EPA REGION III

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<><P.M. Headlines

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*** P.M. HOT LIST ***

Editorial: Aquaculture part of a better approach to restoring oysters

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL Albert Einstein supposedly defined insanity as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." This is a pretty good summary of the state's policy on restoring oysters to the Chesapeake Bay. The state has been doggedly trying to revive populations of the disease-enfeebled native oysters to accomplish two goals: To have the oysters - perhaps the greatest natural filter known to man - improve the bay's water quality. To maintain some remnant of the traditional oyster fishery.Unfortunately, these goals conflict. So far the state's dogged efforts to rebuild and reseed oyster reefs have merely put some oysters in the bay, so that the bulk of the surviving ones can be removed again by watermen. The oyster population isn't growing, water quality isn't improving and the fishery, at best, is on life-support.

Maryland Moment: Md. Environmental Advocates Say Sprawl Continues

WASHINGTON-POST WASHINGTON-POST_Environment Maryland, one of the state's biggest environmental groups, concludes in a study released today that despite passage of the 1997 Smart Growth Act, which tried to reduce suburban sprawl and halt the decline of the Chesapeake Bay, development patterns haven't changed over a decade. "Our land consumption is the same," policy associate Mike Sherling said. The study's release during the General Assembly's 90-day session highlights the concerns of environmental advocates over Gov. Martin O'Malley's proposals to overhaul the 1997 law, which is widely viewed as having failed to curb growth or at least direct it into dense areas near public transit.

County may be too wealthy for state help with pipes

MARYLAND GAZETTE The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission won't know until late this week whether state environmental officials will recommend it for federal stimulus money to shore up its drinking water pipes that ruptured at a record rate last year. The problem for the bicounty utility is that state officials are unsure whether the WSSC qualifies for the federal grants because the money is being distributed under the Environmental Protection Agency's clean water and drinking water quality programs, which traditionally allow grants and no-interest loans only to "disadvantaged" communities. Montgomery and Prince George's counties might be deemed too wealthy. Maryland Department of Environment spokeswoman Dawn Stoltzfus said the WSSC, if approved, could qualify for loans at 1 percent interest under terms of the stimulus program.

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Editorial: Protect the river

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW The state Department of Environmental Resources is right: PPG Industries must move quickly to stop contaminated water from a former dump site that is being discharged into the Allegheny River near Ford City. According to the DEP, the water is contaminated with arsenic and lead, and the pH level is almost as high as bleach. PPG officials said they were surprised by the order this week -- because the company and the DEP have been monitoring the site for years. The site was a dump from 1949 to 1970 for glass-polishing wastes from the now closed Ford City glass plant. The 77-acre slurry lagoon is mostly covered over by vegetation. PPG officials noted that testing from 1984 to 1998 had shown no harmful discharges into the river. We don't doubt that.

INSIDE WASHINGTON: Probe finds health risks missed

ASSOCIATED PRESS -- The federal agency charged with protecting the public near toxic pollution sites often obscures or overlooks potential health hazards, uses inadequate analysis and fails to zero in on toxic culprits, congressional investigators and scientists say. A House investigative report says officials from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry "deny, delay, minimize, trivialize or ignore legitimate health concerns." Local communities have voiced frustration and confusion at findings by the agency that are challenged by outside scientists or are ambiguous about whether people living near industrial pollution or toxic dumps or breathe foul-smelling air have reason to worry. "Time and time again ATSDR appears to avoid clearly and directly confronting the most obvious toxic culprits that harm the health of local communities throughout the nation," said the report from the House Science and Technology investigations and oversight subcommittee.... _ Henry Cole, an environmental consultant and former senior scientist with the Environmental Protection Agency, said a four-year study into residents' complaints of foul odors and health ailments near an Ohio waste plant, Perma-fix of Dayton, used insufficient sampling to conclude in December that none of the 100 compounds exceeded safe levels.

PROMISES, PROMISES: House fails to zero out carbon

ASSOCIATED PRESS WASHINGTON -- It was a bold promise: the House would "lead by example" to fight global warming, becoming the first legislative body in the world to zero out its carbon impact on the planet. Too bold, perhaps. The House quietly shelved the idea late last month, the word delivered in an e-mail to a couple of reporters. It turned out that the House's goal to become carbon neutral _ by removing as much carbon dioxide from the air as it releases _ could not be guaranteed. "No one can really tell you if you are truly carbon neutral, and the lack of that standard bothered us," said Jeff Ventura, a spokesman for the House's chief administrative officer. The House already had spent $89,000 to cancel out 24,000 tons of emissions that it couldn't erase by turning out lights, buying better light bulbs and making the Capitol's power plant burn more natural gas. The money bought "offsets," which fund projects that reduce greenhouse gases, such as capturing methane from farm manure ponds, that supposedly wouldn't have happened without the investment.

Urban areas see revival in housing construction

USA TODAY A substantial amount of housing built this decade has shifted from open fields on the edges of suburbia to dense central cities and their nearby suburbs, a new government study suggests. The change suggests that a much-publicized urban renaissance in the past 15 years is more than an isolated trend, some urban analysts say. **INTERACTIVE MAP:** Housing going up in and near cities In more than half of the 50 most populous metropolitan areas, communities at the urban core have captured a significantly larger share of their region's new residential building permits since 2002 than in the first half of the 1990s, according to an analysis by the Environmental Protection Agency.

New Gas: MIT Researchers Identify Potent New Greenhouse Gas

WALL ST. JOURNAL The unintended law of consequences strikes again. The 20-year old campaign to save the ozone layer has led to the widespread industrial use of a greenhouse gas 4,800 times more potent than carbon dioxide. How did we get here? The 1987 Montreal Protocol was established to limit emissions of chlorofluorocarbons and other gases that deplete the ozone layer, the big worry in the 1980s. One of the targeted compounds was methyl bromide, which was widely used in fumigation to kill weevils and mice and other pests that threaten food supplies. Methyl bromide was phased out in 2005. Dow Chemical's AgroSciences unit came to the rescue, dusting off research on an old compound called sulfuryl fluoride, which has now become the standard fumigant. ... The new findings may cause dismay for an industry that just finished complying with one environmental imperative only to find that the cure might have been worse than the disease. But at least the new findings come soon enough to make changes without too much pain, said Ron Prinn, director of MIT's Center for Global Change Science and a co-author on the new paper. It's "a new frontier for environmental science — to try to head off potential dangers as early as possible, rather than wait until it's a mature industry with lots of capital and jobs at stake," he said in a statement. And making the first switch from methly bromide to sulfuryl fluoride hasn't exactly kneecaped the fumigation business—the new compound is cheaper and more effective than what it replaced, meaning the environmental imperative also carried business benefits.

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Potomac River mostly spared from Md. fly ash spill

ASSOCIATED PRESS HAGERSTOWN, Md. (AP) — A 4,000-gallon spill of potentially toxic coal ash sludge mostly missed the Potomac River and doesn't appear to have done much harm, a Maryland environmental official said Tuesday. "Any spill of coal ash is very serious, but it does seem like it will be of relatively limited impact, that it was a minor leak," said Dawn Stoltzfus, a spokeswoman for the Maryland Department of the Environment. She said papermaker NewPage Corp., which owns the leaky pipeline over the river's North Branch, must tell state regulators within five days how it plans to prevent future spills. The agency is considering fining the company, Stoltzfus said. Patricia R. Koontz, a spokeswoman for Miamisburg, Ohio-based NewPage, said in an e-mail to The Associated Press that the company will improve how it maintains ash pipelines. Stoltzfus said the bulk of the sludge spilled onto the West Virginia river bank across from NewPage's mill in Luke, about 210 miles upstream from Washington. Workers were expected to finish cleaning the stream bank Tuesday, Stoltzfus said. She said a minor amount of sludge caused discoloration in the river about 30 feet downstream, with no sign of harm to any fish. The spill also was not expected to taint any drinking water supplies.

Fly ash spills into Potomac River

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS LUKE — Cleanup of 4,000 gallons of fly ash sludge that spilled into the Potomac River from a coal-burning power plant pipeline at the NewPage paper mill Sunday was completed within hours of the discovery of the leak, according to the NewPage public relations manager at Luke. "The majority of the ash did not go into the river. The residual ash, a nonhazardous material, was removed from the river bank by Luke mill employees Monday within hours of the incident," said Patsy Koontz. Maryland Department of the Environment spokeswoman Dawn Stoltzfus said the spill began at about 8 a.m. and continued until 6 a.m. Monday, when it was detected by NewPage employees during a daily inspection. The damaged pipeline that crosses the river was taken out of service after a "dime-sized" hole was seen in the pipeline. Two other parallel pipelines continue to carry ash slurry from the mill's coal-burning power plant to an ash storage lagoon some 800 feet away in Mineral County, W.Va.

