EPA REGION III

<>Office of Public Affairs

<><PM Headlines

Tuesday, March 13, 2012

*** PM HOT LIST***

Grants to help localities clean Bay

BALTIMORE-SUN Local government officials stressing out about the costs of cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay are being offered a little help - and a little cash - to take steps needed to control polluted runoff from their streets and parking lots.Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation announced they're offering local officials throughout the bay region $4 million in grants and technical assistance for designing and installing "green infrastructure." The "Local Government Green Infrastructure Initiative," as it's called, will let local officials compete for grants of up to $750,000 each on projects that both green their communities and help improve water quality in streams, rivers and the bay. Road maintenance, park enhancements and public facilities renovations would qualify.Some Maryland counties and Baltimore city project having to spend hundreds of millions of dollars each on storm drain retrofits and other costly pollution control projects to comply with the baywide "pollution diet" imposed by EPA. Officials says these grants are meant to encourage local officials to make those investments by demonstrating that the projects have other benefits for their communities besides clean water.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation says Maryland restoration plan may not get the job done

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.) BALTIMORE — The Chesapeake Bay Foundation says Maryland's bay restoration strategy is underfunded and may not get the job done as promised.The foundation said Tuesday that it has raised the concerns in formal comments submitted on the second phase of the state's restoration strategy. The six states in the bay watershed are being required by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to submit detailed bay restoration plans.The foundation says Maryland is more than halfway toward meeting its goals, but state lawmakers must provide dedicated funding for upgrading sewage treatment plants and stormwater systems. Policies also must be changed to manage pollution from sprawl development.

Watershed assessment project in Elk, Mon rivers seeks feedback

WOWKTV.COM A pilot project to make map-based information about watershed health and threats available online at a high level of detail has reached a milestone.Watershed groups, county planners and others looking for the highest conservation or restoration priorities will be helped by the West Virginia Watershed Assessment Pilot Project, a project of the Nature Conservancy and the state Department of Environmental Protection under funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Nature Conservancy is ready to share its progress over the past year with stakeholders in the Elk and Monongahela watersheds. "The goal for these workshops is to present what we are proposing as an interactive web tool and as a report and getting feedback about what works for (stakeholders), what they would like to see, what doesn't working for them," said Ruth Thornton, the Nature Conservancy's conservation information manager.

Huntington plan to address stormwater violations

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL HUNTINGTON, W.Va. (AP) - Huntington officials have developed a plan to address the city's stormwater violations and reduce a $156,000 fine proposed by federal regulators. Media outlets report that City Council approved the plan Monday. It will be presented to the Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday. The EPA proposed the fine last October. The agency said the city hasn't adequately addressed several problems, including runoff from construction sites and pollution from municipal operations. The city's plan includes rain gardens, rain barrels and the planting of more trees. City officials say the EPA has agreed to reduce the fine if the city moves forward on the initiatives.

How much can the public know about chemical facilities? A lot

POCONO RECORD The building at the corner of Arch and 17th streets in Philadelphia looks like an average library, filled with polished wooden shelves groaning under the strain of books, reports and documents.The information contained in these reports is far from average, however. The room is the Environmental Protection Agency's Federal Reading Room, the only one of its kind in Pennsylvania. Its shelves are filled with risk management plans from hazardous

DIM0078337

chemical facilities.Want to peek at these reports? Make an appointment and have your photo identification ready — that's all it takes to get inside. But, as both industry representatives and advocacy groups agree, there's nothing wrong with disclosing this information to the public.

Save the James With 'River Hero Homes'

RICHMOND.COM James River Association's new River Hero Homes program can help homeowners take steps to improve water quality and maybe save money in the process. The new certification initiative recognizes and educates homeowners throughout Virginia's watershed who are attempting to reduce the amount of stormwater and pollution leaving their property to improve water quality. River Hero Homes gives homeowners across the watershed easy-to-understand plans on how they can reduce stormwater runoff from their property. With steps like picking up after pets, reducing fertilizer and installing rain barrels, people can have a River Hero Home and help the environment. To get started, homeowners can visit JRA's free, online Runoff Calculator to determine how much runoff and pollution is leaving their home annually. After completing the calculator, users can review results and decide a pollution-reduction project that best fits the homeowner's needs. Projects range from installing rain barrels to planting a rain garden.

