

GHG Project Case Study

Capturing Major Reductions in Non-CO₂ Gases: Con Edison's Work to Reduce Methane Releases

Con Edison is a utility that provides electricity, steam, and natural gas to its customers. Like many energy companies, Con Edison has various types of GHG emissions from its operations, including emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Through its work with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Natural Gas STAR Program, Con Edison began to evaluate best practices for reducing methane releases. The company discovered a number of ways of managing these releases and implemented projects across various company operations, including

- Inspection and maintenance at pipeline interconnection and metering stations.
- Repair and replacement of more than 500 miles of leaky natural gas mains and distribution pipes.
- Installation of computerized, remotely operated regulators to lower pipeline pressure during periods of low demand for gas.

Since 1993, Con Edison has reduced its emissions of methane by more than 47,000 metric tonnes, which is equivalent to over 1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. This reduction of methane emissions has helped Con Edison save about \$5 million in avoided leakage costs. Con Edison also won the "Distribution Partner of the Year" award from the EPA for excellence in implementation, outreach efforts, and promotion of the economic, safety, and environmental benefits of the STAR program.

Con Edison is building on its success. Working with other New York State gas utilities through the Northeast Gas Association, Con Edison cofunded the design, development, and assembly of a new technology to capture natural gas in pipelines undergoing maintenance and repair work. Maintenance crews can remove the gas from a section of pipeline being repaired and feed it back into the active part of the pipeline, thus avoiding the release of the gas into the atmosphere. The technology is currently being field-tested, and it will help the gas industry and Con Edison further reduce methane emissions.