# Waste of natural gas costing taxpayers millions

WASHINGTON (AP) — Significant amounts of natural gas on federal lands are being wasted, costing taxpayers tens of millions of dollars each year and adding to harmful greenhouse gas emissions, a congressional investigation has found

The nonpartisan Government Accountability Office also said the Bureau of Land Management failed to conduct production inspections for hundreds of high-priority oil and gas wells — roughly 1 out of 5 — to ensure full payment of royalties to the U.S.

The report, obtained by The Associated Press before its public release, is the latest to highlight substantial gaps in oversight. An AP review of government records last May found the agency, which manages oil and gas development on federal and Indian lands, had been overwhelmed by a boom in a new drilling technique known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking.

The GAO report said it had been urging BLM, an agency of the Interior Department, to update guidelines for the burning or venting of natural gas since at least 2010, when it found 40 percent of it could be captured economically and sold. BLM has yet to do so, although agency officials now



A natural gas well pad sits in front of the Roan Plateau near the Colorado mountain community of Rifle, Colo. Significant amounts of natural gas on federal lands are being wasted, costing taxpayers tens of millions of dollars each year and adding to harmful greenhouse gas emissions, a congressional investigation has found.

say they are in the process of putting together various orders and a proposed rule for comment later this year.

Until then, government investigators called BLM's management of oil and gas "high-risk" for waste and fraud.

"The Interior Department has known for at least a decade that companies have been wasting natural gas from oil and gas wells on public lands," said Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore. "Venting and flaring natural gas from these wells hurts the environment and

speeds up global warming, and it shortchanges the taxpayers." He joined Reps. Peter

DeFazio, D-Ore., and Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., the top Democrat on the House Committee on Natural Resources, in calling on the department to redouble efforts to stem waste, rather than give "drilling companies a pass to let millions of taxpayer dollars evaporate into thin air.'

Companies that drill for natural gas pay the federal government a royalty on the gas they extract; they are also allowed to burn or release publicly-owned gas from wells in certain amounts for

But GAO said BLM was underestimating the amount of gas vented and flared and failing to collect royalties for that gas. Based on data from the Environmental Protection Agency, the GAO calculated in 2010 that the government was losing at least \$23 million annually in lost sales, an amount that environmental groups say has since grown due to increased drilling activity.

Much of the vented gas is methane, a greenhouse gas roughly 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Using EPA estimates, the GAO concluded that capturing the vented gas would be the equivalent of removing 3.1 million cars from the road or closing four average-sized coal-fired power plants.

Pieter Tans, lead scientist of the Global Greenhouse Gas Reference Network at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, said methane is an important contributor to global warming, but that carbon dioxide emissions remained the no. 1 target. "It's more easy to do something about methane than it is to do something about CO2," he said.

#### BRIEFLY

### Teacher arrested after burning students with Tesla coil

SALEM (AP) — An Oregon science teacher who police say used a Tesla coil to burn the phrase "I love mom" into the arms of students has been charged with criminal mistreatment.

Salem Police Lt. Steve Birr says 37-year-old Samuel Dufner was arrested Tuesday at South Salem High School. Birr says students used the coil in an exercise last

Thursday. Dufner noted it could also be used to mark the skin and asked for volunteers.

Dufner burned "I love mom" — with a heart to symbolize the word love — into their arms. A parent complained Friday, starting the

investigation. Dufner posted \$2,000 bail. The Salem-Keizer

School District placed him on leave.

Birr says the markings had mostly faded. The Tesla coil transmits electricity without wires at high frequency and high voltage levels.

### Health officials close recreational shellfish harvest

BELLINGHAM, Wash. (AP) — State health officials have closed all recreational shellfish harvesting on beaches in northern Whatcom County after tests found unsafe levels of a biotoxin.

The State Department of Health announced the closure on Wednesday for beaches from Sandy Point north to the Canadian boarder, including Points Roberts.

Testing detected unsafe levels of paralytic shellfish poisoning, or PSP, biotoxin in molluscan shellfish. These include clams, mussels, oysters and scallops.

This was the second biotoxin-related closure in less than a month. Officials say the algae that contains the toxins can't be seen and must be detected by laboratory testing. The department of health provides test results on its website.