EPA lists options for cleansing lead, arsenic-tainted soil in North

Whitehall

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL Cleanup could take years, but dangerous levels will be dealt with much more quickly, agency says.The best way to cleanse arsenic-contaminated soil in North Whitehall Township might be to leave it there. The Environmental Protection Agency, which announced last week that it discovered elevated levels of arsenic and lead in areas that were once part of Mohr Orchard, can haul the tainted dirt away, cap it with a layer of fresh topsoil, or leave it -- and mix in enough clean soil to reduce the concentration of the toxic metals. That third option, called soil blending, is the most cost-effective and the least restrictive on future development, according to Bruce Bruso, the president of a company that cleans soil for developers and municipal governments. Bruso said he has seen dozens of cases like North Whitehall's, where a one-time orchard or farmland is sold to a housing or commercial developer. Later, chemicals from pesticides are discovered in the soil or water table, making the land potentially harmful to people living there.

DEP: Drilling taints Susquehanna County wells

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE Drilling by a natural gas extraction company caused methane contamination in private water wells in Susquehanna County's Dimock Twp., state regulators say. The state Department of Environmental Protection notified Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. in a Feb. 27 letter the company is in violation of two state laws — the Clean Streams Law and the Oil and Gas Act — for allowing natural gas to contaminate groundwater in the vicinity of Carter Road. The notice of violation comes amid an ongoing investigation into a New Year's Day explosion that shattered a concrete slab covering a private water well in the township. The company has until Friday to submit a plan to DEP to resolve the violations. "We have been working on this, and we are going to continue to work on this until we solve the problem," Mark Carmon, spokesman for DEP's regional office in Wilkes-Barre, said Tuesday. Cabot spokesman Ken Komoroski said the company doesn't necessarily agree with the department's conclusions, calling them premature. The company is awaiting a report from a hydrogeologist it hired to evaluate how gas might be migrating into the groundwater supply.

DEP: Cabot violated state law when natural gas contaminated groundwater

WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS VOICE Drilling by a natural gas extraction company caused methane contamination in private water wells in Susquehanna County's Dimock Township, state regulators say. The state Department of Environmental Protection notified Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. in a Feb. 27 letter that the company is in violation of two state laws — the Clean Streams Law and the Oil and Gas Act — for allowing natural gas to contaminate groundwater in the vicinity of Carter Road. The notice of violation comes amid an ongoing investigation into a New Year's Day explosion that shattered a concrete slab covering a private water well in the township. The company has until Friday to submit a plan to DEP to resolve the violations. "We have been working on this and we are going to continue to work on this until we solve the problem," Mark Carmon, spokesman for DEP's regional office in Wilkes-Barre, said Tuesday.Cabot spokesman Ken Komoroski said the company doesn't necessarily agree with the department's conclusions, calling them premature. The company is awaiting a report from a hydrogeologist it hired to evaluate how gas might be migrating into the groundwater supply.

Editorial: Coal ash rules long overdue

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE A disaster last year in Tennessee, coupled with advanced technology and a presidential election, finally have convinced the Environmental Protection Agency to better regulate ponds that hold millions of tons of toxic coal ash. The waste is generated by power plants. Ash resulting from coal combustion is stored in more than 300 massive ponds near plants nationwide, including several dozen in Pennsylvania. Some ash generated by power plants is deposited in state and federally regulated landfills. Much more — as much as 125 million tons a year — is stored in holding ponds that are largely unregulated. In 2005, one

such pond in Northampton County ruptured, sending 100 million gallons of ash-saturated water into the Delaware River. And late last year, a pond collapse near Knoxville, Tenn., buried more than 300 acres, including many homes, and fouled the Tennessee River.

Part of James River called clean by officials

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH The James River is now clean enough for swimming in a 13-mile stretch that includes the popular Pony Pasture Rapids in South Richmond. State environmental officials revealed the good news yesterday during a meeting to discuss a planned cleanup of a still-polluted part of the James. Water tests during the past several years showed that fecal bacteria had dropped to acceptable levels from near the Chesterfield County-Powhatan County line to the Boulevard Bridge in Richmond. "The water got cleaner," said Mark Alling, an aquatic biologist with the state Department of Environmental Quality. The reason for the improvement is unclear. Possibilities include farmers putting up fences to keep cattle out of streams and people increasingly picking up after their dogs. Parts of the now-clean stretch had been listed as polluted for more than a decade. A 33-mile stretch, from the Boulevard Bridge to Hopewell, remains on the state's dirty-water list. Reducing bacteria levels there and in several tributaries could take seven years or more and cost hundreds of millions of dollars, state officials said.

Forest Service ignored concerns about drilling

CHARLESTON GAZETTE A private gas drilling and pipeline project in the Fernow Experimental Forest threatened an underground cave system that shelters endangered bats, created toxic runoff and damaged long-term forest ecology, according to a report from the group Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. U.S. Forest Service officials approved the project, despite grave concerns expressed by the agency's staff scientists about impacts on the Fernow, according to documents released by PEER. The Fernow, located in the Monongahela National Forest near Parsons, is used for research on growing trees and on better ways of timbering. PEER filed a complaint Tuesday with the inspector general of the Department of Agriculture, which oversees the Forest Service, over the Fernow incident.

Report: Smart growth failing

CARROLL COUNTY TIMES ANNAPOLIS — Maryland's policies for concentrating growth and avoiding sprawl aren't working, according to a report released Tuesday.Environment Maryland, an environmental advocacy group, released its report "Not So Smart: Land Consumption in Maryland After a Decade of 'Smart Growth,'" which looked at acres of commercial and residential development per new resident. Although the amount of growth in Carroll has leveled off, the county still ranked in the top 10 for acres of new residential and commercial development since the beginning of 1998, according to the report. Carroll was No. 10 with 10,724 acres developed, or 3.7 percent of the county's land area. Between 1998 and 2007, Carroll had 0.43 acres of commercial and residential development per new resident, according to the report. Since 1998, a year after Smart Growth laws were passed in Maryland, more than 175,000 acres have been used for residential or commercial development, according to the report. "The point is that the approach we've been trying hasn't worked. We need to take a new approach," said Brad Heavner, state director for Environment Maryland and one of the report's authors.

Volunteers across globe pick up tons of marine debris

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT The list reads like the inventory at a dump site: 17,607 cigarette butts, 13,499 plastic bottles, 15,231 food wrappers, 437 spent shotgun shells, 140 junk appliances, 49 syringes, 213 used condoms. The dump site in this case, however, was Virginia's beaches and waterways. And the numbers were but a fraction of what volunteers collected in one day last September as part of the International Coastal Cleanup. According to data released Tuesday, more than 254,000 pounds of marine debris were recovered along Virginia waters on that single day last year, the fourth highest amount in the nation. North Carolina ranked second, with

528,026 pounds of retrieved garbage, while California again was No. 1, with 1.6 million pounds of trash. Florida was third. "Marine debris is choking our oceans, and choking our lakes, and choking our rivers - and it's totally preventable," said Vikki Spruill, president and CEO of Ocean Conservancy, an environmental group that sponsors the cleanup and compiled a mountain of data for its 2008 report.

