FAQS RULE 13-1: Significant Methane Releases

What is the purpose of Rule 13-1?
Draft Rule 13-1 limits emissions from sources with significant methane releases by requiring the reduction of methane emissions upon detection.

What is a significant methane release?
A significant methane release under Draft Rule 13-1 is considered any gaseous release with a methane concentration greater than 10,000 parts per million (ppm) or 1 percent.

How are these releases detected?
Multiple technologies can be used, including optical gas imaging cameras, laser equipment, infrared equipment, and handheld combustible gas indicators capable of detecting methane concentrations of at least 10,000 ppm.

Which facilities are affected by Draft Rule 13-1?
Virtually all sources of methane in the Air District's jurisdiction will be affected by this rule with exemptions on a limited basis. The rule will target landfills, petroleum refineries, bulk plants, bulk terminals, wastewater treatment facilities, and natural gas storage, transmission and distribution operations, and will include Type A and Type B sources.

What are Type A sources?
Type A, or point sources, are sources where emissions are tracked using traditional testing methods and include exhaust stacks, process vents, and components, such as valves and flanges.

What are Type B sources?
Type B, or area sources, are larger surface-area sources such as wastewater ponds and composting piles.

What does Draft Rule 13-1 require of facilities?
Any significant methane release must be minimized within three days to the lowest achievable level and abated within 14 days to below 500 ppm, unless issued a limited exemption.

When are limited exemptions issued?
Exemptions may be issued via a petition process for small methane releases not exceeding 10 pounds per day for less than five consecutive days.

When will Draft Rule 13-1 go into effect?
Draft Rule 13-1 is expected to be adopted by the Air District Board of Directors during the first half of 2019 and will go into effect six months after adoption.