Officials say shellfish sold in restaurants and markets have been tested before distribution and are safe to eat

## No charges in shooting death of man who was strangling woman

EUGENE (AP) — Prosecutors won't be charging the 70-year-old Dorena man who shot and killed his friend to stop him from strangling a woman.

The Eugene Register-Guard reports Jerry Dale Risener said he didn't have a choice when he shot 49-year-old Mitchell Demopoulos in the chest.

An argument broke out in January between the two and a female tenant at Risener's house, where the three had been drinking. Demopoulos started strangling the woman, and prosecutors say he threatened to kill Risener and burn down his house.

Risener asked him to stop, and shot him when Demopoulos continued to strangle the woman. Prosecutors say the shooting was legally justified.

# Corrections

An article in the May 2-3 weekend edition of the East Oregonian misspelled the name of the operations manager at Williams Northwest Pipeline's Plymouth, Washington facility. His name is Von Studer.

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

#### Idaho man admits using meth, killing police officer later after a police dog found Renfro was being held on

Renfro

By KEITH RIDLER Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho — An Idaho man told investigators he used a 9mm Glock handgun hidden in his coat pocket to shoot and kill a police officer because he feared the officer would find the weapon, according to court documents released Wednesday.

records 26-year-old Jonathan Renfro of Rathdrum told authorities he shot Coeur d'Alene police Sgt. Greg Moore early Tuesday then stole his patrol vehicle.

Renfro said he used methamphetamine the day before the shooting, which was recorded by the officer's body

Moore was checking on a suspicious person while patrolling a neighborhood when he was gunned down. He died later that evening.

"Renfro is observed shooting Sgt. Moore," Idaho State Police Senior Detective Michael A. Van Leuven wrote

describes images from the camera worn by Moore. "After being shot, Sgt. Moore falls to the ground, causing his body camera to point skyward. A short time later Renfro's face comes back into the frame. Renfro is seen using

in an affidavit that

a flashlight while searching Sgt. Moore's person."

A Post Falls police officer later spotted the stolen police vehicle and gave chase with speeds reaching 125 mph but found the vehicle abandoned. Law enforcement agencies set up a perimeter and Renfro was apprehended several hours him hiding under a truck and dragged him out. From the information I've

received so far, it doesn't look like an ambush-style

attack,' Coeur d'Alene Police Chief Lee White said. "This was just a bad guy doing bad guy stuff and our officers doing what they were trained to do — and that's trying to keep our communities safe."

Renfro faces felony several charges, including murder, attempted murder and grand theft.

The documents Moore's service pistol was found near Renfro, and a second 9mm pistol was found in a nearby field with Moore's flashlight and Renfro's eyeglasses.

\$2 million bail. His attorney, John Adams

of the Kootenai County Public Defender's office, didn't return a call from The Associated Press. One of the court docu-

ments is a request by Adams for a gag order barring anyone involved in the case from discussing it with news Hundreds of

gathered at a candlelight vigil Tuesday for the veteran police officer, some traveling from out of state and others paying tribute to the sacrifice of a lawman they didn't know.

"It's just amazing that people who don't even know him, they come out and support everything he stood for," Don Eckles, a close friend of Moore, told The Spokesman-Review newspaper of Spokane, Washington.

# EAST () REGONIAN

Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.F. Byers Ave. Pendleton 541-276-2211 333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211 Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed major holidays

# www.eastoregonian.com

To subscribe, call 1-800-522-0255 or go online to www.eastoregonian.com and click on 'Subscribe'

East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday, Monday and Dec. 25, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801.

Copyright © 2015, EO Media Group

Subscriber services: For home delivery, vacation stops or delivery concerns: 1-800-522-0255

Didn't receive your paper? Call 1-800-522-0255 before 5 p.m.Tuesday through Friday or before 10 a.m. Saturday for same-day redelivery

	SUBSCRIPTION RATES	<u>)</u>
	Local home delivery	Savings off cover price
EZPay*	\$14 per month	41 percent
One year	\$168.61	41 percent
6 months	\$88.53	38 percent
3 months	\$46.38	35 percent
4 weeks	\$15.00	31 percent
*EZ Pay = one-	year rate with a monthly credit or	debit card/check charge
•	•	•

