EPA REGION III

Office of Public Affairs

P.M. Headlines

Monday, March 16, 2009

*** P.M. Hot List ***

Legislature enters fray on carbon cleanup

TIMES WEST-VIRGINIAN CHARLESTON — Pressure is mounting nationwide for government to regulate greenhouse gases and reduce the amount carbon dioxide released by coal-fired power plants. But right now, West Virginia has no long-term strategy to do either through carbon dioxide sequestration.CO2 sequestration is the injection of carbon dioxide into underground rock. The idea is that injecting the gas will keep it out of the atmosphere. Coal-fired power plants release carbon dioxide and other pollution into the air. Pollution can be greatly reduced if the carbon dioxide it includes can be captured, or separated from other emissions and stored. The coal industry adds more than $3.5 billion a year to West Virginia's gross state product, according to the West Virginia Coal Association's "2008 Coal Facts." The Legislature now is focusing on developing regulations regarding carbon sequestration. Coal is not the only energy source that produces CO2. Natural gas is used in manufacturing plants nationwide and probably emits about 50 percent of carbon dioxide released into the air, according to Jeff Herholdt, director of the state Division of Energy.There are two major issues facing the state on carbon dioxide sequestration: the technology to separate and store it and the legal machine needed to protect the government from liability, experts said.

WVa mercury releases focus of planned lawsuit

ASSOCIATED PRESS CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) -- Two environmental groups have put PPG Industries on notice that they intend to sue over mercury releases from a West Virginia plant. The West Virginia Rivers Coalition and the Washington, D.C.-based group Oceana, filed their notice on Monday against PPG's Natrium plant. Both claim the plant continues to exceed the legal limits governing mercury releases into the Ohio River. The Marshall County plant makes chlorine by pumping saltwater through vats of pure mercury, which is a neurotoxin harmful to human health.In 2007, the state Department of Environmental Protection issued a permit that increased the plant's average monthly mercury discharge into the river. A PPG spokesman did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Mountaintop mining fight heads to Washington

ASSOCIATED PRESS MORGANTOWN, W.Va. (AP) -- Environmental activists from Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia and 28 other states are traveling to Washington, D.C., this week, to urge Congress to stop mountaintop removal mining. Retired miner Carl Shoupe, of Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, says mountaintop removal mining has destroyed more than a million acres in Appalachia. The activists will meet with lawmakers to urge passage of the Clean Water Protection Act.

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The bill would outlaw valley fills, or the dumping of rocks and other debris into nearby streams. The coal industry says most of the nearly 130 million tons of coal produced at mountaintop mines in Appalachia goes to generate electricity for 24.7 million U.S. customers.

State dismisses coal-ash appeal

CAPE GAZETTE When it comes to the Indian River power plant, local environmental activist Bill Zak says state environmental officials are failing to protect the public and the environment. He took his case for cleaning up coal-ash landfills at the Indian River power plant to environmental appeals court, but his appeal was dismissed for lack of standing. “I don’t feel defeated,” said Zak. “I certainly feel circumvented.” He plans to take his case to Gov. Jack Markell. More than 50 Sussex County residents attended the Tuesday, March 10 hearing in Dover to support Zak and his appeal. Zak says Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) permits allowing coal waste to be stored at the NRG Energy-owned Millsboro facility violate the department’s own regulations and pose serious hazards to residents of the Inland Bays watershed.

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Obama expected to kill key Bush EPA program

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER WASHINGTON - The Obama administration intends to close an EPA program heavily promoted by the Bush administration that rewards voluntary pollution controls by hundreds of corporations with reduced environmental inspections and less stringent regulation, according to EPA sources and internal e-mails. EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson is expected to sign, as early as this week, a memo terminating the Performance Track program, senior EPA officials said yesterday. Performance Track offers regulatory perks to corporations that pledge to save energy and reduce pollution. Entry into Performance Track, EPA's premier voluntary "green club," is supposed to be reserved for companies with sterling environmental records, but has been denounced by environmentalists as a public-relations charade. EPA's decision comes three months after an Inquirer investigation found that Performance Track lauded companies with suspect environmental records, spent millions on recruiting and publicity, and failed to confirm members' environmental pledges independently. The program became so desperate for new members, The Inquirer found, that it turned to gift shops and post offices to pad its numbers. A senior EPA official said in an interview yesterday that The Inquirer's findings had played a role in Jackson's decision.

Plant's bid to dump smokestack pollutants into Mon is under fire

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE Allegheny Energy is cleaning up smokestack emissions from its Hatfield's Ferry coal-fired power plant in Greene County but wants to dump some of the toxic pollutants it takes out of the air into the drinking water source for more than 90,000 people in southwestern Pennsylvania. If the utility is permitted to dispose of pollutants in the Monongahela River, it could set a precedent that would let dozens of other old, dirty power plants in the Northeast dump coal combustion wastes collected by new, state and federally mandated air pollution control equipment into rivers and streams, said Abigail Dillen, an attorney with Earthjustice, a nonprofit environmental law firm. "Allegheny Energy is finally installing scrubbers, but that creates a whole new wastewater stream. The controls are taking pollution from the air and putting it into rivers," said Ms. Dillen, who today will file a motion to intervene in Allegheny Energy's appeal of its state-issued water discharge permit.

Permit requirements to limit pollution stricter than Md.

regulations

BALTIMORE SUN (Sunday) Permit requirements to limit pollution stricter than Md. regulations The Environmental Protection Agency has told Maryland's poultry farmers it intends to enforce for the first time federal pollution rules governing chicken manure - a crackdown that has surprised and angered growers while pleasing environmentalists who've long complained about agricultural runoff fouling Chesapeake Bay. At meetings recently on the Eastern Shore, EPA officials told several hundred farmers that they must get federal pollution-discharge permits if any manure from their flocks is washing off their land into drainage ditches and streams. More than half of the state's 800 poultry farmers have filed notices to get the permits, state officials say. The federal permits are tougher in key respects than what Maryland has so far been unable to establish for its poultry farmers. State regulations and permit requirements developed last year to cover about 200 of the largest chicken farms are on hold because of appeals filed both by environmentalists and farmers.

