

PADEP Proposes Revised Coal-Mine Methane Enclosed Flares General Permit

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On March 16, 2024, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) announced in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* an opportunity to submit public comments on the proposed revised [General Plan Approval and/or General Operating Permit BAQ-GPA/GP-21, Coal-Mine Methane Enclosed Flare](#) (Revised GP-21). See 54 Pa. Bull. 1429 (Mar. 16, 2024). As reported in [Vol. 40, No. 3 \(2023\)](#) of this *Newsletter*, PADEP previously published a final version of the General Plan Approval and/or General Operating Permit BAQ-GPA/GP-21, Coal-Mine Methane Enclosed Flare (GP-21) on September 23, 2023, which industry groups appealed.

According to PADEP's technical support document (TSD) for the Revised GP-21, PADEP "was presented additional source and site-specific information after September 23, 2023, and upon review, decided certain changes were warranted to address the new information and intended use of GP-21." [TSD for the Revised GP-21](#), at 2. Although the TSD references changes to address the appellants' concerns, it does not provide specific details about the appeal.

In the Revised GP-21, PADEP proposes to raise the best available technology (BAT) compliance requirement to limit NOx emissions to less than or equal to 0.15 lb/MMBtu, up from 0.08 lb/MMBtu. As explained in the TSD, PADEP determined that the 0.08 lb/MMBtu limit finalized in September was "not appropriate at the variable site conditions and the concentration of methane present in Pennsylvania mines." *Id.* at 3. The Revised GP-21 also allows operators to install and operate methane gas monitors to continuously measure and record the coal-mine gas methane concentration. This option permits operators to forgo the prior requirement under GP-21 that they conduct quarterly gas analysis at the inlet gas stream to the enclosed flare to monitor heat input to the flare. PADEP explains in the TSD that it made this change in response to cost concerns raised by appellants and that the continuous monitoring option meets the intent of PADEP's quarterly analysis requirement. Comments on the Revised GP-21 were due to PADEP by April 29, 2024.

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