Watershed assessment project in Elk, Mon rivers seeks feedback

WOWKTV.COM A pilot project to make map-based information about watershed health and threats available online at a high level of detail has reached a milestone. Watershed groups, county planners and others looking for the highest conservation or restoration priorities will be helped by the West Virginia Watershed Assessment Pilot Project, a project of the Nature Conservancy and the state Department of Environmental Protection under funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Nature Conservancy is ready to share its progress over the past year with stakeholders in the Elk and Monongahela watersheds. "The goal for these workshops is to present what we are proposing as an interactive web tool and as a report and getting feedback about what works for (stakeholders), what they would like to see, what doesn't working for them," said Ruth Thornton, the Nature Conservancy's conservation information manager.

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Goodlatte says EPA stormwater measures may cost city

LYNCHBURG NEWS AND ADVANCEÀ Congressman Bob Goodlatte introduced legislation to stop a federal push to introduce aggressive new stormwater quality measures. On Monday, during a stop in Lynchburg, Goodlatte, R-6th, said his bill would "halt this EPA power grab" and restore authority to the states where it belongs. "This has really been federal bureaucracy run wild without any check against it," he said of the recent action taken by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "This legislation is about providing a check against what they're trying to do." Goodlatte, whose district includes Lynchburg, has been a vocal critic of the EPA's new stormwater program and its plan to impose harsher penalties on non-complaint localities. The requirements, aimed at cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, led the city to create a new stormwater management fee, effective July 1. The fee will be levied against all developed city properties. Exact rates have not yet been set. City Council has not been able to agree on how much to charge. Under the rate proposed by staff, first-year fee revenues would reach $2.6 million. Councilman Turner Perrow — a critic of the EPA who testified before a Congressional subcommittee about his concerns last November — said revenues eventually may need to reach $15 million or more. Goodlatte said the EPA is expanding its authority in ways not authorized by the law. By threatening to take action against areas that do not meet their standards, he said the agency is usurping the authority Congress intended to rest with the states. "We need to halt this EPA power grab and do it the right way," he said. "… The states have the authority here and ought to be allowed to move forward in a fashion that makes sense." States in the bay watershed are not getting credit for the strides made over the past 25 years, including reducing sediment pollution by more than 50 percent and phosphorous and nitrogen pollution by more than 40 percent, Goodlatte said.

Commentary: EPA rule will cost jobs -- We need to fight coal-plant pollution, but not like this

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTEÀ Last December, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued a final rule intended to reduce electric utility emissions of mercury and other air toxics. The EPA projected that less than 5,000 megawatts of older coal-fueled generating plants would be retired as a result of its Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule. The United Mine Workers of America and other unions met with EPA officials repeatedly over the course of the rulemaking to share our analysis of the rule's potential impacts and to recommend several improvements to it. Our study suggested that up to 56,000 megawatts of electric generating capacity at smaller and older plants could be "at risk" of premature closure. We told EPA that as many as 54,000 direct jobs were at risk in the utility, mining and rail transport sectors, in addition to 200,000 jobs in related industries and communities impacted by plant closures. We also made it clear that we supported the rule's basic objective of reducing mercury and other harmful emissions. Our principal concerns were the inadequate time provided for compliance and the feasibility of meeting some of the proposed emission limits with different types of coal. But the EPA ignored our concerns. Instead, the agency created a rule that not only will cause far more negative effects on the utility and coal industries than it is willing to admit; the rule will also make it next to impossible for new coal-fired power plants to be built based on current technologies. This is bad policy and has the potential for serious repercussions for our nation's energy security. We are now seeing the tip of the job loss iceberg that will result from this rule. FirstEnergy, American Electric Power and other utilities have announced the closures of several plants in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, directly affecting hundreds of plant workers and thousands of jobs in surrounding communities. Some of these plants were scheduled to be closed anyway -- though not as quickly -- but many were not.