EPA official might have conflict over C8

CHARLESTON-GAZETTE CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- When President Obama named Lisa Jackson to be his Environmental Protection Agency administrator, advocates for tougher regulation of the toxic chemical C8 were optimistic. Read more in the Sustained Outrage blog. As New Jersey's top environmental regulator, Jackson had set the toughest C8 guideline in the country - a drinking water standard of 0.04 parts per billion of C8, also known as PFOA. Now those advocates are worried. Last month, Jackson named lawyer Robert M. Sussman to be her "senior policy counsel," to advise her on energy and environmental issues across EPA's broad regulatory authority. For several years, Sussman represented 3M Corp., helping the agency deal with EPA efforts to understand - and perhaps regulate - what C8 and similar chemicals are doing to public health and the environment. Sussman worked for EPA during the Clinton administration and later became a partner in the Washington office of the Los Angeles law firm, Latham & Watkins. After retiring from the law firm, Sussman became a fellow at the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank run by John Podesta, a former chief of staff for President Bill Clinton.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

From Early Bird Obama expected to kill key Bush EPA program

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EPA official said in an interview yesterday that The Inquirer's findings had played a role in Jackson's decision.

From Early Bird Editorial/Op-Ed: A move toward bias-free science
The 15,000 scientists and engineers who protested the manipulation, suppression, and distortion of research during the Bush administration no doubt welcomed President Obama's pledge last week to restore scientific integrity to the White House. Lifting the ban on research on embryonic stem cells Monday, Obama promised to let "scientists like those here today do their jobs, free from manipulation or coercion" and to listen "to what they tell us, even when it's inconvenient, especially when it's inconvenient." He assigned his advisers to develop integrity safeguards within 120 days. With earnest words and the stroke of a pen, it was goodbye to George W. Bush's "sound science," and welcome to Obama's "soundest science." If only it were that simple.

PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

From Early Bird Letters: Get planting, Philadelphia! PHILADELPHIA has proclaimed that it's going to be the "greenest" city in the country. But did anyone check out how we actually stack up against other cities in terms of tree cover? Here are the best figures we could find via an Internet search and e-mails: Pittsburgh, 35 percent ... Baltimore, 20... Philadelphia, 15 ...Like many cities, Philadelphia has suffered massive tree loss. Let's face it, we can't survive without the many economic, social, health and environmental benefits that trees provide. At a 15 percent tree canopy, Philly is in the bottom third of these cities, far below the recommended 40 percent canopy.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

From Early Bird Plant's bid to dump smokestack pollutants into Mon is under fire
Allegheny Energy is cleaning up smokestack emissions from its Hatfield's Ferry coal-fired power plant in Greene County but wants to dump some of the toxic pollutants it takes out of the air into the drinking water source for more than 90,000 people in southwestern Pennsylvania.
If the utility is permitted to dispose of pollutants in the Monongahela River, it could set a precedent that would let dozens of other old, dirty power plants in the Northeast dump coal combustion wastes collected by new, state and federally mandated air pollution control equipment into rivers and streams, said Abigail Dillen, an attorney with Earthjustice, a nonprofit environmental law firm. "Allegheny Energy is finally installing scrubbers, but that creates a whole new wastewater stream. The controls are taking pollution from the air and putting it into rivers," said Ms. Dillen, who today will file a motion to intervene in Allegheny Energy's appeal of its state-issued water discharge permit.

From Early Bird Editorial: Murky water: The city authority's financial deal deserves scrutinyIt's easy -- and tempting -- for people to dismiss complicated financial deals that are hard to understand. But when public dollars are at stake and the operation of a city water and sewer system hangs in the balance, that's when more, not less, of a contract's inner workings should be brought to light. Councilman Patrick Dowd and Controller Michael Lamb make a good case that there is too little known about the $414 million debt package entered into last June by the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority. Designed to refinance old debt and bring the agency $98 million for system improvements without a water rate increase, the arrangement uses a tool called a swap in which the involved parties sell bonds to each other weekly at rates driven in part by averages of other swap deals. This deal also has $18.5 million in no-bid insurance premiums, consulting fees and payments to terminate 1-year-old contracts.

From Early Bird Drilling stalled in Allegheny National Forest (Today)CLARION -- The U.S. Forest Service hasn't OK'd any new gas or oil wells in the Allegheny National Forest for almost two months, delaying oil and gas development and causing at least one company to consider drilling without federal

approval. Leanne Martin, Allegheny National Forest supervisor, said no "notices to proceed" have been issued for new wells since Jan. 16, when the Forest Service's regional office in Milwaukee took over the local well review process. "Milwaukee hasn't gotten back to us on any reviews it's doing," she said, at the last of three public meetings last week. "And we have not been told when that will end."

From Early Bird Burning the forest to save the trees (Yesterday)One unique Central Pennsylvania ecosystem in is considered so vital, the state plans to burn it down. Last week, the Pennsylvania Game Commission released plans for a controlled burn of a section of the Scotia Barrens on State Game Land 176 in Patton Township, Centre County. The planned burn-off of 95 acres, scheduled to occur on a single day sometime between April 6 and May 8, is intended to improve habitat conditions within the forest and reduce the possibility of an uncontrolled wildfire impacting the surrounding communities.

From Early Bird Rivers of money? There's not enough to fix all locks and dams (03/14/2009)
Pittsburgh owes its existence to the presence of its three rivers, and two-and-a-half centuries after its founding the rivers are still vital to the region's prosperity. To that end, there was good news this week for the nation's second-largest inland port. The Army Corps of Engineers has secured a lion's share of federal funding for local projects under the $410 billion spending bill just passed by Congress and signed by President Barack Obama. Of the federal funds slated for the nine-county region, the corps will receive approximately $95 million for locks and dams ($53 million for maintenance and operations and $42 million for construction) for fiscal year 2009.

WILKES-BARRE TIMES-LEADER

From Early Bird Engineers promoting going green NEPA Green Exchange advocates using environmentally friendly materials to help save money. With environmental action on the rise in both political and economic circles, a self-styled “green team” of local architects and engineers is betting that if homeowners, industry professionals and job seekers plan now, they’ll all be able to benefit when the economic recession breaks. “We decided what we need to do is put out before the public and other professionals what the green economy amounts to and how people can take personal action in saving money and saving the environment by using green materials and energy sources in their homes and buildings,” said Norm Johnstone, a retired engineer and the current president of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers’ Luzerne County Chapter.

From Early Bird Consequences of gas drilling still unknown Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. caused natural gas to infiltrate into at least nine homes in Susquehanna County, according a letter of violation from the state Department of Environmental Protection, but it remains unclear whether Cabot knowingly violated any regulations. “The more important part of the investigation is still ahead of us,” DEP spokesman Mark Carmon said. “We know where it came from. The two more important things are how did it get there … and more importantly, how do we get it out of the wells.” The company, however, is not confident in DEP’s findings, according to spokesman Ken Komoroski, believing the letter is “unnecessary” and claims as fact conclusions that haven’t been proven.

HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS

From Early Bird Farm odors: now under state management
You know it's nearly spring when the neighborhood starts to stink. At least it's that easy for folks living in central Pennsylvania where farmers spread manure on their fields in anticipation of a new planting season. A drive through the countryside in late March promises a permeating mix of fresh and funky smells for the uninitiated. Many of us have either grown up with it or grown used to it and consider farm odors part of the bargain in living here. But there are residents who live near farms so big they're considered factories where the plumes of stench can be unbearable.

From Early Bird Rural area faces development boom
Residents of rural Londonderry Twp. are already looking at a proposed 966-home development. Now an even larger one is waiting in the wings.
A developer is working on plans to build up to 2,000 homes, including a retirement community, on the Lytle farm property that straddles Route 230 along Swatara Creek.

From Early Bird Bald eagle population soars
Sandra Dzielak's Psychology 101 assignment for 20 minutes of solitary reflection suddenly crashed to an end in the raucous caterwauling of a mob of crows. Any remaining shreds of the Messiah College freshman's quiet contemplation evaporated as the object of the crows' excitement settled onto the branch of a sycamore on the opposite bank of Yellow Breeches Creek. "This huge bald eagle came flying in," said Dzielak, of Linglestown. "I was completely amazed, flabbergasted."

SCRANTON TIMES

From Early Bird State grant will help Lackawanna River Sewer Basin Authority go greenTHROOP — Lackawanna River Sewer Basin Authority is making an effort to "go green" with money from a new state grant. LRBSA received $397,961 from the state Department of Environmental Protection for two microturbines to generate electricity using waste gas. With decreased reliance on electricity, LRBSA will produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions, said facilities manager Michael Matechak. When waste solids are removed from water, they are put in a treatment tank and broken down by bacteria. At that point, gas is generated that the microturbines will use for energy.

From Early Bird Landfill shortfall impact felt in ThroopTHROOP — Decreasing revenue from Keystone Sanitary Landfill means fewer projects for the borough, officials said. The borough gets the biggest chunk of its revenue from the landfill, but the revenue has been slowly declining over the past two years. Projected revenue from the landfill was down by more than $300,000 in 2008 and about $200,000 in 2007. Bigger projects will have to wait, Council Vice President James Barnick said, as will repairs on infrastructure previously made possible by landfill money. "We're going to have to hold back on projects. Things are tight for everybody," Mr. Barnick said. "Less people buying things means less garbage is going into the landfill."

From Early Bird Inventor offers idea on acid mine drainage
OLD FORGE — A local inventor is seeking permission to use borough-owned land off Union Street for a demonstration of the technology he plans to use to treat acid mine drainage in the Lackawanna River, downstream from the Old Forge borehole. Chris Gillis, president of Eco-Tech Environmental Technologies in Shavertown, was recently awarded a $792,000 grant from Luzerne County's share of the state gaming tax to build a prototype treatment center for the demonstration project and acquire land around the bore- hole's outfall.

From Early Bird Landfill intake declines as consumers reuse
WASHINGTON — Along with the stock market and the foreclosure rate, a less-heralded barometer has signaled the arrival of hard times: the landfill. In an extravagantly wasteful society that typically puts 254 million tons of unwanted stuff at the curb to be thrown away each year, landfill managers say they knew something was amiss in the economy when they saw trash levels start steadily dropping last year. Now, some are reporting declines as sharp as 30 percent.

CENTRE DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Editorial: A right to clean water When out-of-state energy companies complain about the "bureaucratic B.S." preventing them from unfettered access to natural gas trapped in rock a mile

beneath us and the riches it promises, think of the river. Coal mining — and the poisons produced in the process — almost killed the Susquehanna and its tributaries, along with their once-flourishing aquatic life. Acid drainage and other toxic runoff was considered merely a “trifling inconvenience” by a legal system that was clearly influenced more by money streaming from coal barons than the life-sustaining water flowing through Penns Woods down to the Chesapeake Bay. A more enlightened court, nine decades later — and almost too late — declared that “the people have a right to clean air, pure water and to the preservation of the natural scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment.” As last week’s two-day package of stories reported, a number of efforts are under way to secure those rights. Among them are PA Cleanways, the West Branch Susquehanna Rescue and, locally, ClearWater Conservancy. But the already difficult job will become even more daunting when the rock fracturing, by which gas is extracted from the Marcellus Shale, begins in earnest in central and northeastern Pennsylvania.

WASHINGTON OBSERVER-REPORTER

From Early Bird Breathing easier at Hatfield's Ferry

Allegheny Energy Inc.'s Hatfield's Ferry Power Station has been an easy target for regulatory agencies and environmental activist groups, which have singled out the plant in Monongahela Township for years as a major source of pollution in Greene County. And frankly, the power station, for the most part, deserved the criticism. Three years ago, however, Allegheny Energy launched a $650 million project to install scrubbers at the power station, a project intended to substantially improve the emission controls at that facility.

NORRISTOWN TIMES-HERALD

Environmental concerns in Great White North I’ve just returned from a special corner of the world: Canada’s Northwest Territories. Yellow Knife, Canada, is a town of some 25,000 people now celebrating its 75th anniversary. It came into being during the Yukon Gold Rush era. Most East Coasters head south or west this time of year on vacation. My husband and I headed north, way north — to see the Aurora Borealis. We stayed at a wonderful remote spot called Blachford Lake Lodge, some 80 miles from Yellow Knife. Blachford Lake is just off Great Slave Lake, one of the world’s great fishing spots. From the lodge windows, one looks out over one of the most pristine vistas that still exist on earth. In winter the lake is frozen and snow-covered and small hilled islands are covered with spruce, trembling Ash, Birch and pine trees dusted with snow. Our view of the Aurora was unparalleled: in the middle of the night we watched the darkness light up with shimmering shades of green, white, yellow and pink dancing across the sky in wavering arcs and slithering bands.