Humans worsen 'rising tide of ocean trash'

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES OCEAN CITY -- Next time you toss that cigarette butt out the window, consider it probably will make its way to a storm drains.From there, to rivers and bays, to the Atlantic Ocean, where a sea creature could mistake it for lunch. The message? Trash travels. And while smoking-related garbage tops the list, it's only one category of many for an outreach group that collected 6.8 million pounds of debris from oceans, rivers and lakes -- all from a single day of pickup last September. What began in 1986 with a single Texas woman in her own town has become the International Coastal Cleanup, a day orchestrated by the environmental advocacy group, Ocean Conservancy. Last year, nearly 400,000 volunteers in 100 countries participated at 6,500 sites. Throughout the years they've taken 123 million pounds of rubbish out of waterways, from coffee stirrers to diapers to appliances.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS

From Early Bird Commentary: SEPTA is our key to a green future THE OBAMA administration plan for America's future calls for the U.S. to create jobs, jump-start growth and transform our economy to compete in the 21st century. This includes becoming the world leader in green technology and adopting progressive environmental policies. As the nation's sixth-largest city, with the fifth-largest regional public transit system, our impact is huge, our responsibility profound. Given the stimulus money that will flow to the city and the state, we face hard choices about priorities. Philadelphia is uniquely positioned to respond to this call to increase access to jobs and reduce our carbon footprint by supporting development that takes full advantage of our public transportation system - transit-oriented development (or TOD). An approach that encourages mixed-use, mixed-income and green development around transit hubs will make the city a more desirable place to live and increase our economic viability. Studies show that TOD has positive effects on real-estate values - residential, commercial and retail. SEPTA is one of the city's most valuable resources. With 325 million rider-trips annually, 142 routes and more than 15,000 stops all over the region, the system is extensive. Philadelphia already has an advantage over cities like Denver, L.A. and Charlotte, N.C., that are spending billions to develop transit systems. Despite our high rate of use, any number of Market-Frankford El and Broad Street subway stops have vacant land, fast-food drive-thrus and other auto-oriented uses that take less than full advantage of their locations.

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

From Early Bird Bill to end water discounts stalls in Council A proposal to end to the 25 percent discount on water rates given to schools, churches, and other charitable institutions failed to clear a City Council committee yesterday, leading several members to doubt whether Council was ready to make hard financial choices in the forthcoming budget.

From Early Bird Blog: Green Living: Citizen science programs at the Schuylkill Center Join Dr. Patricia Zaradic for a presentation and discussion on the decline of participation in nature-based activities and the implications for biodiversity and conservation. Schuylkill Center educators are hosting a free nature play program for children during the lecture. Thursday, April 2nd | Energy Choices for the Home, A Panel Discussion: Learn ways to address energy needs in your home, from conservation to alternative fuels. Liz Robinson of the Energy

Coordinating Agency; Mike McKinley of Solaris

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

From Early Bird Water service restored in parts of Greenfield (Today) About 75 households in Greenfield were without water service for several hours yesterday because of a water main break on Saline Street. Pittsburgh Water Department officials said the break occurred in the afternoon and repairs were eventually completed by late last night. It was unclear what caused the damage to the water line.

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL

From Early Bird EPA lists options for cleansing lead, arsenic-tainted soil in North Whitehall Cleanup could take years, but dangerous levels will be dealt with much more quickly, agency says.The best way to cleanse arsenic-contaminated soil in North Whitehall Township might be to leave it there. The Environmental Protection Agency, which announced last week that it discovered elevated levels of arsenic and lead in areas that were once part of Mohr Orchard, can haul the tainted dirt away, cap it with a layer of fresh topsoil, or leave it -- and mix in enough clean soil to reduce the concentration of the toxic metals. That third option, called soil blending, is the most cost-effective and the least restrictive on future development, according to Bruce Bruso, the president of a company that cleans soil for developers and municipal governments. Bruso said he has seen dozens of cases like North Whitehall's, where a one-time orchard or farmland is sold to a housing or commercial developer. Later, chemicals from pesticides are discovered in the soil or water table, making the land potentially harmful to people living there.

From Early Bird Letter: Celebrating agriculture in America National Ag Week, March 15-21, 2009, recognizes agriculture's role in supplying the necessities of everyday life. Producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and others will celebrate the abundance of American agriculture.

SCRANTON TIMES

From Early Bird DEP: Drilling taints Susquehanna County wellsDrilling by a natural gas extraction company caused methane contamination in private water wells in Susquehanna County's Dimock Twp., state regulators say. The state Department of Environmental Protection notified Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. in a Feb. 27 letter the company is in violation of two state laws — the Clean Streams Law and the Oil and Gas Act — for allowing natural gas to contaminate groundwater in the vicinity of Carter Road. The notice of violation comes amid an ongoing investigation into a New Year's Day explosion that shattered a concrete slab covering a private water well in the township. The company has until Friday to submit a plan to DEP to resolve the violations. "We have been working on this, and we are going to continue to work on this until we solve the problem," Mark Carmon, spokesman for DEP's regional office in Wilkes-Barre, said Tuesday. Cabot spokesman Ken Komoroski said the company doesn't necessarily agree with the department's conclusions, calling them premature. The company is awaiting a report from a hydrogeologist it hired to evaluate how gas might be migrating into the groundwater supply.

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STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird State College gets greenhouse gas grant (Tuesday) State College will receive $66,832 in state

money to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, announced state Rep. Scott Conklin, D-Rush Township, on Monday.

WYALUSING ROCKET COURIER

From Early Bird Can rural drinking water be protected from gas well drilling?
(Mar. 5) The issue of what lies beneath has focused of late on the natural gas trapped below and within the layers of Marcellus Shale in this region, but a geologist from Tunkhannock reminds us of another precious resource that may be at risk.

WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS VOICE

From Early Bird DEP: Cabot violated state law when natural gas contaminated groundwater Drilling by a natural gas extraction company caused methane contamination in private water wells in Susquehanna County's Dimock Township, state regulators say. The state Department of Environmental Protection notified Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. in a Feb. 27 letter that the company is in violation of two state laws — the Clean Streams Law and the Oil and Gas Act — for allowing natural gas to contaminate groundwater in the vicinity of Carter Road. The notice of violation comes amid an ongoing investigation into a New Year's Day explosion that shattered a concrete slab covering a private water well in the township. The company has until Friday to submit a plan to DEP to resolve the violations. "We have been working on this and we are going to continue to work on this until we solve the problem," Mark Carmon, spokesman for DEP's regional office in Wilkes-Barre, said Tuesday.Cabot spokesman Ken Komoroski said the company doesn't necessarily agree with the department's conclusions, calling them premature. The company is awaiting a report from a hydrogeologist it hired to evaluate how gas might be migrating into the groundwater supply.

BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES

From Early Bird Officials considering canal tunnel Representatives and engineers will tour the area where the Delaware Canal passes under Route 13 in Tullytown. The silent and serene Delaware Canal comes to Tullytown and hits a highway. Bikers and hikers face steel barriers and, beyond them, four-lane Route 13. Darting across one of Bucks County's busiest roadways could be deadly. But should the historic towpath and trail go through an underground tunnel? After years of debate about a bridge over Route 13, the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor is considering plans for a much cheaper box culvert under the roadway. Representatives for Tullytown will join engineers with the Heritage Corridor Thursday for a tour of the area. The day's itinerary includes an inspection of the waterway. There are two areas where engineers said they believe trash and overgrowth slow the flow of water. The project to connect the towpath has itself been slowed by bureaucracy and funding issues. The Heritage Corridor is trying to build a pathway through the region. While there are other obstacles along the 165-mile trail that stretches from Jim Thorpe to Bristol along the Lehigh and Delaware canals, Tullytown's situation is among the most dramatic, said Trail Manager Scott Everett. "It's basically a dead end," he said. "It would be suicidal to cross Route 13 there. [For] all intents and purposes, the trail stops there."

READING EAGLE

Georgia farmer issues warning about sewage sludge in Berks
Georgia farmer Bill Boyce took what was for the taking - and kept taking it. Beginning in 1986 and continuing for years, the city of Augusta spread truckload after truckload of sewage sludge, or "free fertilizer," on Boyce's fourth-generation farm in Keysville, southwest of the city. Years later, cows began dying at the Boyceland Dairy Farm, known for its award-winning cows and ambitious milk production. ... On Tuesday, he warned more than 100 people gathered in Bowers for a conference on sludge that the sewage-treatment byproduct is not necessarily safe. "Regardless of what the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) may say, sludge destroyed Boyceland Dairy Farm," said Boyce, 59. ... Tuesday's conference was organized by the United Sludge Free Alliance, a Kutztown nonprofit organization. Berks County receives the third highest amount of sludge of any county in Pennsylvania, said Darree A. Sicher, the group founder and president. "Somebody like Bill Boyce ... works his whole life to

provide food for America ... and loses everything," she said later. "Where are we going to be as this happens around the country?" But cases like Boyce's and McElmurray's are rare, according to Timothy L. Chronister, who applies sludge to farms for Jesse Baro Inc., Douglassville.