Editorial: Shaky ground: Quakes suggest caution for deep disposal wells

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTEÀ The debate over natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania -- an economic boon that must be weighed against environmental impact -- has been literally shaken up by events in neighboring Ohio, reminding everyone that water quality is not the only issue for concern. In December, a dozen minor earthquakes occurred near a 9,184-foot deep well drilled to dispose of wastewater from the drilling process. Experts from Columbia University believed the Northstar No. 1 disposal well owned by D&L Energy, five miles from Youngstown, was linked to the quakes. As a result, officials in Ohio shut it down along with four other wells nearby pending an investigation. That caution was vindicated last week with the release of a preliminary report by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. While D&L said the findings were premature in the absence of new testing, the ODNC relied on seismic monitors to determine that the earthquakes were linked to "coincidental events," including the presence of a previously unknown geologic fault line. It is important to differentiate between drilling for natural gas and drilling a deep

injection well to dispose of wastewater from the fracking process (water which, in this case, came from Pennsylvania). It is also worth remembering that these quakes -- rated between 2.7 and 4.0 for severity -- caused no serious damage. This unusual series of events is therefore not an argument to cease the search for gas in the Marcellus Shale; it is instead a reminder that special caution is called for when injection wells are being contemplated at exceptional depths. If a fault can go undetected in Ohio, so can it in Pennsylvania. Common sense suggests that proximity to population centers should be an important factor.This state can learn from Ohio, although Pennsylvania leaves regulation of disposal wells to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency instead of a state agency. Pennsylvania has six injection wells, another two approved but are under appeal and another being considered in Venango County. There is no need for anyone to quake in their boots, but caution is advised.

Goodlatte visits to oppose EPA mandates

STAUNTON NEWS LEADER VERONA — U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-6th, organized a stakeholders' roundtable on the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Cleanup plan at the Augusta County Government Center on Monday afternoon. The hour and a half meeting ranged from suggestions to improve the EPA plan, to criticism of the plan, to ways to prevent the EPA from continuing to implement the plan. "Every community in Virginia is going to be facing a much higher burden than competing states like North Carolina (that aren't in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed," Goodlatte told the group of agriculture industry representatives and state and local government officials. One purpose of the meeting was to rally support for the Chesapeake Bay Reauthorization and Improvement Act, which Goodlatte introduced to the House Agriculture Committee last week. Goodlatte hopes to hold hearings on the bill soon, he said. "We have a lot of work to do" to pass the bill, Goodlatte said, but the bill "has got to be pursued along with other avenues such as cutting off funding to the EPA and the lawsuits" that have been filed against the EPA by the American Farm Bureau and others. Some environmental groups, notably the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, have criticized the bill as an attempt to "undermine the pollution limits currently in place, derail clean-up efforts and undercut the federal government's role in making sure all Americans have access to clean, swimmable, fishable waters."

Talbot commission, council want more flexibility in WIP

EASTON STAR DEMOCRAT EASTON -- The Talbot County Planning Commission and Talbot County Council concur that the best action plan for the state's Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) is for the county to have flexibility to pursue the best and most cost effective pollution reduction methods. The plan is a document of strategies on how each jurisdiction in the 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed will meet the federally mandated Bay pollution diet. That diet is a series of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) that prescribe how much pollution a body of water can handle and still meet water quality levels. Each jurisdiction, including Maryland, submitted WIPs during phase one, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved in late 2011. Phase two involves local governments, which also must develop detailed strategies on how to meet local pollution load requirements. At its March 7 meeting, the Talbot County Planning Commission discussed recommendations to forward to the state. "I just think they need to look at a cost benefit study," said Commissioner Michael Sullivan. "It's somewhere in the $60 to $80 million range to basically take care of a (37,000 pound) problem for nitrogen and 380,000 pound problem coming from agriculture. The number that was thrown out at the meeting last week was $66 million to remove 37,000 pounds. I would rather give the $66 million to farmers and solve the 380,000-pound problem and we'll deal with the 37,000 later. That is how I look at the whole thing."