HAZLETON STANDARD-SPEAKER

Seeing Green Hazleton Area and Tamaqua Area school districts are considering wind and geothermal as ways to reduce energy costs

Two local school districts want to take a greener approach to powering their schools. Hazleton Area school Director Steve Hahn and Facilities Manager Andre Marchese have asked the school board to undertake a feasibility study on whether windmills could power the Drums Elementary/Middle School.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Stimulus puts maglev back on track

Plans for two southwestern Pennsylvania rail projects may be back on track thanks to a $950,000 congressional earmark and $8 billion allocated for high-speed rail transit in the $787 billion federal stimulus package. But officials caution that it's too early to declare victory in their longstanding campaigns to build a high-speed, magnetic-levitation line — known as maglev — to carry passengers between Pittsburgh International Airport and Greensburg and a slower, so-called urban maglev line

connecting portions of the California University of Pennsylvania campus. "Everything that we do, we want to put ourselves closer to getting the large amount (of money) needed to build the project," Ed Gurney, president and chief executive officer of Maglev Inc., said Thursday after the earmark was announced. McKeesport-based Maglev Inc. is developing the Pittsburgh maglev project.

BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

Health department investigates spill at Teva

The Bucks County Health Department investigated a waste water spill at a pharmaceutical company near the East Branch of the Perkiomen Creek in West Rockhill. It found the sewage never infiltrated the creek or contaminated soil in the area, according to a health department official. The unwanted waste water release was discovered Wednesday morning at Teva Pharmaceuticals' facility on the 600 block of Cathill Road, said Jason Wood, a county environmental protection specialist. An unknown quantity of sewage began spreading into a field on the property after the failure of a pump that sends waste water out to be processed. The sewage filled the pump station and soon was outside. A Teva employee discovered the spill. The company notified the health department and quickly got a back-up pump up and running, said Wood.

WASHINGTON D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

From Early Bird Review Finds Modest Risk From Children's ToiletriesExtensive studies of two toxic chemicals found in children's bath and personal care products suggest that if they pose a health hazard, it is likely to be extremely small and probably incalculable, a review of scientific research shows. **The two chemical compounds -- 1,4-dioxane and formaldehyde -- were found in trace quantities in children's shampoos, bath gels, lotions and wipes in a study conducted by the consumer group Campaign for Safe Cosmetics.**

From Early Bird Capture Rain Runoff to Water Plants NEWPORT NEWS, Va. -- The next time there's a rainstorm, stand outside and look at how much water falls from the roof of your house.It's buckets and buckets -- water you can put to good use if you have rain barrels catching all those drops. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation estimates that during an average rainstorm, which is an inch in 24 hours, more than 700 gallons of water run off the roof of a typical home. That's enough water to take 17 baths or 58 showers, or water who knows how many plants.

From Early Bird Capturing Nature's Power: Swan Point Couple Install Area's First Residential Wind Mill Swan Point Couple Install Area's First Residential WindmillAs his 33-foot windmill slowly rose into place, Ken Robinson watched wide-eyed and breathed a sigh of relief. "It was a bureaucratic nightmare, and there were times of doubt, but now it's real," Robinson said Wednesday, as the windmill gained momentum in the mild afternoon breeze.

From Early Bird Smithsonian and 27-Year Employee in Battle Over Asbestos: Staffer Has Disease; Museum Defends Safety A year ago, the National Air and Space Museum gathered a group of workers for a safety briefing on "asbestos awareness." Nearly 45 minutes into the session, the museum's safety coordinator said something that Richard Pullman thought at first he'd misheard: There was asbestos in the museum walls.

From Early Bird Champion of Environmental Stewardship
Jack Lorenz, who became a nationally prominent advocate for nature preservation during 18 years as executive director of the Izaak Walton League, and who developed a code of ethics governing outdoor activities, died of a stroke March 2 at Scripps Mercy Hospital in San Diego, where he was visiting. He was 69 and lived in Woodstock, Va.

From Early Bird Column: On Warming, a Cold Splash From Across the Pond
One of the foremost proponents of the view that global climate change is a myth, the Right Honorable *Christopher Walter Monckton*, Third Viscount Monckton of Brenchley, was in town last week warning a House Ways and Means subcommittee that adopting a cap-and-trade system or another such tax plan to reduce pollution is unnecessary and would pretty much destroy the country.

From Early Bird **A Trashed Economy Foretold: Intake at Landfills Has Been Falling** Intake at Landfills Has Been FallingAlong with the stock market and the foreclosure rate, a less-heralded barometer has signaled the arrival of hard times: the landfill.In an extravagantly wasteful society that typically puts 254 million tons of unwanted stuff at the curb to be thrown away each year, landfill managers say they knew something was amiss in the economy when they saw trash levels start steadily dropping last year. Now, some are reporting declines as sharp as 30 percent.

From Early Bird Area Churches Join Lenten Trend: Cutting Out Carbons
Instead of giving up chocolate for Lent this year, members of several local

churches are cutting back on other luxuries: water, light bulbs and plastic bags.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

From Early Bird Codes cost billions in wasted energy Markell reviewing new draft policy that could save money, create jobs Delawareans use more energy per capita than any of their neighbors -- a practice that costs millions, possibly billions, of dollars a year. Our homes, businesses and industrial sites often are inefficient energy hogs. And we drive more -- way more -- than folks just across the state line in Maryland. Worse yet, our energy legacy is filled with missed opportunities, including two recent failed attempts by legislators to update state codes to ensure that new construction is more energy-efficient.

From Early Bird Court: Del. may block effort to build gas terminal
DOVER, Del. - An appeals court yesterday rejected Delaware's challenge of a federal agency's ruling granting conditional approval to British oil company BP for a proposed natural gas terminal in New Jersey at the mouth of the Delaware River.

CAPE GAZETTE

State dismisses coal-ash appeal When it comes to the Indian River power plant, local environmental activist Bill Zak says state environmental officials are failing to protect the public and the environment. He took his case for cleaning up coal-ash landfills at the Indian River power plant to environmental appeals court, but his appeal was dismissed for lack of standing. “I don’t feel defeated,” said Zak. “I certainly feel circumvented.” He plans to take his case to Gov. Jack Markell. More than 50 Sussex County residents attended the Tuesday, March 10 hearing in Dover to support Zak and his appeal. Zak says Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) permits allowing coal waste to be stored at the NRG Energy-owned Millsboro facility violate the department’s own regulations and pose serious hazards to residents of the Inland Bays watershed.

