



South Texas Energy  
& Economic Roundtable

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# UNDERSTANDING FLARING

## Eagle Ford Fact Sheet

### What Is Flaring?

Flaring is the controlled, necessary and safe burning of natural gas. Our work to reduce flaring in the Eagle Ford provides economic and environmental benefits.

The protection, preservation and health of the environment, communities and individuals are a top priority in for the oil and natural gas industry in South Texas. The oil and natural gas industry is one of the most heavily regulated industries. STEER members are subject to federal, state and local regulations that oversee every part of the drilling, completion and production process.

Natural gas is a valuable product used in power generation and a key component in many products you use every day. Operators would prefer to capture gas at site and transport via pipeline. When this process is unavailable, a high-efficiency technique known as flaring is employed to ensure emissions do not escape into the atmosphere.

### Why We Flare?

- 1. During well production testing after drilling is completed:**  
After a well is drilled and hydraulically fractured, a temporary flare is used in the production testing, lasting several days or weeks.
- 2. Flaring is an important safety device:**  
When equipment or piping becomes over-pressured, special valves on the equipment automatically release gas through piping to flare stacks.
- 3. Lack of pipeline infrastructure:**  
Although the pipeline infrastructure is growing throughout the Eagle Ford, some areas do not have access to pipeline. In these cases, flaring is employed to ensure that emissions do not escape into the atmosphere.

### To Reduce Emissions, The Oil And Gas Industry Is Working To:

- Use Vapor Recovery Units at well sites and central facilities to capture gas into a sales line
- In the Eagle Ford, industry is using no-emission or low-emission controllers for various operations
- Using solar-powered pumps rather than pneumatic pumps, a source of vented emissions

### Flaring Info and Stats!

#### The Texas Railroad Commission

Allows operators to flare for no more than 10 days after the well is completed; central facilities require individual permits for flaring.

#### Operators May Apply For A Flaring Extension

If valid, it can be granted by the Texas Railroad Commission

#### Texas Pipeline Miles From 2010 – 2013\*

- 2013 – 374,318 miles
- 2010 – 358,164 miles

\* Source: Texas Railroad Commission

Flaring Safely Combusts Gas That Cannot Otherwise Be Transported Efficiently

**IN 2013, TEXAS HAD 374,318 MILES OF PIPELINE INFRASTRUCTURE.**  
Efficient Pipeline Infrastructure Offers Clean Air Advantages By Reducing The Need To Flare Gas.