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EDITOR'S PICK

WVU researchers to study methane emission from natural gas fields

By Matt Combs Register-Herald Reporter Sep 3, 2018



Researchers from West Virginia University will be looking into how much methane gas is emitted from natural gas well sites.

The research, led by Derek Johnson, an associate professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering, and Omar Abdul-Aziz, an associate professor of civil and environmental engineering, has been awarded a three-year grant of more than \$320,000 from the National Science Foundation.

“Our team at WVU previously developed a system to directly quantify methane emissions from natural gas components, and even though the system is robust and accurate it does require site access and extended personnel efforts on site,” Johnson said in a news release. “Both industry and researchers are developing technologies that can be deployed near the site that require less physical labor. Our team will develop an overall approach of combining the best data from multiple techniques to develop a more efficient method of methane quantification.”

According to the release, recent studies have significant variations in exactly how much methane is lost and the WVU study may lead to a more concrete figure.

“These new approaches will reduce uncertainties between studies, which will help improve the greater understanding of methane emissions,” Johnson said. “These tools will also help industry to identify excessive emissions so that they can be remedied immediately in efforts to conserve natural gas and reduce their greenhouse gas footprint.”

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