Capstone features green houses Capstone Homes offers green building for people on a budget. Capstone offers many energy- saving options once only reserved for high-end homes. Capstone is currently offering a free geothermal system for all new-home sales.
The firm offers three-bedroom, two-bath homes with geothermal heating and air-conditioning systems on lots in the Cape school district for $189,900. Some studies show a geothermal heating and air-conditioning system can reduce monthly energy bills by as much as 70 percent, said Scott Dailey of Capstone Homes. “Capstone is proud to offer other ways to save energy on a new home: solar power and solar water heating.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

From Early Bird Permit requirements to limit pollution stricter than Md. regulations

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From Early Bird Lawyers to take different tack in next case against Exxon

For the past five months, spectators in a Baltimore County courtroom watched as dozens of families who live near a Jacksonville service station that leaked thousands of gallons of gasoline into the community's groundwater made their case against Exxon Mobil Corp. One especially interested onlooker at the trial, which concluded Thursday with a jury awarding $150 million to the plaintiffs, was attorney Theodore M. Flerlage Jr. "It's always interesting to see how another firm addresses a situation," said Flerlage, who is with the Peter G. Angelos law firm. "I felt sorry for the plaintiffs, and I found their testimony very compelling." Flerlage's turn comes next. He will represent 150 other Jacksonville homeowners and businesses against the oil giant in a suit over the same spill that is scheduled to go to trial next year. ... Meanwhile, Ron Diedeman's daughter, Linda Langrill, lives about 10 miles away in Fallston, where a vapor leak was discovered at an Exxon station in 2004. She and her family are among the plaintiffs in a suit Angelos is bringing against Exxon for contaminating wells with MTBE. A Harford County Circuit Court judge will hold a hearing March 30 on whether that case will proceed as a class action suit or on behalf of individual plaintiffs.

From Early Bird Commentary: Wrong way on bay? With little to show for billions of dollars and decades of cleanup effort, it's time to reassessFor something that has been steadily dying for decades, the Chesapeake Bay promises to be a lovely corpse. Most of us who are fortunate to look out onto the broad estuary at sunset or witness the morning sky unveil the remaining pristine tracts of tributary and marsh are blinded by beauty. Yet we know the bay is sick, because we are constantly reminded. For a decade, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the region's dominant enviro-educational organization, has issued annual report cards with disappointing grades. In addition, other nonprofit groups are recording how legislators vote on measures affecting the air, land and water qualities of the three states that most directly affect the bay. ... -- Bill Thompson, a former writer for The Baltimore Sun, is the author of magazine articles and books about the Chesapeake Bay. This article is distributed by Bay Journal News Service.

SALISBURY TIMES

From Early Bird Inland Bays neutral on DNREC suit

DEWEY BEACH -- The Center for the Inland Bays is taking a neutral stance concerning the Sussex County Council's lawsuit regarding buffer regulations.The suit, filed with the authority of the previous County Council, contends the state Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control overstepped its authority in drafting regulations on buffer zones between subdivision developments and some bodies of water. The lawsuit argues that only the county has the authority to develop land-use rules."By not taking a stance, we increase our objectivity in our role in the future as a neutral forum for the Inland Bays watershed," said board member Bill McGowan.

From Early Bird Del. program aims to track frog noises GEORGETOWN -- Hearing the familiar sounds of frogs at night is a reminder that the spring and summer months aren't far off.But to Holly Neiderriter, wildlife biologist for the Delaware Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, the sounds mean more."Frog calling distinguishes where different species live and how the population is changing," she said. "Because amphibians are aquatic for at least part of their life cycle, they can serve as an important indicator of water quality and other aspects of environmental health."

Final vote set on marina bailout
SALISBURY -- The City Council plans to take its final vote on a budget amendment to bail out the Port of Salisbury Marina during a special meeting prior to today's regularly scheduled work session.The budget amendment is a reaction to news of the marina's financial instability brought to the council less than a month ago. A budget amendment was attempted immediately following, but failed. The city then further investigated its options, deciding to cut ties with Coastal Properties, a management company which had maintained the marina for three years and recently signed a new three-year contract. The city decided during a work session about two weeks ago to terminate the contract and manage the marina in-house for the upcoming season, until further plans can be made.Following the budget vote, the council plans to meet in closed session before continuing with the planned work session.In other business, the council plans to hear discussion on a highly anticipated report from the Environmental Policy Task Force. The report was delivered to Mayor Barrie Parsons Tilghman on Thursday and recommends Salisbury "lead by example" in environmental sustainability practices.

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL

From Early Bird Our Bay: Growing Green - the proper way With emergence of the warming sun at the onset of spring, there's an urge in many of us to try to rescue our sad, soggy, brown lawns. But the steps homeowners take to achieve lush, green lawns - especially applying fertilizer - can end up doing more harm than good, sending streams of nutrient pollution running off into waterways and sometimes doing little to help the grass. ...

From Early Bird Our say: This Week's Take: Menhaden talk should focus on scienceThe Atlantic menhaden fishery has been a fixture along the Atlantic coast for more than a century, delivering economic stability to otherwise depressed areas and providing a multitude of products that has helped to improve our lives.The menhaden industry has an impressive history of cooperating with fisheries management and science agencies and institutions, and has voluntarily partnered with the National Marine Fisheries Service since 1955 to report landings and biological data, resulting in the longest continuous fisheries database in the country.

From Early Bird State looking for enviro heroes BALTIMORE - The state is accepting nominations for the annual Tawes Award for a Clean Environment. The annual awards are named in honor of the late J. Millard Tawes, a former governor and the state's first secretary of natural resources. The honors are given out each year by the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Maryland Petroleum Council.

From Early Bird Ask a ScientistHow can we get rid of abandoned boats in our waterways? The Maryland Department of Natural Resources budgets $500,000 annually to remove abandoned boats and debris from state waterways from the Waterway Improvement Fund.The fund was created in 1966 to support the development, use and enjoyment of all waters. It provides financial support in form of grants and loans for a wide variety of boating projects and services. Each year these funds are used to remove tons of debris and about 50 abandoned boats from Maryland waters.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Early Bird POULTRY: Some Md. farmers chafe at new federal rules BALTIMORE (AP) — Some Maryland poultry farmers are upset that they will have to comply with federal pollution rules regarding chicken manure for the first time.Environmental Protection Agency officials have informed farmers in a series of meetings o the Eastern Shore that they intend to enforce the rules. Farmers will have to get permits if any manure from their flocks is washing off their land into drainage ditches and streams. State officials say more than half of Maryland's 800 poultry farmers have filed notices to get the permits.