Obama to visit Maryland, discuss energy

BALTIMORE SUN President Barack Obama will visit Largo on Thursday to give an address on American energy, White House officials said Monday. The address comes at a critical time, when economists say rising gasoline prices are dragging on the nation's economic recovery. Polls indicate rising prices at the pump are also hurting Obama's approval rating as he heads into this year's election.Details of the event, including where the president will speak, were not immediately available. Nearly five in 10 voters gave Obama negative marks on energy, according to a *Washington Post*-ABC News poll released Monday. Republican presidential candidates Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum have both tried to cast the higher prices as a result of the administration's policies. Not including trips to Joint Base Andrews in Prince George's County, where he regularly boards Air Force One, Obama last visited Maryland in January when he spoke in Cambridge to the House Democratic issues conference. Before that he addressed students and officials at the University of Maryland during the debt limit debate in July.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

From Early Bird Pa. Turnpike looks at much higher non-E-ZPass rates Better get that E-ZPass. The Pennsylvania Turnpike's plan for all-electronic tolling envisions a 76 percent surcharge for motorists who don't use E-ZPass devices. That means a trip across Pennsylvania from Ohio to New Jersey that costs $30.17 with E-ZPass would cost $53.10 for a driver who would be billed by mail. The turnpike is moving to do away with all toll booths and instead charge drivers as they pass at highway speed under overhead gantries equipped with electronic readers and cameras. **...** In addition, turnpike officials say, all-electronic tolling would improve safety, reduce travel time, reduce air **pollution**, and improve efficiency.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

From Early Bird Editorial: Shaky ground: Quakes suggest caution for deep disposal wells The debate over natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania -- an economic boon that must be weighed against environmental impact -- has been literally shaken up by events in neighboring Ohio, reminding everyone that water quality is not the only issue for concern. In December, a dozen minor earthquakes occurred near a 9,184-foot deep well drilled to dispose of wastewater from the drilling process. Experts from Columbia University believed the Northstar No. 1 disposal well owned by D&L Energy, five miles from Youngstown, was linked to the quakes. As a result, officials in Ohio shut it down along with four other wells nearby pending an investigation. That caution was vindicated last week with the release of a preliminary report by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. While D&L said the findings were premature in the absence of new testing, the ODNC relied on seismic monitors to determine that the earthquakes were linked to "coincidental events," including the presence of a previously unknown geologic fault line. It is important to differentiate between

drilling for natural gas and drilling a deep injection well to dispose of wastewater from the fracking process (water which, in this case, came from Pennsylvania). It is also worth remembering that these quakes -- rated between 2.7 and 4.0 for severity -- caused no serious damage. This unusual series of events is therefore not an argument to cease the search for gas in the Marcellus Shale; it is instead a reminder that special caution is called for when injection wells are being contemplated at exceptional depths. If a fault can go undetected in Ohio, so can it in Pennsylvania. Common sense suggests that proximity to population centers should be an important factor.This state can learn from Ohio, although Pennsylvania leaves regulation of disposal wells to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency instead of a state agency. Pennsylvania has six injection wells, another two approved but are under appeal and another being considered in Venango County. There is no need for anyone to quake in their boots, but caution is advised.

