



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL

June 3, 2013

**MEMORANDUM**

**SUBJECT:** New Assignment Notification: Evaluation of EPA Actions to Reduce Methane Distribution Sector Leaks  
Project No. OPE-FY13-0016

**FROM:** Carolyn Copper, Assistant Inspector General /s/  
Office of Program Evaluation

**TO:** Gina McCarthy, Assistant Administrator  
Office of Air and Radiation

Lek Kadeli, Acting Assistant Administrator  
Office of Research and Development

The purpose of this memorandum is to notify you that the Office of Inspector General plans to begin the preliminary research phase of an evaluation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to reduce methane leaks from pipelines in the natural gas distribution sector. This project is included in our fiscal year 2013 annual plan. We plan to address the following question:

- What actions has the EPA taken to reduce methane emissions from leaking pipes in the natural gas distribution sector?

During the preliminary research phase we plan to obtain information to address the above question, which is subject to change as we conduct our work. We plan to review documents, analyze data, and interview managers and staff from the EPA's Office of Air and Radiation, Office of Research and Development, and selected regions. We also plan to interview representatives of environmental groups, industry associations, academia and local distribution companies that have conducted research on methane distribution leaks and retrofit technologies. At agreed-upon periods, our team will meet with your staff to discuss the status of our preliminary research review.

We will contact your audit liaison within 2 weeks to arrange a mutually agreeable time for a kickoff meeting to discuss the assignment objective and our planned work. We will also answer any questions you or your staff may have about the evaluation process and reporting procedures. If you or your staff have any questions in the meantime, please contact Rick Beusse, director for program evaluation, air issues, at (919) 541-5747 or [beusse.rick@epa.gov](mailto:beusse.rick@epa.gov); or Erica Hauck, project manager, at (303) 312-6629 or [hauck.eric@epa.gov](mailto:hauck.eric@epa.gov).

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