PW - PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY

Beautiful Biofuel

A Kensington-based company is hoping to become a national leader in turning slimy, rancid waste into fuel. Tom Ferrero has been pumping grease traps for 20 years. As a third-generation septic pumper, it's Ferrero's job to go underneath restaurants and clear the congealed mass created by your half-eaten bacon cheeseburger and the dishwater used to clean the plate. Brown and with a jellyfish consistency, trap grease is scraped in chunks off the sides of grease vats under restaurant sinks and drains so that it doesn't harden and clog city pipes. Ferrero admits it's not the most fun way to make a living. But recently, he says, he hasn't minded going down in the vats as much, ever since a Philadelphia company began turning this filth into fuel. "It is exciting," Ferrero says. "This slimy, stinky waste that even the treatment centers don't want to deal with has been treated as just that—a waste. The idea of some resourceful recovery is a great thing." The company Ferrero's talking about is Black Gold Biofuels, creator of a new technology to turn trap grease into a useable biofuel for trucking and home heating. In 2003, founding member and current CEO Emily Bockian-Landsburg was working with the Energy Cooperative to find a more sustainable form of heating oil. They found that restaurant fryer oil was a good place to start—that is, until everyone else thought of it also. Under the name Fry-O-Deisel, the company founders soon discovered there was already a market for fryer oil as a base for animal feed and for use in biodeisel. So they set out to find a material so degraded and disgusting that no other energy company would touch it. And they didn't even have to leave the kitchen.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Editorial: Protect the river

The state Department of Environmental Resources is right: PPG Industries must move quickly to stop contaminated water from a former dump site that is being discharged into the Allegheny River near Ford City. According to the DEP, the water is contaminated with arsenic and lead, and the pH level is almost as high as bleach.

PPG officials said they were surprised by the order this week -- because the company and the DEP have been monitoring the site for years. The site was a dump from 1949 to 1970 for glass-polishing wastes from the now closed Ford City glass plant. The 77-acre slurry lagoon is mostly covered over by vegetation. PPG officials noted that testing from 1984 to 1998 had shown no harmful discharges into the river. We don't doubt that.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

From Early Bird Editorial: Federal help for wind power would help solve energy needs The wind may have its day yet. U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar is talking up offshore wind power projects just off the coast of Delaware and other nearby states. He says that strip of the Atlantic Ocean is considered perfect for generating electricity through offshore windmills. Secretary Salazar wants to put his department behind the development of that potential energy source. A lot of people want the same thing, but the secretary recognizes that the federal government's rules and regulations to get the job done are still lacking. It's a perfect time to fix that problem. The

U.S. Energy Department has established a national goal of obtaining 20 percent of our electricity from wind power by 2030. The Atlantic "renewable energy zone," as Mr. Salazar calls it, should play an important part in that plan.

Letter: Industrial pollution spikes Delaware cancer rates
Your recent editorial on cancer was myopic at best. The dramatic increase in cancer rates is accepted as a given. Then we are to look to early detection and search for the elusive "cure." Why is a blind eye turned toward identifying the causes of cancer and preventing it in the first place? Delaware is home to some of the most toxic industries: refineries, chemical companies and pharmaceuticals. As we chase that elusive cure, we miss opportunities to prevent cancers.

BETHANY BEACH WAVE

Frog monitoring project looking for volunteers GEORGETOWN -- Hearing the familiar sounds of frogs at night is a reminder that the spring and summer
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."
Concern over the decline of the amphibian population has prompted the Delaware Amphibian Monitoring Project, which tracks the calling of frogs along certain routes through the state.

State recycling council to hold monthly meeting in Lewes
LEWES --The state's Recycling Public Advisory Council, a group of individuals who make recommendations to the state on issues surrounding recycling, is scheduled to convene for its monthly meeting with a rare appearance in Sussex County.The council, which tends to meet in locations to the north, is scheduled to hold its March meeting at the state Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control's Lewes office on Pilottown Road in Lewes.

Don't toss that old TV, recycle E-waste
MILLVILLE --Dennis Hastings has been working in the electronics industry for almost 50 years and has seen many changes to the repair and upkeep of electronic devices.

DEWEY BEACH: Inland Bays board meeting scheduled
DEWEY BEACH — The Board of Directors for the Center for the Inlet Bays has scheduled a meeting for 9:30 a.m. Friday, March 13, at the center building on Inlet Road in Delaware Seashore State Park to hear a presentation concerning the Slough's marsh-enhancement project at James Farm Ecological Preserve.

PPG Industries surprised by DEP order
(Tuesday) PPG Industries officials said they are surprised by the state's decision to require the company to collect and treat contaminated water discharging into the Allegheny River from its slurry lagoons in North Buffalo Township. On Monday, the Department of Environmental Protection announced that PPG must begin to monitor the quality and quantity of discharge and develop a plan to collect and treat the waste water, which has been found to contain antimony, arsenic and lead and has a pH level equivalent to bleach. The site in North Buffalo and Cadogan townships along Route 128 between the Ford City Bridge and Cadogan, was used from 1949 through 1970 as a disposal area for glass-polishing waste slurry produced by the former Ford City plant.

WASHINGTON D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

From Early Bird EPA Plans U.S. Registry of Greenhouse Gas Emissions The Environmental Protection Agency plans to establish a nationwide system for reporting greenhouse gas emissions, a program that could serve as the basis for a federal cap on the buildup of carbon dioxide and other gases linked to global warming. The registry plan, which was announced yesterday, would cover about 13,000 facilities that account for 85 to 90 percent of the nation's greenhouse gas output. It was drafted under the Bush administration but stalled after the Office of Management and Budget objected to it because the EPA based the rule on its powers under the Clean Air Act. "Our efforts to confront climate change must be guided by the best possible information," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson in a statement. "Through this new reporting, we will have comprehensive and accurate data about the production of greenhouse gases. This is a critical step toward helping us better protect our health and environment -- all without placing an onerous burden on our nation's small businesses."

From Early Bird Carmakers Lobbying as They Get Bailout Money: GM, Chrysler Spent $7.3 Million in 4th Quarter General Motors and Chrysler continue to spend millions of dollars on lobbying the same government that is loaning them billions of dollars, as they appeal for more money and seek to influence federal rule-making. In the last three months of 2008, just as slumping auto sales pushed the two Detroit carmakers closer to bankruptcy, GM spent about $3.9 million on lobbying, according to a review of its most recent disclosure forms. Chrysler and its parent company, Cerberus Capital Management, reported spending about $3.4 million. The companies said they lobbied for industry bailout bills in the House and Senate, as well as a sweeping list of legislative and regulatory issues, including vehicle emissions standards, air bag systems, hydrogen fuel safety and climate change.

From Early Bird Ponies no longer targeted for sale, move National Park Service officials have decided not to sell or move any of the ponies living on Assateague Island National Seashore, settling a years-long debate about how to deal with the horses' appetite for rare and valuable plants. In a statement sent yesterday, the Park Service said it would use "intensive contraception" to prevent the horses from reproducing, then wait for natural deaths to thin the pony herd from 130 to between 80 and 100 over five to eight years. In the past, scientists have shot female horses with darts containing contraceptive chemicals.The decision applies only to horses on the Maryland half of the island, which is run by the Park Service. It does not affect the more celebrated ponies on the Virginia side, which are owned by a local volunteer fire company and are auctioned off annually after the celebrated Chincoteague pony swim.

From Early Bird Senate Approves $410 Billion Bill to Fund Federal Government The Senate gave final approval last night to a $410 billion spending bill to fund most of the federal government for the remainder of the year after overcoming a resilient Republican opposition and several Democratic defections.

From Early Bird An Unusual Perch A snowy owl -- an Arctic species rarely seen this far south -- spent part of yesterday afternoon surveying downtown Washington from a high ledge at 17th and L streets NW. The owls, which usually spend winters near the U.S.-Canada border, have turned up in several places across Virginia and Maryland this year. Birding experts think the problem might be a shortage of lemmings, an important prey, on their home turf. Bird experts said the last time a snowy owl was seen this close to the city's urban core was 1994, when one was spotted at Reagan National Airport. Greg Butcher of the National Audubon Society said he hoped this owl would move on from downtown: "We don't have too many lemmings here."

A More Sustainable Tuna?: Japan's Kindai Bluefin Arrives in Virginia Japan's Kindai Bluefin Arrives in Virginia For years sushi aficionados have reserved their most lavish praise -- and their spare cash -- for bluefin tuna, the fatty, pinkish fish featured at high-end restaurants across the globe. But as wild stocks of the fish have plummeted, ordering bluefin has become as socially unacceptable as consuming the once-ubiquitous Chilean sea bass. Now, Virginia's Monterey Bay Fish Grotto restaurant has joined a small group of U.S. restaurants selling a bluefin tuna dubbed Kindai, farmed from hatched eggs in Japan as the result of a university laboratory's efforts to ease diners' consciences. Though the product is not fully sustainable, it underscores how fish suppliers and academic innovators are seeking to satisfy consumer demand without wiping out wild populations altogether.

