

Methane From Municipal Landfills: Environmental Integrity Project May 2023 Report



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

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The Environmental Integrity Project (“EIP”) issued a report titled:

Trashing the Climate: Methane from Municipal Landfills (“Report”)

EIP states it examined data from the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s (“EPA”) Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program to characterize methane emissions reported by more than 1100 municipal landfills.

The *Report* cites EPA for data indicating that a total of 3.7 million metric tons of methane was emitted from United States municipal landfills in 2021.

Food waste is cited as a potential expanding source of emissions in landfills. Specifically, the *Report* estimates that the volume of food waste generated in the United States increased by 70 percent between 1990 and 2017.

The *Report* includes data on the states with highest methane emissions from landfills and those which have the most landfill waste.

The EIP *Report* argues that EPA significantly underestimates methane emissions from landfills. The organization filed a lawsuit against EPA in 2022 arguing that its method for estimating emissions from landfills resulted in significant underreporting. EPA and EIP are stated to have reached an agreement in April of 2023 requiring the federal agency to review the current methodology used to estimate landfill methane (if necessary).

Recommendations found in the *Report* include:

1. Stronger federal regulations for landfill gas collection systems
2. EPA should establish a uniform method for estimating emissions from landfills
3. Direct measurement of methane
4. Improve reporting requirements
5. More composting and recycling, less food waste
6. Avoid burning trash

Components of the *Report* include:

- Landfills That Report Emitting Methane

- Greenhouse Gases from Landfills
- Emissions by State
- How Landfills Currently Estimate Methane Emissions
- Underestimation Compared to Direct Measurement
- How Landfill Methane Can Be Controlled
- Gas Collection and Control Systems
- When Collection Systems Are Required
- Landfill cover
- Organics Diversion
- Organics Diversion in the United States
- Impact on Local Neighborhoods and Communities of Color
- Environmental Justice Case Studies
- Arrowhead Landfill, Uniontown, AL
- Baltimore, Maryland
- Recommendations
- Appendix A: Methodology and Data Caveats
- Appendix B: Comparison of Estimated Emissions

A copy of the *Report* can be downloaded [here](#).