

NEWS RELEASE

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B.C. flaring levels reduced, target met in 2009

FORT ST. JOHN — A new report on flaring, incinerating and venting in British Columbia shows a continued decrease in flaring volumes in 2009, as well as the fulfillment of a BC Energy Plan target.

The Flaring, Incinerating and Venting Reduction Report for 2009, which details industry emission levels, initiatives and achievements, shows a 30 per cent reduction in total flared volumes from 2008, as well as fulfillment of the target to eliminate continuous solution gas flaring that meets an economic threshold for conservation. The BC Energy Plan, announced in 2007 by the provincial government to situate British Columbia at the forefront of environmental and economic leadership, sets out greenhouse gas reduction targets for the oil and gas industry.

“The Flaring, Incinerating and Venting Reduction Report for 2009 provides ongoing assurance that the BC Oil and Gas Commission is committed to flaring alternatives and resource conservation,” said BC Oil and Gas Commission CEO and Commissioner Alex Ferguson. “We’ve had an increase in activity, yet flaring numbers are decreasing. Our initiatives are working.”

Since 1996, natural gas production in British Columbia increased by 40 per cent and the amount of gas flared per unit of natural gas production decreased by 54 per cent.

Solution gas flaring has declined from the single largest flaring source in 1997 to the smallest flaring source, and now accounts for eight per cent of all flaring in British Columbia. In 2009, 97 per cent of solution gas production was conserved.

These achievements are the result of the Flaring, Incinerating and Venting Reduction Guideline for British Columbia, introduced in 2008. The report details this guideline, as well as progress made in other areas, such as well cleanup and test flaring, flaring from underbalanced drilling and the ongoing initiative to reduce continuous flares located near communities.

To view the report please visit the Commission [website](#).

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Should you have any questions regarding this news release, please contact:

Hardy Friedrich
Communications Manager
Corporate Affairs Division
BC Oil and Gas Commission
250-794-5219
Hardy.Friedrich@bcogc.ca

BACKGROUND

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This second annual report, covering the 2009 calendar year, details progress made in meeting the objectives of reducing and eliminating flaring, incinerating and venting in British Columbia.

In March 2008, the Commission's Flaring, Incinerating and Venting Reduction Guideline for British Columbia (Guideline) came into effect.

The BC Energy Plan set an interim goal of a 50 per cent reduction of routine flaring at producing wells and production facilities by 2011, with the final goal of elimination of all routine gas flaring by 2016.

In 2009, the Commission made further progress toward these targets. Achievements include:

- A 30 per cent reduction in total flared volumes from 2008 to 2009.
- From 1996 to 2009, natural gas production increased by 40 per cent and the amount of gas flared per unit of natural gas production decreased by 54 per cent.
- Since the beginning of 2006, industry has achieved a 56 per cent reduction in solution gas flaring, and a 92 per cent reduction in solution gas flaring since 1997.

The Commission also continues to target continuous flares within a five-kilometre radius of communities. In doing so, options to minimize or eliminate well test and cleanup flares can include:

- Requiring pipeline construction prior to the completion of a well to ensure gathering systems are in place for inline testing rather than flaring where possible.
- Enhanced facility design to ensure facilities have the necessary equipment to accept inline test gas.
- A review of current Guideline flare volume and time limits with a view to further limitations.

Between 2003 and 2007, flaring has been reduced by 40 per cent, representing a greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction of 317,000 tonnes. Total gas flaring accounts for less than two per cent of GHG emissions in British Columbia.