Maryland Moment: Md. Environmental Advocates Say Sprawl Continues Environment Maryland, one of the state's biggest environmental groups, concludes in a study released today that despite passage of the 1997 Smart Growth Act, which tried to reduce suburban sprawl and halt the decline of the Chesapeake Bay, development patterns haven't changed over a decade. "Our land consumption is the same," policy associate Mike Sherling said. The study's release during the General Assembly's 90-day session highlights the concerns of environmental advocates over Gov. Martin O'Malley's proposals to overhaul the 1997 law, which is widely viewed as having failed to curb growth or at least direct it into dense areas near public transit.

Gov't forcing wildlife group to ID leak's source WASHINGTON -- The inspector general for the Commerce Department is trying to force a prominent environmental group to reveal who leaked the Bush administration's plans to weaken the Endangered Species Act just weeks before President Barack Obama took office. The investigation was triggered by Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma, senior Republican on the Committee on Environment and Public Works. The case suggests that, under at least certain circumstances, the government will continue to pursue and identify federal employees who disclose sensitive documents about controversial U.S. policies _ a common practice under the Bush administration.

From Early Bird The Federal Government Yesterday Committed $900 Million of a $5.2 Billion Project to Extend Washington's Metro System to Dulles International Airport Six-Year Project Will Bring Airport Access, Traffic Woes.The federal government's formal commitment yesterday to a long-planned extension of Metro to Dulles International Airport allows the region, finally, to focus on this reality: a public transit line serving Washington's busiest airport and Virginia's most prosperous -- and congested -- jobs corridor.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

From Early Bird Forest Service ignored concerns about drilling A private gas drilling and pipeline project in the Fernow Experimental Forest threatened an underground cave system that shelters endangered bats, created toxic runoff and damaged long-term forest ecology, according to a report from the group Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. U.S. Forest Service officials approved the project, despite grave concerns expressed by the agency's staff scientists about impacts on the Fernow, according to documents released by PEER. The Fernow, located in the Monongahela National Forest near Parsons, is used for research on growing trees and on better ways of timbering. PEER filed a complaint Tuesday with the inspector general of the Department of Agriculture, which oversees the Forest Service, over the Fernow incident.

From Early Bird Work on Yeager hiking-biking trail to begin CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Work on a hiking and biking trail across Yeager Airport property could start this month, Airport Manager Rick Atkinson said, even though Charleston Mayor Danny Jones has yet to sign off on a formal agreement for the project. Atkinson recently signed a trail license agreement that allows the city to build, operate and maintain a trail along the westernmost 600 acres of airport property - essentially the hillside between the flattened hilltop and the Elk River. Engineer John Bullock and City Councilman Lewis Payne, both members of the Charleston Land Trust, came up with the idea of building a trail at the airport as part of a system that would connect Coonskin Park to downtown by way of Northgate Business Park and Spring Hill Cemetery.When they approached Atkinson last summer, he was enthusiastic about the project and offered the use of heavy equipment from Cast & Baker, the contractor that has been doing construction at the airport. The Airport Authority board approved the concept in August and told their lawyer to work out the legal details

From Early Bird Drilling at Haddad Park (news photos)

From Early Bird Blog: Massey gives protesters what they want BECKLEY, W.Va. — Raleigh County Circuit Judge John A. Hutchison might not see the protesters in his courtroom again, but environmental activists seem unlikely to halt their peaceful actions against Massey Energy anytime soon. As the Gazette reported earlier, Hutchison agreed yesterday morning to consolidate Massey's court actions against the protesters and ship the cases over to his fellow Raleigh Circuit Judge, Robert A. Burnside. But first, Hutchison extended his previous temporary restraining order for a couple more weeks.

From Early Bird Blog: Tax the power lines? Governor Joe Manchin has finally unveiled his proposed power line tax legislation. The proposal, promised months ago, was introduced on Monday at the governor's request in both houses, as SB 505 and HB 3000. But oh, are the power companies being coy about where they will stand on the bills. I asked Jeri Matheney at American Electric Power where her company (promoter of the PATH project) could come down. She e-mailed me back: *We will not oppose the Governor's transmission line tax bill.*

From Early Bird Blog: Ooops! Another coal-ash spill This one happened back home — right across the Potomac River from Piedmont, W.Va., at the former Westvaco paper mill in Luke, Md. (pictured above). The Associated Press reports that about 4,000 gallons of fly-ash from the mill's (it's now owned by NewPage Corp.) on-site power plant spilled into the river. The Maryland Department of the Environment explained:

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

From Early Bird AEP says rate hike driven by coal Utility says proposed $442 million increase is to cover costs, not profit. CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Coal has kept the state's economy cooking during the nation's economic recession but Appalachian Power customers are about to get burned by a side effect: higher electric bills. Appalachian Power on Monday filed a $442 million rate hike request with the state Public Service Commission. "This is driven by the cost of coal," Appalachian spokeswoman Jeri Matheney said. "On balance coal is a good thing for West Virginia," she said. "Coal provides jobs and keeps our economy going. When coal is doing well, it also brings in tax revenue. It makes us one of the few states in the nation with a budget surplus. But when coal prices go up, it has an effect on electricity prices. That's hard on all of us."

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

From Early Bird Md. coal ash spills into W.Va. waterway In the wake of a huge coal ash spill in December, now West Virginia is dealing with a spill of its own, although much smaller. The spill happened Sunday night outside of Keyser in the small town of Piedmont. The Maryland Department of the Environment is overseeing clean-up efforts in the North Potomac River. The MDE says about 4,000 gallons of coal ash slurry spilled from a pipeline when a small hole formed Sunday night. Officials recognized the hole on Monday morning. MDE says the pipe was taken out of service while crews continue to clean up the waste. However, the ash slurry is still traveling from Maryland to the mountain state in two unaffected pipelines. The pipe carries the coal ash slurry produced from New Page Corporation, a paper mill in Maryland, to an ash lagoon in West Virginia. The coal ash lagoon in West Virginia is regulated by MDE through a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit. The lagoon normally discharges directly into the river after treatment, according to the MDE.

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

From Early Bird Editorial: Use 'Stimulus' To Make Repairs The $1.5 billion Ohio is expected to receive through the federal "stimulus" program sounds like a lot of money. It isn't, in the context of the state's needs. State officials need to spend it wisely - and that doesn't mean on hundreds of projects to construct new roads, bridges, etc. State government had been unable to find enough money to cover repairs to existing roads and bridges, even before the "stimulus" money surfaced. Prudence dictates that most of the "stimulus" money be used to make repairs - not to build new roads and bridges that will require expensive maintenance in the future

From Early Bird Editorial: Ethanol Idea Fails Common-Sense Test Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has provided an excellent example of why government should simply stay out of telling the private sector how to conduct business. On Monday, Vilsack suggested that the Environmental Protection Agency should increase the amount of ethanol that refiners can blend with petroleum-based gasoline. The limit now is 10 percent; Vilsack wants 15 percent. That would be excellent news for farmers, of course. They would be able to sell lots more corn to ethanol refiners. Because they would be diverting more corn to ethanol, prices for food would increase (more). But automobile and small engine manufacturers don't like the idea. They point out that it is entirely possible that fuel made of 15 percent ethanol could harm some engines.

ASSOCIATED PRESS - W. Va.