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

Local restaurant joins national clean tap water campaign FROSTBURG — The Savage River Lodge has joined the Tap Project to support UNICEF's efforts to bring clean and accessible water to millions of children around the world. In 2007, the Tap Project was born in New York City based on a simple concept: restaurants would ask their patrons to donate $1 or more for the tap water they usually enjoy for free, and all funds raised would support UNICEF's efforts to bring clean and accessible water to millions of children around the world. During World Water Week, March 22-28, the Tap Project will raise vital donations and awareness for UNICEF's water and sanitation programs. For every dollar raised a child will have clean drinking water for 40 days.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

From Early Bird Kersey Creek Elementary shows off its green features A field trip to another school Chesterfield 4th-graders learn about Hanover's green elementary building The urban legends surrounding the mysterious third floor of Kersey Creek Elementary School were put to rest yesterday. There are no animals or ghosts or a secret teachers' lounge with a hot tub. The only thing lurking up there is the school's heating and air-conditioning systems, and that's for a good reason, as some Chesterfield County students learned during a field trip to the Hanover County school. The fourth-grade students from Robious Elementary visited Kersey Creek to learn about green schools. Kersey Creek is certified green by the U.S. Green Building Council for its environmentally friendly architecture and features. Chesterfield's "expeditionary learning" program teaches children through hands-on activities and field trips.

From Early Bird Eagles again flocking to James River area
CHARLES CITY On a cold morning before dawn, Libby Mojica worked by headlamp to wire up explosives in a farm field. If all went well, the explosives would launch three rockets to carry a 60-foot net over a bald eagle. Biologists Mojica, 31, and Bryan Watts, 48, are trapping and studying eagles along the James River, which runs beside the field at Weyanoke Point in Charles City County. The research should help experts help the majestic birds, perhaps by pointing out territories in need of protection. But field work can be unpredictable. Six days earlier, Mojica and Watts sat in tentlike blinds for three hours -- a test of patience and bladder control -- but no eagles visited the deer carcasses set out as bait.

VIRGINIAN PILOT

From Early Bird Opponents of uranium mine find allies at the Beach
Deborah and Phillip Lovelace felt like they were going up against an army as they organized opposition

to a proposed uranium mine five miles from their cattle farm near Gretna, a Southside town of 1,300. Then the Virginia Beach City Council passed a resolution opposing the mine without guarantees that the operation wouldn't contaminate Lake Gaston, its primary drinking water supply. Suddenly, the Lovelaces had their own army: a city of 425,000 people. "I could have almost turned cartwheels," Phillip said. "People now realize, 'Hey, maybe it's not just little Gretna, Va.,' " Deborah added. "It's going to affect a lot more people."

DAILY PRESS

From Early Bird Watermen seeking 'ghosts' of the bay State program targets abandoned crab pots that pose a danger to a declining industry. GLOUCESTER - Richard Green spent the winter on the Chesapeake Bay searching for what scientists say could be among the most prolific killers of blue crab. It wasn't striped bass or eel, which feast on juvenile crabs. Instead, it was muck-covered steel baskets, better known as crab pots. Scientists estimate that more than 100,000 crab pots are abandoned — most are accidentally cut lose by boat propellers — annually off the shores of Virginia. The traps, also known as "ghost" or "derelict" crab pots, fall to the bottom of the bay, where they attract crab and fish for a year until the steel dissolves into salt water.

From Early Bird Even with conservation, our area needs reservoir
Newport News Waterworks, James City Service Authority and Williamsburg have worked cooperatively since the 1980s to ensure the future adequacy of the Peninsula's water supply, culminating most notably in the King William Reservoir on Cohoke Creek and an intake pumping station on the Mattaponi River. Phillips concedes that Waterworks made a good investment in 1998 when it built its brackish groundwater desalination plant to bridge the gap until a new reservoir supply is available. However, he implies we use the plant at full capacity only during droughts and emergencies, as a result of reduced demand for water. Use of surface water (like our reservoirs) and groundwater sources is actually optimized through conjunctive management.

From Early Bird DEQ reps to speak at Surry coal-plant meeting
DENDRON - Not much happens in this sleepy town. But a lot could change in the quiet community over the next decade if the Old Dominion Electric Cooperative's proposal to build a $6 billion coal-powered power plant is granted. The co-op announced in December that 1,600 acres in Dendron — the former site of a lumber company that was the hub of the town's once-bustling business community — was its first choice for a place to build the proposed Cypress Creek Power Station. The state Department of Environmental Quality and Old Dominion Electric Cooperative are holding a public meeting on the proposal from 5 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at Gardens on the Rolfe, 4373 Rolfe Highway in Dendron.

From Early Bird Here's why offshore drilling is bad for Va.*I*n response to Robert Murphy's Feb. 1 opinion piece, "Why offshore drilling is good for Va." I would like to offer the following: • He dangles possible royalties as a revenue stream for an economically beleaguered state. The federal government is not interested in sharing these with Virginia. • He mentions how Americans want our country to produce as much fuel as possible here at home. The Interior Department's Minerals Management Services predicts Virginia's potential supply (130 million barrels of oil) at less than seven days of this nation's 20 million barrel a day habit. Murphy feels these reserves could reduce the dependence on foreign oil so many Americans want, but how much would seven days' worth really free us?

ROANOKE TIMES

From Early Bird Asphalt plant foes may have solid case
You don't have to drive past many highway paving projects to know that steaming asphalt stinks. It stings the nose, irritates the lungs and just plain smells bad. So perhaps you can understand why hundreds of

Glenvar residents are worried a 300-tons-per-hour asphalt plant in their neighborhood will foul the air they and their children breathe. Adams Construction Co. wants to build the factory at the old Salem water plant site between West Main Street and Interstate 81 in West Roanoke County. That land is now zoned for uses such as warehouses and lumberyards. The company wants the site rezoned to allow heavy industry, and it needs a special exception, too.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

From Early Bird EPA official might have conflict over C8

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- When President Obama named Lisa Jackson to be his Environmental Protection Agency administrator, advocates for tougher regulation of the toxic chemical C8 were optimistic. Read more in the Sustained Outrage blog. As New Jersey's top environmental regulator, Jackson had set the toughest C8 guideline in the country - a drinking water standard of 0.04 parts per billion of C8, also known as PFOA.

Now those advocates are worried. Last month, Jackson named lawyer Robert M. Sussman to be her "senior policy counsel," to advise her on energy and environmental issues across EPA's broad regulatory authority. For several years, Sussman represented 3M Corp., helping the agency deal with EPA efforts to understand - and perhaps regulate - what C8 and similar chemicals are doing to public health and the environment.