From Early Bird Commentary: EPA rule will cost jobs -- We need to fight coal-plant pollution, but not like this Last December, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued a final rule intended to reduce electric utility emissions of mercury and other air toxics. The EPA projected that less than 5,000 megawatts of older coal-fueled generating plants would be retired as a result of its Mercury and Air Toxics Standards rule. The United Mine Workers of America and other unions met with EPA officials repeatedly over the course of the rulemaking to share our analysis of the rule's potential impacts and to recommend several improvements to it. Our study suggested that up to 56,000 megawatts of electric generating capacity at smaller and older plants could be "at risk" of premature closure. We told EPA that as many as 54,000 direct jobs were at risk in the utility, mining and rail transport sectors, in addition to 200,000 jobs in related industries and communities impacted by plant closures. We also made it clear that we supported the rule's basic objective of reducing mercury and other harmful emissions. Our principal concerns were the inadequate time provided for compliance and the feasibility of meeting some of the proposed emission limits with different types of coal. But the EPA ignored our concerns. Instead, the agency created a rule that not only will cause far more negative effects on the utility and coal industries than it is willing to admit; the rule will also make it next to impossible for new coal-fired power plants to be built based on current technologies. This is bad policy and has the potential for serious repercussions for our nation's energy security. We are now seeing the tip of the job loss iceberg that will result from this rule. FirstEnergy, American Electric Power and other utilities have announced the closures of several plants in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia, directly affecting hundreds of plant workers and thousands of jobs in surrounding communities. Some of these plants were scheduled to be closed anyway -- though not as quickly -- but many were not.

From Early Bird Trains ready to roll under the river to North Shore A sneak peek at the Port Authority's $523.4 million light-rail extension. Whether it will win over its many critics is anyone's guess, but the Port Authority's $523.4 million light-rail extension to the North Shore is certain to be a civic conversation piece for years to come. Starting March 25, for the first time in Pittsburgh's storied history, people will travel under a river, in twin tunnels bored about 20 feet below the bottom of the Allegheny. The 1.2-mile North Shore Connector will link a new Gateway Center Station at Liberty Avenue and Stanwix Street, Downtown, with an underground station near PNC Park and an elevated station near Heinz Field. Authority officials provided a sneak preview on Monday, taking reporters and photographers on a round trip of the new leg. It started at Gateway, an underground station that is enclosed in glass to let natural light stream to the platform. "It's a tunnel station that allows sunlight to come through. That's a unique characteristic," said Winston Simmonds, the authority's rail operations/engineering officer.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

From Early Bird Water in gas line closes elementary for a day Laurel Valley Elementary School was closed to students on Monday, three days after water got into the school's gas line and made it impossible to heat the building over the weekend. Work on a Marcellus Shale natural gas well maintained by Texas-based XTO Energy Inc. caused water to enter the Peoples Natural Gas line on Friday, according to Superintendent Chris Oldham's report at a school board work session last night. XTO Energy spokesman Jeff Neu said in an email that the incident occurred during a "routine pipeline procedure," when "water produced from natural gas condensation inadvertently entered a gas distribution line in Fairfield Township. "While the water posed absolutely no health risk to residents, it is standard practice to shut (down) the line for proper cleaning to take place," Neu said. District officials worked over the weekend to try to get the boilers, powered by natural gas, to come on but could not keep them lit long enough to heat the building, Oldham said. Temperatures in the building yesterday morning ranged from 62 to 66 degrees. "It was too cold for the little ones," Principal Diane Ravis said. Assistant Principal Wayne Waugh said that Peoples Natural Gas arranged for a Johnstown-based company to come out to the school yesterday afternoon to try to suck the water out of the line. Neu said XTO worked with local agencies to handle the cleanup. Oldham said that the boilers were back on by 7:08 p.m. and that she anticipated the school would reopen today. Although the incident didn't pose a danger to teachers who still reported to the school yesterday, Ravis said it did upset the school's PSSA testing schedule. "We were going to give students a 'brain break' from testing on Wednesday, but that school will have to test that day in order to make up (Monday)," Ravis said. The state mandates testing to take place between March 12 and March 23. "We apologize for any inconvenience this has caused residents," Neu said.

