

Agency Contacts

Staff	Agency	Email	Phone
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Website: www.arb.ca.gov/energy/biogas/biogas.htm

To receive email notification of ARB-OEHHA activities pertaining to implementation of AB 1900, please join the AB 1900 email list serve at:
http://www.arb.ca.gov/listserv/listserv_ind.php?listname=biogas