CLIDS CDIDTION DATES

Single copy price: \$1 Tuesday through Friday, \$1.50 Saturday

Astoria

Bend Brookings

Baker City

Enterprise

Eugene

Heppner

Hermiston

John Day

Klamath Falls

Grande

Meacham

Medford

Newport

Ontario

Pendleton

Redmond

Portland

Salem

Spokane

Vancouver

Yakima

Walla Walla

Hong Kong Jerusalem

Mexico City

London

Moscow

Paris

Seoul

Tokyo

(in mph)

Pullman

67/36

72/44

Pasco

North Bend

### ADVERTISING

Advertising Director: Jennine Perkinson  $541\text{-}278\text{-}2683 \bullet jperkinson@eastoregonian.com$ 

# Multimedia consultants

· Jeanne Jewett

541-364-4531 • jjewett@eastoregonian.com

· Dayle Stinson 541-966-0806 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

Terri Briggs

541-215-0447 • tbriggs@eastoregonian.com **Classified Advertising:** 

1-800-962-2819 • classifieds@eastoregonian.com

Legal Advertising: Amanda Jacobs 541-278-2683 • ajacobs@eastoregonian.com

Real Estate Advertising: Jodi Snook 541-278-2670 • jsnook@eastoregonian.com

To submit news tips and press releases: • call 541-966-0818 •

fax 541-276-8314 • email news@eastoregonian.com To submit community events, calendar items and Your EO News: email community@eastoregonian.com or call Tammy Malgesini in Hermiston at 541-564-4539 or Renee Struthers in Pendleton at

To submit engagements, weddings and anniversaries: email rstruthers@eastoregonian.com or visit www.eastoregonian com/community/announcements

To submit a Letter to the Editor: mail to Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email

0

editor@eastoregonian.com. To submit sports or outdoors information or tips:

541-966-0838 • sports@eastoregonian.com

COMMERCIAL PRINTING Production Director Jake Duquette

541-966-0815 • iduquette@eastoregonian.com

#### AccuWeather.com Forecast **SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY** Pleasant with Nice with plenty of Sunshine and Pleasant with Partly sunny and some clouds plenty of sun sunshine plenty of sunshine pleasant PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST 69° 42° 41° 40° **76°** 43° 80° 47° 39° 80° 40° 80° 39° 81° 42° 80° 44° Seattle **ALMANAC** Spokane 68/48 Wenatchee 74/49

Aberdeen

Astoria

64/44

64/43

### **PENDLETON** through 3 p.m. yesterday **TEMPERATURE**

HIGH

Yesterday	60°	39°
Normals	68°	44°
Records	93° (1992)	31° (1927)
PRECIPITA	TION	
24 hours end	0.00"	
Month to da	te	0.00"
Normal mor	th to date	0.21"
Year to date		3.13"

LOW

#### Normal year to date **HERMISTON** through 3 p.m. yesterday **TEMPERATURE**

Last year to date

	HIGH	LOW				
Yesterday	64°	39°				
Normals	71°	44°				
Records	95° (1966)	27° (2000)				
PRECIPITATION						
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"						
Month to date 0.00"						
Normal month to date 0.24"						
Year to date 1.79"						

Last year to date Normal year to date

SUN A	ND MC	ON	
Sunrise to	oday		5:35 a.m.
Sunset to			8:09 p.m.
Moonrise	today	1	1:40 p.m.
Moonset	today		8:29 a.m.
Last	New	First	Full

May 11 May 17 May 25 June 2

4.23

#### Enterprise Hermiston 72/47 Pendleton 57/36 The Dalles 75/39 69/42 77/46 Salem La Grande 63/40 71/43 Corvallis John Day 72/42 59/38 Ontario 6 Bend Eugene 67/46 68/40 59/31 Caldwell Burns 63/45 Medford 69/44 Klamath Falls 3.41" Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows. REGIONAL FORECAST

Tacoma

68/39

Olympia

71/44

Moses

75/40

Yakima

77/43

Lake

75/46

Kennewick Walla Walla

72/45

Coastal Oregon: Partly sunny today; pleasant across the north. Clear tonight. Sunshine tomorrow. Eastern and Central Oregon: Partly sunny

today. A thunderstorm in the south; warmer Western Washington: Mostly sunny today. Clear tonight. Plenty of sun tomorrow.

however, sunnier in the north. Clear tonight Sunny tomorrow. Cascades: Warmer today with partial sunshine; an afternoon shower in spots in

Eastern Washington: Partly sunny today;

Northern California: Windy at the coast today; some sun, then clouds in the interior mountains.