From Early Bird Substance released on school bus; three students sickened Three Albert Gallatin High School students received medical treatment Monday, after being overcome by a substance allegedly released inside a school bus. According to state police, the bus was en route to the Fayette County Career & Technical Institute at 8:15 a.m., traveling on Route 119 at Wynn Road in Georges Township. A male on board emptied four ounces of an unknown substance onto the floor, police said. The odor caused three students -- two males and one female -- all 16, to suffer headaches, nausea, and eye and mouth irritation. They were treated at Uniontown Hospital and released, police said. The bus was placed out of service to be cleaned. Investigation into the incident in continuing, police said. The unnamed male who allegedly released the substance faces charges of criminal mischief and disorderly conduct.

Peters funeral home open, sans crematorium
... Tim Dvonch, assistant professor in the Department of Environmental Health Sciences at the University of Michigan, who studies mercury emissions, said inhalation exposure is generally not a concern with mercury. Instead, he said, "It's an ecosystem problem if it gets into the soil and into the water." The Department of Environmental Protection regulates crematories. DEP conditions state any crematory must operate "in such a manner as not to cause air pollution," and be "attended by a trained operator at all times when the unit is in operation," among other conditions.

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL

From Early Bird Letter: Marcellus Shale gas drilling benefits Pennsylvania Paul Carpenter's March 6 column ("Gas drilling symposium at NCC to challenge 'bill of goods' ") fundamentally disregards the overwhelmingly positive developments surrounding responsible, well-regulated natural gas production. While Mr. Carpenter cites propaganda from Rolling Stone and "Gasland" — a "documentary" that's been thoroughly debunked by a broad spectrum of experts, including former state Department of Environmental Protection Secretary John Hanger — he fails to recognize the facts. Has he even visited a well site or the countless rural communities that have been renewed thanks to Marcellus development? Indeed, a new World Economic Forum study found that the oil and natural gas sector added 9 percent of all new jobs last year. Closer to home, 229,000 jobs in the commonwealth are now supported by natural gas development, according to data. Further, a recent University of Texas report proved once again that there is no scientific data that connects hydraulic fracturing and groundwater contamination. We're all entitled to our own opinions, but not our own facts. As President Obama said, "The development of natural gas is proving that we don't have to choose between our environment and our economy." The safe development of clean-burning natural gas is creating jobs and powering America's

economy, proving that we don't — and shouldn't — have to choose between protecting our environment and growing our economy

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

From Early Bird Throop to appeal mill construction after landfill samples raise concern THROOP - Borough council is not ready to sign off on a specialized mill at Keystone Sanitary Landfill that would process some waste from Marcellus Shale drilling. Citing concerns from consultants, the borough asked its solicitor to file an appeal of the permit modification that would allow the mill at the site. The state Department of Environmental Protection approved the mill March 1, according to council President Thomas Lukasewicz. Representatives from Cocciardi and Associates Inc. presented the preliminary findings from analysis of two samples, taken on Jan. 19, which showed some pH levels "in excess of what the landfill is able to accept." The pH level - which refers to the acidity or alkalinity of a solution - in one sample fell in the hazardous waste category, according to Cocciardi representative Rocco DiPietro. The landfill is approved for municipal and residual waste, not hazardous waste. "At this point, I'm calling it some concerns, but I'm going to stop short of calling it a direct violation," Mr. DiPietro said. With or without violations, Mr. Lukasewicz is taking those concerns seriously. He and council approved solicitor Louis Cimini to file an appeal of the approval of a minor permit modification, which would allow the mill to be erected at the landfill site. "They approved the pugmill permit before any of these results came back," he said. Samples were tested by DEP, the landfill and Cocciardi on the request of the council; however, the DEP's results were not yet available. A pugmill is used to treat residual waste from Marcellus Shale drilling, processing it before it is disposed of in sanitation lines. The safety of the transportation, treatment and disposal of residual waste through sanitation lines that Mr. Lukasewicz called "antiquated" has been a concern of his for months. He believes that residual waste should be treated and processed at a specialized facility. "I believe it's a fine line between residual waste and hazardous waste," Mr. Lukasewicz said. "I just want someone to tell me it's safe. The ball is in the DEPs court now."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