From Early Bird Graves lose out to mining CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Walter Young can't find his great-grandmother's grave. The coal company that had it moved doesn't know where the remains ended up. "It always looked like a safe, good place nobody would bother," the 63-year-old retiree said of the cemetery along Pigeon Creek where his relative, Martha Curry, was buried. "It was up on a hill." But that hill was in West Virginia's southern coalfields, and over the years, it changed hands. The land around and under the cemetery passed from one coal company to another as mines grew up around it. Now, no one is sure where Young's great-grandmother was ultimately laid to rest.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

From Early Bird County emphasizes recycling's savings The sale of used paper, cans and bottles saved Baltimore County taxpayers $5 million last year, and that money came from residents recycling only a quarter of the available items. The other 75 percent - and its earnings potential - was tossed into the trash, said county officials, who this week launched "Recycle: Don't throw tax dollars away," a campaign promoting fiscally responsible handling of trash. About 4 percent of the trash generated last year was recycled and sold for about $120 a ton, officials said. Mary Gail Hare

From Early Bird Commentary: Rushing into energy legislation could produce nasty shock Maryland is doing it again: rushing into politically fashionable energy legislation that could end up generating a nasty shock. Policymakers are talking about canceling kilowatt shopping even for commercial and industrial customers. They're setting up everybody to pay for expensive, new generation plants. What, exactly, is the hurry, except to appear to be doing "something" about high electricity prices? Re-regulation would force utilities to build the new power plants that deregulation was supposed to bring but didn't. But the recession, unfortunately, has postponed the date when new generation will be needed to avoid blackouts.

From Early Bird Blog: Pardon my ash Who says Maryland isn't America in miniature? About 4,000 gallons of coal ash slurry from a pulp and paper mill in Allegany County leaked into the North Branch of the Potomac River on Sunday night, according to the Maryland Department of the Environment. As spills go, the leak at Luke was tiny compared to the 1.1 billion gallons of coal ash sludge that flooded out of a manmade lake in Kingston, Tenn., in December, damaging homes, fouling two rivers and killing fish. But it's a reminder of how ubiquitous is this waste from burning coal to produce power -- and how troublesome.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Humans worsen 'rising tide of ocean trash' OCEAN CITY -- Next time you toss that cigarette butt out the window, consider it probably will make its way to a storm drains.From there, to rivers and bays, to the

Atlantic Ocean, where a sea creature could mistake it for lunch. The message? Trash travels. And while smoking-related garbage tops the list, it's only one category of many for an outreach group that collected 6.8 million pounds of debris from oceans, rivers and lakes -- all from a single day of pickup last September. What began in 1986 with a single Texas woman in her own town has become the International Coastal Cleanup, a day orchestrated by the environmental advocacy group, Ocean Conservancy. Last year, nearly 400,000 volunteers in 100 countries participated at 6,500 sites. Throughout the years they've taken 123 million pounds of rubbish out of waterways, from coffee stirrers to diapers to appliances.

From Early Bird After veto, OC revisits windmills OCEAN CITY -- Following the mayor's veto, Town Council members will create a new ordinance outlining residential wind turbine use that would allow for exceptions to restrictive zoning requirements.In his first-ever veto, Mayor Rick Meehan rejected the bill last week. He said he didn't like the wording that prevented homeowners from appealing the law's setback restrictions with the Board of Zoning Appeals. The law specifically would not have allowed pole-mounted turbines at the water's edge of bayfront properties. "We probably are maybe eliminating some properties that are very good sites for windmills because there's no flexibility in their ability to get a variance or some relief from defined setbacks, even though they may be in unique circumstances," Meehan said. "I don't want to pass an ordinance that has no practical use."

From Early Bird Westside park closer to reality SALISBURY -- Wicomico County officials have reached a deal to buy 100 acres near Hebron for a giant park, a purchase that could be finalized in April. The agreement, contingent on the authorization of the County Council, comes after two years in which County Executive Rick M. Pollitt Jr. tried unsuccessfully to secure land for a Westside park. Using state funds specifically earmarked for park purchases, the county would pay landowner Keith Coffin $1 million, or $10,000 per acre, for a sizable chunk of his grassy fields at Levin Dashiell Road.The Westside park is designed to include ballfields and sports courts. It would be similar in size to WinterPlace Park off Route 50 in Salisbury. County planners say the park is needed because the Westside is the county's fastest-growing area, and county recreation plans call for locating a large park there.

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

From Early Bird Fly ash spills into Potomac River LUKE — Cleanup of 4,000 gallons of fly ash sludge that spilled into the Potomac River from a coal-burning power plant pipeline at the NewPage paper mill Sunday was completed within hours of the discovery of the leak, according to the NewPage public relations manager at Luke. “The majority of the ash did not go into the river. The residual ash, a nonhazardous material, was removed from the river bank by Luke mill employees Monday within hours of the incident,” said Patsy Koontz. Maryland Department of the Environment spokeswoman Dawn Stoltzfus said the spill began at about 8 a.m. and continued until 6 a.m. Monday, when it was detected by NewPage employees during a daily inspection. The damaged pipeline that crosses the river was taken out of service after a “dime-sized” hole was seen in the pipeline. Two other parallel pipelines continue to carry ash slurry from the mill’s coal-burning power plant to an ash storage lagoon some 800 feet away in Mineral County, W.Va.

CARROLL COUNTY TIMES

From Early Bird Report: Smart growth failing ANNAPOLIS — Maryland’s policies for concentrating growth and avoiding sprawl aren’t working, according to a report released Tuesday.Environment Maryland, an environmental advocacy group, released its report “Not So Smart: Land Consumption in Maryland After a Decade of ‘Smart Growth,’” which looked at acres of commercial and residential development per new resident. Although the amount of growth in Carroll has leveled off, the county still ranked in the top 10 for acres of new residential and commercial development since the beginning of 1998, according to the report. Carroll was No. 10 with 10,724 acres developed, or 3.7 percent of the county’s land area. Between 1998 and 2007, Carroll had 0.43 acres of commercial and residential development per new resident, according to the report. Since 1998, a year after Smart Growth laws were passed in Maryland, more than 175,000 acres have been used for residential or commercial development, according to the report. “The point is that the approach we’ve been trying hasn’t worked. We need to take a new approach,” said Brad Heavner, state director for Environment Maryland and one of the report’s authors.

From Early Bird Commentary: Sustainability in spiritualitySustainability has become quite a buzzword these days, and rightly so. Sustainability is important. A sustainable economic system would have prevented the financial mess we now find ourselves in. Ecological sustainability would mean that neither resource depletion nor pollution would be problems, unlike today. And sustainable communities are communities that support all their members, enabling them to live secure, balanced and productive lives together with their neighbors. Somewhat belatedly, steps are being taken in all of these directions, and that is good. But it seems to me that an important piece is missing.

From Early Bird Commentary: Mountain of money wasted This is a story of the waste of $8 billion, tons of dangerous, radioactive waste and the game of power politics, the kind that President Obama said he would abolish even as he plays with the best of them. When the world ushered in nuclear power, few gave thought to what would be done with the tons of toxic waste it would generate. The United States, with 104 commercial nuclear power plants, has 56,600 metric tons of waste, plus defense-related waste, enough to cover a football field to a depth of 10 feet. In 25 years, U.S.-generated waste is expected to reach 119,000 metric tons. In 1978, the Department of Energy began studying the possibility of storing the spent fuel in underground caverns at Yucca Mountain in the Nevada desert, owned by the federal government, instead of having radioactive waste scattered at 121 temporary sites around the country.

HAGERSTOWN HERALD MAIIL

From Early Bird Wildfire claims 30 acres of woods in Hedgesville (Monday) HEDGESVILLE, W.Va. — Fire scorched about 30 acres of woods in a steep terrain off Allensville Road on Monday afternoon and night in what a state Division of Forestry official said was one of the worst woods fires in recent history in the Eastern Panhandle. The fire broke out along Rejoice Lane, which is near the North Mountain Landfill north of Hedgesville.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

From Early Bird Potomac River mostly spared from Md. fly ash spill HAGERSTOWN, Md. (AP) — A 4,000-gallon spill of potentially toxic coal ash sludge mostly missed the Potomac River and doesn't appear to have done much harm, a Maryland environmental official said Tuesday. "Any spill of coal ash is very serious, but it does seem like it will be of relatively limited impact, that it was a minor leak," said Dawn Stoltzfus, a spokeswoman for the Maryland Department of the Environment. She said papermaker NewPage Corp., which owns the leaky pipeline over the river's North Branch, must tell state regulators within five days how it plans to prevent future spills. The agency is considering fining the company, Stoltzfus said. Patricia R. Koontz, a spokeswoman for Miamisburg, Ohio-based NewPage, said in an e-mail to The Associated Press that the company will improve how it maintains ash pipelines. Stoltzfus said the bulk of the sludge spilled onto the West Virginia river bank across from NewPage's mill in Luke, about 210 miles upstream from Washington. Workers were expected to finish cleaning the stream bank Tuesday, Stoltzfus said. She said a minor amount of sludge caused discoloration in the river about 30 feet downstream, with no sign of harm to any fish. The spill also was not expected to taint any drinking water supplies.