Sussman worked for EPA during the Clinton administration and later became a partner in the Washington office of the Los Angeles law firm, Latham & Watkins. After retiring from the law firm, Sussman became a fellow at the Center for American Progress, a liberal think tank run by John Podesta, a former chief of staff for President Bill Clinton.

From Early Bird Meeting set to probe August explosion at Bayer plant in Institute

Kanawha Valley residents will get a chance to hear from -- and speak to -- the federal Chemical Safety Board about safety problems at the Bayer CropScience plant in Institute.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Early Bird Monongahela drilling debate continues The Bureau of Land Management's decision to scrap a proposed oil and gas lease auction on the Monongahela National Forest doesn't end the debate on whether the forest's natural resources should be tapped, says the forest's supervisor.

The forest covers 919,000 acres in West Virginia and the federal government owns about 62 percent of the oil and gas locked in formations below the forest. About 24 percent has been leased.

From Early Bird Blog: Some climate change voices in W.Va.

Although forest decisions are guided by a management plan, Supervisor Clyde Thompson said it becomes a balancing act between caring for the forest and capitalizing on its resources. I wanted to be sure that Coal Tattoo readers saw two op-ed commentaries that appeared in the Gazette last week. Both are along the lines of urging West Virginians — normal citizens, policymakers and the folks in the coal industry — to come to terms with the changes needed to deal with climate change. The first is by Jim

Kotcon, a longtime Sierra Club official and former president of the West Virginia Environmental Council. Here' part of what he had to say:

Mountaintop mining fight heads to Washington MORGANTOWN, W.Va. (AP) -- Environmental activists from Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia and 28 other states are traveling to Washington, D.C., this week, to urge Congress to stop mountaintop removal mining. Retired miner Carl Shoupe, of Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, says mountaintop removal mining has destroyed more than a million acres in Appalachia.
The activists will meet with lawmakers to urge passage of the Clean Water Protection Act. The bill would outlaw valley fills, or the dumping of rocks and other debris into nearby streams. The coal industry says most of the nearly 130 million tons of coal produced at mountaintop mines in Appalachia goes to generate electricity for 24.7 million U.S. customers.

WVa mercury releases focus of planned lawsuit CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) -- Two environmental groups have put PPG Industries on notice that they intend to sue over mercury releases from a West Virginia plant. The West Virginia Rivers Coalition and the Washington, D.C.-based group Oceana, filed their notice on Monday against PPG's Natrium plant. Both claim the plant continues to exceed the legal limits governing mercury releases into the Ohio River. The Marshall County plant makes chlorine by pumping saltwater through vats of pure mercury, which is a neurotoxin harmful to human health.In 2007, the state Department of Environmental Protection issued a permit that increased the plant's average monthly mercury discharge into the river. A PPG spokesman did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS SERVICE

From Early Bird DuPont Will Reduce PFOA Level in West Virginia Water
PARKERSBURG, West Virginia, March 13, 2009 (ENS) - The chemical used to manufacture nonstick cookware and all-weather clothing has three names. Perfluorooctanoic acid, or PFOA, is also known as C-8. By any of these names the synthetic chemical is equally toxic, but scientists are still evaluating exactly how toxic it is. Studies already completed indicate that PFOA, a fluoropolymer, can cause developmental and other adverse health effects in laboratory animals.

TIMES WEST-VIRGINIAN

Legislature enters fray on carbon cleanup
CHARLESTON — Pressure is mounting nationwide for government to regulate greenhouse gases and reduce the amount carbon dioxide released by coal-fired power plants. But right now, West Virginia has no long-term strategy to do either through carbon dioxide sequestration. CO2 sequestration is the injection of carbon dioxide into underground rock. The idea is that injecting the gas will keep it out of the atmosphere. Coal-fired power plants release carbon dioxide and other pollution into the air. Pollution can be greatly reduced if the carbon dioxide it includes can be captured, or separated from other emissions and stored. The coal industry adds more than $3.5 billion a year to West Virginia's gross state product, according to the West Virginia Coal Association's "2008 Coal Facts." The Legislature now is focusing on developing regulations regarding carbon sequestration. Coal is not the only energy source that produces CO2. Natural gas is used in manufacturing plants nationwide and probably emits about 50 percent of carbon dioxide released into the air, according to Jeff Herholdt, director of the state Division of Energy. There are two major issues facing the state on carbon dioxide sequestration: the technology to separate and store it and the legal machine needed to protect the government from liability, experts said.

MISCELLANEOUS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Early Bird Study: Northeast U.S. to see biggest sea level rise WASHINGTON — The northeastern U.S. coast is likely to see the world's biggest sea level rise from man-made global warming, a new study predicts. However much the oceans rise by the end of the century, add an extra 8 inches or so for New York, Boston and other spots along the coast from the mid-Atlantic to New England. That's because of predicted changes in ocean currents, according to a study based on computer models published online Sunday in the journal Nature Geoscience. An extra 8 inches — on top of a possible 2 or 3 feet of sea rise globally by 2100 — is a big deal, especially when nor'easters and hurricanes hit, experts said.

From Early Bird Monitoring of rare whales near NY harbor endsALBANY, N.Y. -- Monitoring for endangered right whales off New York harbor is ending because the project has lost funding in the state's current budget crunch. Acoustic monitoring by Cornell scientists shows the rare right whales swimming off the harbor, where federal officials have recently lowered ship speed limits to help protect the slow-moving mammals during migrations from Florida to New England and Canada.

Student bloggers give public a seat at Grace trial HELENA, Mont. -- A cadre of journalism and law students from the University of Montana is providing a virtual window on what many are calling the most extensive environmental criminal trial in U.S. history. Paired together in two-hour shifts, a law student and a journalism student provide daily, continuously updated online coverage of the W.R. Grace & Co. trial in U.S. District Court in Missoula through their blog,http://blog.umt.edu/gracecase. Communities in Montana and around the country were exposed to asbestos-contaminated ore that W.R. Grace mined and shipped from Libby, Mont. Lawyers for Libby residents contend the pollution has killed some 225 people and sickened about 2,000 in Libby.

Official: Australian oil spill worse than thought BRISBANE, Australia -- About half of the white sand beaches along Australia's northeast coast that were blackened by an oil spill have been cleared, an official said Sunday. Authorities declared a disaster zone along 37 miles (60 kilometers) of some of Australia's most popular beaches in Queensland state after they were covered in heavy fuel oil that spilled from a cargo ship caught in rough seas Wednesday.

