

The NMR-MR community should be concerned. We all know that helium costs have been increasing for some time that has squeezed budgets.

We have had a decade for helium prices increasing at >10% a year. Who knows what the proposed Airgas-Air Liquide combo will do to all gas prices. My guess is not good. Nonprofits, health care and research institutions use such large quantities of these commodities. Stable prices require robust markets and we have had neither lately. This merger would appear to exacerbate the problem. Currently there are a big three in international helium – Air Products, Praxair and Exxon (Airgas buys here and re-packadges).

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In the words of another colleague:

"This is a vitally important issue. Also, I doubt the newly discovered helium in Tanzania is going to make it to market without piggy-backing on the fiscal benefits of methane, which I did not see claimed in any articles. In addition, Tanzania is not exactly close to where the helium markets are. "

Thanks!

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