From Early Bird Lawmaker urges end to car emissions tests STATE COLLEGE, Pa. - Every day, mechanics around the state check gas caps and look under hoods as part of annual vehicle emissions inspections. But one state lawmaker says Pennsylvanians should no longer have to pay for the annual tests. State Sen. John Wozniak (D., Centre) told the Centre Daily Times that he thought cleaner cars had made the inspections obsolete. "I think the test needs to be tested," said Wozniak, who introduced a resolution earlier this year asking the federal government to end the requirement. "Virtually all cars pass the test, and it's time to reevaluate whether it's just a waste of money for consumers."

POTTSTOWN MERCURY

Casey, Sunoco CEO discuss future of refineries in region U.S. Sen. Robert Casey, D-Pa., met with Sunoco Inc.s new CEO for 45 minutes Thursday to discuss the difficulties of the refinery closures and what needs to be done to locate buyers for the facilities as he expects the Senate hearings to be scheduled within the next two weeks."For me, it was helpful to have this meeting to understand some of the challenges that we have in front of us," the senator said. "This is a terribly difficult challenge and theres a lot more work to do." Sunoco spokesman Thomas Golembeski characterized the event in an optimistic tone.

POCONO RECORD

Environmental groups protest Susquehanna-Roseland powerline Pennsylvania and New Jersey environmental and community groups will hold a "virtual rally" Wednesday urging the Obama administration to stop the Susquehanna-Roseland transmission line expansion through nearby federal lands. The event is focused around a petition calling on the administration to stop the project. Coalition members will be posting on Facebook and Twitter throughout the week, seeking 5,000 petition signatures. The project by two electric utilities calls for crossing the Delaware River, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and the Appalachian Trail. The National Park Service is currently preparing an Environmental Impact statement on the Susquehanna-Roseland line and determining if the project should be permitted to cross the recreation area near Bushkill into New Jersey.... The virtual rally is sponsored in conjunction with the International Day of Action for Rivers, aimed at protecting precious water bodies.

How much can the public know about chemical facilities? A lot.The building at the corner of Arch and 17th streets in Philadelphia looks like an average library, filled with polished wooden shelves groaning under the strain of books, reports and documents.The information contained in these reports is far from average, however. The room is the Environmental Protection Agency's Federal Reading Room, the only one of its kind in Pennsylvania. Its shelves are filled with risk management plans from hazardous chemical facilities.Want to peek at these reports? Make an appointment and have your photo identification ready — that's all it takes to get inside. But, as both industry representatives and advocacy groups agree, there's nothing wrong with disclosing this information to the public.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

From Early Bird Voters blame Obama for high gas prices How much does the president have to do with the price of gasoline? A lot, say American voters. According to oil experts and economists, not so much — at least in the short term. Today's oil prices are the product of years and decades of exploration, automobile design and ingrained consumer habits combined with political events in places such as Sudan and Libya, anxiety about possible conflict with Iran, and the energy aftershocks of last year's earthquake in Japan. "This notion that a politician can wave a magic wand and impact the 90-million-barrel-a-day global oil market is preposterous," said Paul Bledsoe, strategic adviser to the Bipartisan Policy Center and a former Clinton administration official.