SOMERSET HERALD

Forum addresses sea level rise

WESTOVER -- State employees and wildlife experts painted an eerie picture of what could happen on the Shore in the next century or so if sea levels rise as expected. About 10 county residents attended The Sea Level Rise Workshop, hosted by the Somerset County Department of Technical and Community Services, at Somerset Intermediate School on Saturday morning. The workshop is the first of several public sessions the county plans to host to keep the public informed and gather comments, said Jack Willing Jr., the county's planning director. The next move is for the county to adjust or revise its zoning ordinance and comprehensive plan to account for a rise in the sea level, said a county official. The process is expected to take a year. The last review of the county comprehensive plan was in 1996. The session follows a $30,000 study, bankrolled by the state, compiled by a

consulting company. The study predicted a 1-foot rise in the Somerset County sea level in the next 100 years. A report released by the Maryland Commission on Climate Change in August predicted a 4-foot rise. If the state's scenario materializes, some of the county's schools, hospital and wastewater treatment plants would be lost, Willing said. The rate of increase in the state sea level rise is almost double the global average rate according to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The agency reported that the sea level has risen about 1 foot in the Chesapeake Bay over the last century.

MARYLAND GAZETTE

County may be too wealthy for state help with pipes
The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission won't know until late this week whether state environmental officials will recommend it for federal stimulus money to shore up its drinking water pipes that ruptured at a record rate last year. The problem for the bicounty utility is that state officials are unsure whether the WSSC qualifies for the federal grants because the money is being distributed under the Environmental Protection Agency's clean water and drinking water quality programs, which traditionally allow grants and no-interest loans only to "disadvantaged" communities. Montgomery and Prince George's counties might be deemed too wealthy. Maryland Department of Environment spokeswoman Dawn Stoltzfus said the WSSC, if approved, could qualify for loans at 1 percent interest under terms of the stimulus program.

County pollution program stalls The state will not give Anne Arundel County more money to help residents upgrade failing septic systems until the county doles out $1.3 million remaining from funds it got two years ago, according to a letter obtained by Capital Gazette Newspapers. The Bay Restoration Fund money helps combat pollution from septic systems, but the county has been unable to give away nearly half of it. And the longer it goes unspent, the more pollution seeps into the Chesapeake Bay.

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL

Editorial: Aquaculture part of a better approach to restoring oysters Albert Einstein supposedly defined insanity as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." This is a pretty good summary of the state's policy on restoring oysters to the Chesapeake Bay. The state has been doggedly trying to revive populations of the disease-enfeebled native oysters to accomplish two goals: To have the oysters - perhaps the greatest natural filter known to man - improve the bay's water quality. To maintain some remnant of the traditional oyster fishery.Unfortunately, these goals conflict. So far the state's dogged efforts to rebuild and reseed oyster reefs have merely put some oysters in the bay, so that the bulk of the surviving ones can be removed again by watermen. The oyster population isn't growing, water quality isn't improving and the fishery, at best, is on life-support.

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT

From Early Bird Volunteers across globe pick up tons of marine debris The list reads like the inventory at a dump site: 17,607 cigarette butts, 13,499 plastic bottles, 15,231 food wrappers, 437 spent shotgun shells, 140 junk appliances, 49 syringes, 213 used condoms. The dump site in this case, however, was Virginia's beaches and waterways. And the numbers were but a fraction of what volunteers collected in one day last September as part of the International Coastal Cleanup. According to data released Tuesday, more than 254,000 pounds of marine debris

were recovered along Virginia waters on that single day last year, the fourth highest amount in the nation. North Carolina ranked second, with 528,026 pounds of retrieved garbage, while California again was No. 1, with 1.6 million pounds of trash. Florida was third. "Marine debris is choking our oceans, and choking our lakes, and choking our rivers - and it's totally preventable," said Vikki Spruill, president and CEO of Ocean Conservancy, an environmental group that sponsors the cleanup and compiled a mountain of data for its 2008 report.

RICHMOND TIMES DISPATCH

From Early Bird Part of James River called clean by officials The James River is now clean enough for swimming in a 13-mile stretch that includes the popular Pony Pasture Rapids in South Richmond. State environmental officials revealed the good news yesterday during a meeting to discuss a planned cleanup of a still-polluted part of the James. Water tests during the past several years showed that fecal bacteria had dropped to acceptable levels from near the Chesterfield County-Powhatan County line to the Boulevard Bridge in Richmond. "The water got cleaner," said Mark Alling, an aquatic biologist with the state Department of Environmental Quality. The reason for the improvement is unclear. Possibilities include farmers putting up fences to keep cattle out of streams and people increasingly picking up after their dogs. Parts of the now-clean stretch had been listed as polluted for more than a decade. A 33-mile stretch, from the Boulevard Bridge to Hopewell, remains on the state's dirty-water list. Reducing bacteria levels there and in several tributaries could take seven years or more and cost hundreds of millions of dollars, state officials said.

From Early Bird LEED green-building program being revised Anational green-building program is being revised to put more emphasis on using energy wisely and fighting climate change. The changes are being made in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program, or LEED. It is administered by the U.S. Green Building Council, a Washington-based nonprofit group. The LEED program, which builders and property owners enter into voluntarily, certifies that a building is constructed in ways that help the environment -- by saving energy, for example. Changes in the portion of the program that applies to commercial buildings, such as stores, offices hotels and schools, will be effective in late April, said Taryn Holowka, a spokeswoman for the building council. This is the first major revision in the program since 2000. Among other changes, the online process of getting LEED certification will be streamlined. "We want to be more user-friendly, but we still want to maintain the rigor of LEED," Holowka said.

PETERSBURG PROGRESS-INDEX

From Early Bird Breathe easy HOPEWELL — How clean or dirty is Hopewell's air? It depends on who you ask and the study they cite. An environmental group and the state Department of Environmental Quality have come up with different answers to the question of Hopewell's air quality.A recent report released by the Virginia DEQ suggested that the levels of toxic chemicals in Hopewell's air give no reason for health concerns. But members of the local citizens group Hopewell Clean Air Project challenge the report's conclusion. Jim Gould, the group's spokesman, said the state findings are incomplete. "During our own testing, we have found 10 chemicals in Hopewell's air that the DEQ did not even attempt to identify in their study," he said. Even though DEQ officials reject the criticism, DEQ director David Paylor stated that the test results were not conclusive and required more research. "Our initial results show that levels of the chemicals acrolein and formaldehyde require a more thorough look," Paylor said in a press release. First calls for an extensive clean air study date back to 1996, the year of the first National Air Toxic Assessment in Hopewell. This assessment was repeated in 1999. "In both of them, it was found that the air in the Hopewell-Colonial Heights area deals with high amounts of cancer-causing agents," said Gould, who works for the Sierra Club.

HAMPTON ROADS DAILY PRESS

From Early Bird Plum Tree Island yields fewer munitions than expected POQUOSON - A two-month sweep of Plum Tree Island to locate military ordnance left over from the island's long-ago days as a target range has yielded fewer explosives than originally expected. At a Tuesday morning meeting, about 15 staffers from various local, state and federal agencies met at Poquoson City Hall to discuss progress on the multiyear Army Corps of Engineers

project to clear the island of old munitions. Private contractor Shaw Environmental Inc. is winding down this year's work on the island in advance of the arrival of migratory shore birds for nesting season. Alex Smith, Shaw Environmental's project coordinator, said the most common discovery, by far, has been that of jet-assisted take-off bottles, devices used to give an extra boost to overloaded aircraft or those taking off from short runways. More than 200 of the devices have been found in sweeps of shoreline areas, Smith said. "We have not found any live rockets or bombs in the shoreline," Smith told meeting participants.

DANVILLE REGISTER BEE

From Early Bird Group focuses on solar energy resources Members of OPEC Not! learned about "green roofs" Monday night, but no one is going to be rushing out to buy solar panels. Fred Wydner, agricultural development director for Pittsylvania County, addressed the pros and cons of harvesting the sun through solar panels during the presentation at the Regional Center for Advanced Technology and Training, but the conclusion was that the "green roofs" are still too expensive. "Right now, solar energy is costly, but we're so close," Wydner said. "We're right on the cusp, and a little more research will send it over the edge." He predicted that by 2012 to 2015, prices will come down and be more feasible for homeowners to use. "The cost of solar panels, including installation, is expected to drop 15 to 20 percent this year off of the 8 to 10 percent the price dropped last year," Wydner said. "There is also an oversupply of solar paneling available." Solar energy has a long history, he noted. The first solar technology was developed in the seventh century B.C. and the first solar collector built in 1767 by Horace de Saussure in Switzerland. The first commercial solar water heater was built by Clarence Kemp in Baltimore in 1891. There is a long list of pros for the use of solar energy, Wydner said. "Solar energy is extraordinarily clean, there is no pollution, and it is reliable and predictable," he said. "There is little maintenance, and you get free energy or get paid to harvest the sun. It is universally available and relatively aesthetically pleasing.