**REGIONAL CITIES** 

64 44 s

63

65

58 32 pc

56 59

Today

31 pc

36 pc

39

44 pc

41 pc

47 pc

45 pc

43 pc

**WORLD CITIES** 

Hi Lo W

62 46 pc

63 79

73 49 pc

80 c

55 t 37 s

49 pc 56 pc

63 r

WINDS

Today

NNE 7-14

N 8-16

**UV INDEX TODAY** 

48 s 43 s

Fri.

Hi Lo W

51 c

51 pc 54 s

72 50 pc

61 s

Friday

NNE 8-16

N 8-16

42

NATIO	ONAL WEATHE	R TODAY
Shown are noon positions of weat	her systems and precipitation. T	emperature bands are highs for the day.
Seattle 68/48	Winnipeg 65/29	

#### Fri. 33 pc 33 s 48 9 Billing 54/38 64 37 s 40 pc 37 pc 44 s 37 s 77 70 40 s 39 s 38 pc 35 pc 40 pc 34 s 31 s 47 s 45 s 63 El Pas 83/58 45 pc 47 s 44 s 41 s 80 52 s 30 pc 30 s 47 s 43 pc 70 43 s 80 49 s

warm front stationary front National Summary: Pleasant and warm weather is expected across the Northeast today. A tropical disturbance will bring rain to the Carolinas. Scattered thunderstorms will occur in the Ohio Valley and Appalachians.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states) High 91° in Presidio, Texas Low 21° in Stanley, Idaho

NATIONAL CITIES										
	Today		Fri.				Today		Fri.	
	Hi	Lo W	Hi	Lo	W		Hi	Lo W	Hi	Lo W
Albuquerque	73	48 pc	72	43		Louisville	88	65 pc	90	67 p
Atlanta	85	61 pc	87	65	S	Memphis	87	68 s	88	69 p
Atlantic City	69	56 pc	75	59		Miami	86	72 pc	86	72 p
Baltimore	78	56 pc	81	58		Milwaukee	77	63 pc	74	57 t
Billings	54	38 c	51	34	C	Minneapolis	75	54 t	66	48 c
Birmingham	86	59 pc	89	61	S	Nashville	88	57 s	89	61 p
Boise	62	46 pc	68	46		New Orleans	84	68 s	86	70 p
Boston	77	55 s	68	52	рс	New York City	77	60 s	81	61 s
Charleston, SC	73	63 r	80	68	r	Oklahoma City	78	65 t	80	64 t
Charleston, WV	88	60 pc	87		рс	Omaha	80	55 t	69	51 t
Chicago	84	65 pc	79	62	-	Philadelphia	79	59 pc	84	61 s
Cleveland	80	61 pc	84	64	-	Phoenix	86	62 pc	77	59 p
Dallas	79	67 t	80	67	C	Portland, ME	81	49 pc	60	44 p
Denver	58	44 c	53	42		Providence	77	52 s	75	53 s
Detroit	81	58 pc	85	65		Raleigh	80	60 pc	82	63 r
El Paso	83	58 s	83	56		Rapid City	55	35 r	54	37 c
Fairbanks	64	41 c	64	43	-	Reno	55	43 t	65	44 p
Fargo	73	39 r	57	35	-	Sacramento	72	53 t	76	52 s
Honolulu	82	70 pc	82		рс	St. Louis	86	68 pc	84	68 t
Houston	84	73 pc	86	72		Salt Lake City	68	48 t	64	45 t
Indianapolis	86	62 pc	83		рс		66	59 c	67	61 sh
Jacksonville	85	59 pc	85	64		San Francisco	68	54 pc	68	53 s
Kansas City	77	61 t	78	58		Seattle	68	48 s	75	50 s
Las Vegas	77	52 pc	64	50	C	Tucson	83	55 s	79	51 s

**6 6 6 4 6 1** 8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m. 3-5, Moderate 0-2, Low 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ num Little Rock Washington, DC 80 61 pc 66 55 c 65 57 sh Wichita Los Angeles Forecasts and graphics provided by Weather (W): s-sunny, pc-partly cloudy, c-cloudy, sh-showers, t-thunderstorms, r-rain, AccuWeather, Inc. ©2015 sf-snow flurries, sn-snow, i-ice.