

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Proposes Carbon Emissions Rules for New Power Plants

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EPA recently announced proposed standards to regulate carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂) from new power plants. The proposed limits would apply to new fossil fuel-fired power plants, but not to modified or reconstructed sources. Units that primarily fire biomass would not be subject to the proposed standards. The standards apply only to CO₂ emissions; they do not cover other greenhouse gases.

For fossil fuel-fired utility boilers and integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC) units (primarily coal-fired units), the EPA is proposing limits that depend on the compliance period that best suits the unit. Because of the relatively high carbon emissions produced by firing coal, both limits will likely require the use of carbon capture technology. These standards are:

- 1,100 lb CO₂/MWh gross over a 12-month operating period, or
- 1,000-1,050 lb CO₂/MWh gross over an 84-month (7-year) period

For natural gas-fired stationary combustion units, the EPA is proposing separate standards for larger units (greater than 850mmBtu/hr) and smaller units (less than or equal to 850mmBtu/hr). The proposed limits are:

- 1,000 lb CO₂/MWh gross for larger units (> 850 mmBtu/hr)
- 1,100 lb CO₂/MWh gross for smaller units (≤ 850 mmBtu/hr)

Following publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register, there will be a 60-day public comment period.

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