TASLEY EASTERN SHORE NEWS

New group, Tangier Pride, forms

TANGIER ISLAND -- What is the future of Tangier Island? Will its culture of hardy watermen thrive? Will part-time residents eventually be bigger portion of its population than year-rounders? Will the exit to mainland jobs continue, or will things eventually balance out? Will tourism become its primary industry?

Those are among the driving questions of a new organization, Tangier Pride. Its motto, "Our Island, Our Pride," emphasizes self-help within the community of about 550 residents but realizes that some challenges require outside involvement. The historic island, which dates to 1608, is particularly affected by regulations aimed at restoring the Chesapeake Bay.

MISCELLANEOUS

USA TODAY

From Early Bird EPA pushes to have companies track greenhouse gases In a move that paves the way for sweeping global-warming regulation, the Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday proposed requiring major U.S industries to measure their greenhouse gas emissions.The plan would affect large emitters of carbon dioxide (CO_2) and other greenhouse gases, such as oil refiners and automobile manufacturers, as well as makers of cement, aluminum, glass and paper. Power plants would be included, though they already must monitor how much carbon dioxide they release under the Clean Air Act. Under the rule, slated to be approved by year's end, companies would start tracking their emissions next year. "It's a very important step as we're moving forward to deal with climate change," says Dina Kruger, director of EPA's climate change division. The proposal complies with legislation passed by Congress in 2007. Yet David Doniger, a policy director for the Natural Resources Defense Council, says the EPA's initiative is "another sign" President Obama is intent on curbing global warming. The Bush

administration, he says, dragged its feet and withheld release of the proposed rule.

Urban areas see revival in housing construction A substantial amount of housing built this decade has shifted from open fields on the edges of suburbia to dense central cities and their nearby suburbs, a new government study suggests. The change suggests that a much-publicized urban renaissance in the past 15 years is more than an isolated trend, some urban analysts say. **INTERACTIVE MAP:** Housing going up in and near cities In more than half of the 50 most populous metropolitan areas, communities at the urban core have captured a significantly larger share of their region's new residential building permits since 2002 than in the first half of the 1990s, according to an analysis by the Environmental Protection Agency.

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

From Early Bird Coal sludge spills in Potomac branch KEYSER, W.Va., March 10 (UPI) -- A hole in a pipeline allowed 4,000 gallons of coal ash slurry to leak into a branch of the Potomac River along the Maryland-West VirginiaThe small spill on the North Branch of the Potomac occurred Sunday night in Piedmont, W.Va., near Keyser, W.Va., but wasn't spotted until Monday morning, West Virginia Public Radio reported Tuesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

INSIDE WASHINGTON: Probe finds health risks missed

-- The federal agency charged with protecting the public near toxic pollution sites often obscures or overlooks potential health hazards, uses inadequate analysis and fails to zero in on toxic culprits, congressional investigators and scientists say. A House investigative report says officials from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry "deny, delay, minimize, trivialize or ignore legitimate health concerns." Local communities have voiced frustration and confusion at findings by the agency that are challenged by outside scientists or are ambiguous about whether people living near industrial pollution or toxic dumps or breathe foul-smelling air have reason to worry. "Time and time again ATSDR appears to avoid clearly and directly confronting the most obvious toxic culprits that harm the health of local communities throughout the nation," said the report from the House Science and Technology investigations and oversight subcommittee.... _ Henry Cole, an environmental consultant and former senior scientist with the Environmental Protection Agency, said a four-year study into residents' complaints of foul odors and health ailments near an Ohio waste plant, Perma-fix of Dayton, used insufficient sampling to conclude in December that none of the 100 compounds exceeded safe levels.

Weary catfish farmers becoming landlords of algae

BELZONI, Miss. -- Pond scum was once an aquatic nuisance that Hall Barret III once hated to see in his catfish ponds. It just might become his next cash cow. After more than 30 years, Barret is giving up catfish and becoming a landlord of algae. And he's hoping his lease agreement with PetroSun BioFuels Inc. pays him huge royalties. The Scottsdale, Ariz.-based company wants to convert Barret's catfish ponds into an algae farm to produce alternative fuel, paying the owner of B&B Fish Farm thousands of dollars to baby-sit the new and unusual crop.

PROMISES, PROMISES: House fails to zero out carbon

WASHINGTON -- It was a bold promise: the House would "lead by example" to fight global warming, becoming the first legislative body in the world to zero out its carbon impact on the planet. Too bold, perhaps. The House quietly shelved the idea late last month, the word delivered in an e-mail to a couple of reporters. It turned out that the House's goal to become carbon neutral _ by removing as much carbon dioxide from the air as it releases _ could not be guaranteed. "No one can really tell you if you are truly carbon neutral, and the lack of that standard bothered us," said Jeff Ventura, a spokesman for the House's chief administrative officer. The House already had spent $89,000 to cancel out 24,000 tons of emissions that it couldn't erase by turning out lights, buying better light bulbs and making the Capitol's power plant burn more natural gas. The money bought "offsets," which fund projects that reduce greenhouse gases, such as capturing methane from farm manure ponds, that supposedly wouldn't have happened without the investment.

WALL ST. JOURNAL

New Gas: MIT Researchers Identify Potent New Greenhouse Gas

The unintended law of consequences strikes again. The 20-year old campaign to save the ozone layer has led to the widespread industrial use of a greenhouse gas 4,800 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

How did we get here? The 1987 Montreal Protocol was established to limit emissions of chlorofluorocarbons and other gases that deplete the ozone layer, the big worry in the 1980s. One of the targeted compounds was methyl bromide, which was widely used in fumigation to kill weevils and mice and other pests that threaten food supplies. Methyl bromide was phased out in 2005. Dow Chemical's AgroSciences unit came to the rescue, dusting off research on an old compound called sulfuryl fluoride, which has now become the standard fumigant. ...

The new findings may cause dismay for an industry that just finished complying with one environmental imperative only to find that the cure might have been worse than the disease. But at least the new findings come soon enough to make changes without too much pain, said Ron Prinn, director of MIT's Center for Global Change Science and a co-author on the new paper. It's "a new frontier for environmental science — to try to head off potential dangers as early as possible, rather than wait until it's a mature industry with lots of capital and jobs at stake," he said in a statement. And making the first switch from methly bromide to sulfuryl fluoride hasn't exactly kneecaped the fumigation business—the new compound is cheaper and more effective than what it replaced, meaning the environmental imperative also carried business benefits.

CHEMICAL & ENGINEERING NEWS

Terrorism Fears Top Public Information

IN EARLY FEBRUARY, the Chemical Safety & Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) was deep into planning for a March 19 public meeting in Institute, W.Va. The meeting would give the board and community a chance to discuss events surrounding a deadly accident at the Bayer CropScience facility in the Kanawha Valley. It would be similar to many meetings held in the past by the independent board and is part of CSB's process to investigate and find the root cause of chemical accidents. At that time, the board was about halfway through its investigation of the Aug. 28, 2008, fire and explosion at the Bayer plant that killed two workers and shut down the plant's production of Larvin, an insecticide. CSB had intended to hear community concerns, gather more information on the accident, and inform residents of the status of its investigation. However, Bayer attorneys contacted CSB Chairman John Bresland and set up a Feb. 12 conference at the board's Washington, D.C., headquarters. There, they warned CSB not to reveal details of the accident or the facility's layout at the community meeting. "This is where it gets a little strange," Bresland tells C&EN. To justify their request, Bayer attorneys cited the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002, an antiterrorism law that requires companies with plants on waterways to develop security plans to minimize the threat of a terrorist attack. Part of the plans can be designated as "sensitive security information" that can be disseminated only on a "need-to-know basis." Enforcement of the act is overseen by the Coast Guard and covers some 3,200 facilities, including 320 chemical and petrochemical facilities. Among those facilities is the Bayer plant.