

Form EIA-914: Monthly Crude Oil, Lease Condensate, and Natural Gas Production Report

Protocol Questions

October 2016

Research Goals:

- To understand how respondents use, operate, or acquire the services of oil stabilizers/splitter;
- To determine if respondents are reporting their crude oil production and sales pre- or post-stabilization;
- To determine/provide the volume of gaseous hydrocarbons produced by stabilizers which are not accounted for currently in EIAs petroleum systems/publications.
- If respondents are using a stabilizer for their crude oil and condensate, assess respondents ability to report the amount of crude oil and condensate that is sent to a stabilizer and output from a stabilizer, separately from the existing crude oil and natural gas production they are currently reporting on Form EIA-914;
- If respondents are using a stabilizer/splitter, assess their ability to report the input and output from the stabilizer using the same light hydrocarbon components reported by operators of natural gas processing plants (NGLs, i.e., ethane, propane, normal butane, isobutane, pentanes plus), and
- To assess the burden of requiring respondents to maintain records and report their inputs and outputs from using a stabilizer as an additional section on Form EIA-914.

Purpose of call

Let me start by explaining what we will be doing today.

- The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) is part of the U.S. Department of Energy. It is responsible for collecting, analyzing and disseminating energy information to the public, policy makers, and markets to improve understanding of the interaction of energy with the economy and the environment.
- Today, we are researching stabilizers and how companies track the input and output volumes of their stabilizer. Some companies use the term “splitter” synonymously with stabilizer to refer to the process of stabilizing or reducing the volatility of the crude oil prior to shipping and storage, are you familiar with either of these terms? We will use the term “stabilizer” in this interview to refer to this process.
- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions I will be asking. I’d just like to hear what you think. Also, if something doesn’t make sense to you, or you have any questions, please ask.

- There will be an internal EIA report that combines information from multiple interviews and sessions and will not contain information that personally identifies you or the company you work for.
- I'll try to limit our discussion to thirty minutes.
- Do you have any questions before we get started?

Stabilizer

1. Does your company use a stabilizer to process any part of your crude oil or condensate production?
 - a. *If no*, okay thank you for your time!
2. *If yes*, can you tell me a little bit about the stabilizer use? Where is the stabilizer located? What is the capacity of the stabilizer? Do you have more than one stabilizer at this location? Other locations? Do you know how much oil you send to the stabilizer?
 - a. *If unable to answer previous two question*, ask “How much of your crude and gas condensate is run through a stabilizer? All of it [] Most of it [] Less than half []
3. Does your company operate the stabilizer?
 - a. *If no*, is the stabilizer that you use operated by a third party?
 - i. *If yes*, is the third party another operator, pipeline, refinery, mid-stream company, etc.?
 - ii. Do you have a supply contract with the company operating the stabilizer?
 - iii. Does the company that operates the stabilizer buy your oil?
 - iv. Do you pay a fee to have your oil stabilized?
 - v. Do the fees that you pay vary depending on the volume of crude sent to the stabilizer?
 - vi. Does the company operating the stabilizer take a share of the oil for payment?
 1. Is there a minimum volume required by the stabilizer or maximum volume you can send to the stabilizer?
4. Do you have an ownership relationship with the company operating the stabilizer?
 - a. *If yes*, what is that relationship?
5. Do you retain ownership/title of the crude and condensate after the stabilization process?

- a. *If no*, do you sell your crude or condensate to the operator of the stabilizer?
6. What information about the gas/gaseous hydrocarbons, NGL, or light ends output do you track in your records? Do you have a specific name for the output?
- a. Do you track/measure the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) as a single product or do you track individual components (i.e., methane, ethane, propane, butane, pentanes, etc.)?
 - b. Do you know where the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) output is sent after it leaves the stabilizer? Pipeline, fractionator, petrochemical plant, refinery, etc.?
 - c. How do you measure the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) [*industry name*] output?
 - i. What unit of measurement do you use?
 - d. About how much time do you think it would take for you to gather the information on the output quantity of the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) [*industry name*] group as single number?
 - i. How easy or difficult would it be for you to report the components within the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) [*industry name*] of liquid natural gases separately?
 - e. How easy or difficult would it be for you to report the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) [*industry name*] output as single number on a monthly basis?
 - i. Approximately how much time would it take?
 - ii. *If response is more than 2 hours*, what is involved in your recordkeeping process that would take so much time?
 - f. How easy or difficult would it be for you to report the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) [*industry name*] components to EIA on a monthly basis?
 - i. Approximately how much time would it take?
7. Are the crude oil production volumes and sales volumes that you report on Form EIA-914, pre or post stabilized volumes, or a mix of each (i.e., production pre and sales post)?
- a. *If R reports pre-stabilized volumes*, do you include your condensate with the crude oil production numbers?
 - i. How difficult or easy would it be to report your post-stabilized crude output to EIA on a monthly basis?

- ii. Would it be easier to report your volumes on Form EIA-914 if you reported post-stabilized volumes?
 - iii. How much time would it take you to report post-stabilized volumes compared to how much time it currently takes you to complete the form?
 - b. *If R reports post-stabilized volumes*, what information about the production from the well that goes to a stabilizer facility do you track in your records?
 - i. How difficult or easy would it be to report your pre-stabilized crude output to EIA on a monthly basis?
 - ii. Would it be easier to report your volumes on Form EIA-914 if you reported pre-stabilized volumes?
 - iii. How much time would it take you to report pre-stabilized volumes compared to how much time it currently takes you to complete the form?
 - c. How easy or difficult would it be for you to report pre stabilized production and post-stabilizer sales?
- 8. In total, how much time does it currently take for you to review instructions, gather the information from your company's records, read and complete the form, obtain your company's approval and submit the monthly EIA-914 report to EIA each month?
 - a. *[Note the burden is 4 hours for this form, if the response is < 2 hours or > 6 probe further on first, is this the usual amount of time it takes each month, second, what causes the most time burden or in the alternative, how are they able to complete their report in so short of time?*
- 9. Based on your previous response, how much additional time do you think it would take to gather the information from your company's records and report the amount of crude oil and condensate that is sent to a stabilizer and the gaseous output (gas, NGL, light ends, etc.) [industry name] production and crude oil output that is produced from a stabilizer facility?

Thank you for your time today!