RED ORBIT

From Early Bird Study Finds Carcinogens In Children's Bath ProductsA new report issued by the consumer safety group Campaign for Safe Cosmetics finds that dozens of commonly-used children's bath products sold in the United States contain carcinogens. The watchdog group commissioned an independent laboratory to test 48 best-selling children's products for the presence of 1,4-dioxane. Additionally, 28 products were tested for the presence of formaldehyde, a by-product of a preservative added to products to prevent bacteria growth and extend shelf-life. The 1,4-dioxane chemical is used as a foaming agent in some products, while formaldehyde is used for embalming corpses and as glue in chipboard. Both chemicals are "completely unregulated" in the U.S., the report said, while 1,4-dioxane is prohibited in Europe and the use of formaldehyde is restricted, according to Stacy Malkan of the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics.

SCIENCE DAILY

From Early Bird Former 3M chemical company lawyer chosen as EPA administrator When Lisa Jackson was named to head the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), advocates for tougher toxic

chemical regulation were elated. Now doubts are beginning to arise. Ms. Jackson was New Jersey's top environmental regulator and won accolades after had setting the toughest C8 guidelines for drinking water in the United States. The praises for her turned in doubts when she appointed lawyer Robert M. Sussman to be her senior policy counsel. His job would be to advise her on energy and environmental issues across EPA's broad regulatory authority. The problem seen by Jackson's former supporters was that for several years, Sussman represented 3M Corporation. Although he had worked for the EPA during the Clinton Administration, he later became a partner in the Washington office of the Los Angeles law firm, Latham & Watkins. After retiring from the firm, he became a fellow for American Progress. Now, Robert A. Bilott, an attorney who represents the states of West Virginia, New Jersey and Minnesota, that have polluted drinking water, has urged Jackson to ban Sussman from any involvement in these issues. His reason is that her choice of administrator was directly involved in representing the interests of perfluorochemical manufacturers in negotiations with the EPA while he was a partner in the law firm.

NEW YORK TIMES

Harnessing the Sun, With Help From Cities PALM DESERT, Calif. — Rick Clark's garage is loaded with fast toys for playing in the sun. He has a buggy for racing on sand dunes, two sleek power boats for pulling water skiers, and a new favorite: 48 solar panels that send his energy meter whirring backward. Bronzed and deeply lined from decades of life in the desert sun, Mr. Clark is not one to worry about global warming. He suspects that if the planet's climate is getting hotter, it is part of a natural cycle and will probably correct itself. "Experts have been wrong before," he said.But late last year, Mr. Clark decided to install a $62,000 solar power system because of a new municipal financing program that lent him the money and allows him to pay it back with interest over 20 years as part of his property taxes. In so doing, he joined the vanguard of a social experiment that is blossoming in California and a dozen other states.

EXAMINER.COM

Water shortages, problems lead to solutions, profits If your memory is sharp, you may remember a news story that broke in 2007 concerning two private beaches in Maryland: one in Kent County and one in Cecil County. The news stemmed from a Natural Resources Defense Council report that chronicled pollution at 3,500 U.S. beaches. The report was of particular interest to Marylanders because of the six most contaminated beaches in the country, two were here on our Eastern Shore. To be honest, I had all but forgotten about this story until recently, when I saw a related piece of news. Just last week nearly seven million pounds of trash was collected from waterways and beaches around the world. You can see how the stories are connected, and how polluted water is an ongoing theme and a growing problem. As the water problem balloons, we're beginning to see the effects hit closer and closer to home. Soon, water problems will affect billions of people around the globe as shortages, pollution, and overuse culminate to bring a looming issue to the surface. But like all problems there is great opportunity in the many the solutions that will be needed to ensure clean water for a growing population.**Water Problems Hit Home**

Going green as a couple? Good idea!

Nearly forty years ago The New York Times was the first major newspaper to reference the phrase, "the greenhouse effect." A few years ago, celebrities jumped on the bandwagon and going green became the trend. Today, "Going Green" is the catch phrase for anybody who is earth and environmentally conscious. But more than just the latest trend-y saying, going green has become a way of life for many couples. Being conscious of the world around us is a simple, but vital thing. A good rule of thumb is to treat the world the way you treat your own home because, in essence, the earth is an extension of our homes. You wouldn't allow trash to build up in your house, nor would you deliberately poison the inhabitants there. Have the same consideration for the earth. Fuel efficient hybrid cars with the lowest possible emissions, solar energy panels in our homes and buildings, conservation and the highest productive use of rainwater, responsible recycling, organically produced food products; all fall under the global umbrella of "going green." They're also a bit more expensive than some of us can afford right now. Starting

off slowly by taking small measures to alleviate polluting your immediate environment will lead to larger global effects. It needn't be expensive.

Do not recycle Most of the things people recycle actually hurt the environment and create frivolous expenses. But people continually guilt each other into feeling lazy and selfish when they don't recycle. So we take time out to separate our old magazines, plastic bottles, break down cardboard boxes and maybe even pinch the staples out of them. After all, in many places, you can actually be fined for doing it wrong. So why waste time doing something for which we receive no observable benefit? Probably because most of us have been fed a series of lies since the third grade. Contrary to popular belief, we are NOT running out of landfill space for our trash. Nor is there even a remote statistical chance of that happening in the next thousand years. It might eventually become more expensive to haul trash away to the next available dump, but you know what else is expensive? Recycling.

UPI

Activists decry reuse of contaminated soil

REUTERS

Facemasks may help shield the heart from pollution NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - Heavy air pollution can have immediate effects on the heart and blood vessels, but a simple facemask may offer some protection, new research suggests.In one study, researchers found that when young men were exposed to air polluted with diesel exhaust, their arteries temporarily stiffened. Meanwhile, a second study showed that healthy adults had higher blood pressure and a less healthy heart-rate pattern when they walked through the streets of Beijing without a facemask. The good news, the study found, was that the cardiovascular effects were diminished when volunteers donned a facemask like those worn by construction workers to keep from breathing dust. "Our message from this is that the use of a facemask in heavily polluted cities ... has the potential to improve patients' cardiovascular risk, especially in high-risk populations," said lead researcher Dr. Jeremy P. Langrish, of the University of Edinburgh in the UK.

Polar bear fate seen to depend on emissions cuts OSLO (Reuters) - Global warming is threatening polar bears as it melts their icy Arctic habitat, Norway's environment minister said on Monday. "If the ice is disintegrating in the Arctic, it will have enormous impact on polar bears," Environment and Development Minister Erik Solheim told reporters on the eve of a meeting to discuss the future of the huge white carnivore.