From Early Bird From 'Trumped' to toads and Tigers The Environmental Film Festival in the Nation's Capital, in its 20th year, gives nearly as much attention to the built environment as the natural one. So it's fitting that one of the opening-day offerings is a documentary that considers a controversial development project and a formerly pristine location, as well as a guy who keeps making noise about coming to Washington: Donald Trump. "You've Been Trumped" (7 p.m. Tuesday at E Street Cinema) considers the ostentatious golf-course development Trump is building in Scotland, on a section of coastline known for an ecologically significant natural dune area. "We've saved the dunes," Trump announces

in the movie, shortly before his workers bulldoze them. The developer is just as ruthless with the neighbors who refused to sell their property to him, cutting off their water and power and threatening to seize their land by the British equivalent of eminent domain. This polemical film is clearly on the side of holdouts, but it's hard to imagine how the story could have been spun to make Trump look good.Perhaps the angriest of the films offered for preview — and the only one in which the director is arrested for his efforts — "You've Been Trumped" is among 180 entries in this year's festival. More than half the movies are local debuts, and at least nine are world premieres. The films include features and shorts, documentaries and animation, children's fare and grown-up material. There will be nearly 200 special guests, including 75 filmmakers

---

DELAWARE

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

From Early Bird Milton wastewater rates may skyrocket Milton — What started out as a steep 90 percent increase in wastewater rates for Milton residents just got a little steeper. After a lengthy investigation, Delaware Public Service Commission staff and the Office of Public Advocate reached a settlement with Tidewater Environmental Services Inc. over wastewater rate increases in Milton and six other communities – but it won't make Milton residents happy. Milton customers will likely pay 112 percent more than current rates, while other customers in the area will see increases lower than first proposed. The settlement must be approved by the PSC commissioners. Michael Sheehy, a public advocate, said it was only fair to drastically increase Milton's rates to bring them more in line with other communities in the area. In September, TESI filed for a 90 percent increase for all customers in the town of Milton and for residents of The Retreat, Harts Landing, Country Grove, Breeders Crown, Bayfront and Bay Pointe. "My obligation statutorily, in the law, is to make sure there isn't any discrimination, that rates be equitable; not equal, but equitable," Sheehy said. Milton's increase will be phased in 18.5 percent each year over the next five years. Milton Town Council voted unanimously, with Vice Mayor Leah Betts recusing herself, to file a letter of no objection to the settlement. The letter means town officials don't agree with the terms, but they don't believe fighting them will result in better rates. The town had three options: accept the compromise, file a letter of no objection or fight it. Town Solicitor Seth Thompson said denying the settlement would've been a heavy risk with very little chance of a reward. In the case of a denial, the case would've gone into litigation where the five-year phase-in period would likely be off the table and the town could incur higher wastewater rates. "The public advocate doesn't just represent the people in Milton; it's really representing everyone who could be affected by the rate increase," he said. "The problem is a lot of our neighbors have been paying much higher rates than the town has for a number of years."

From Early Bird Delaware botanic garden beginning to grow Lewes — There's growing fervor about developing at least one botanic garden and maybe more in the Cape Region. A group calling itself Southern Delaware Botanic Gardens is seeking volunteers who have skills to help the idea take root and blossom. "Location is going to be our biggest issue," said Michael Zajic, group president. Zajic has been the driving force behind establishing a botanic garden. About 45 garden enthusiasts who want to be involved gathered Feb. 18 at the Lewes Public Library. Although selecting the botanic garden's location might not be easy, land is available. Zajic said a few landowners are considering providing parcels, and the group has been talking with the owner of a 100-acre parcel adjacent to Route 24 near Millsboro. Zajic said he has also talked to City of Lewes officials and learned the city has two parcels suitable for a garden that could be leased. City of Milford and Town of Millsboro officials have also said they'd like a botanic garden. "Nobody ever says no. Everybody says yes," Zajic said.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

From Early Bird Coal River Group recieves grant to build public access site CHARLESTON, W.Va. --- The Coal River Group has received a $1,000 grant from the American Canoe Association and the L.L. Bean Co. to build a new public access site near the organizations Science and Education Center at Upper Falls. The new boating put-...

WEST VIRGINIA STATE PUBLIC BROADCASTING

From Early Bird White Nose Syndrome spreads in WV bats West Virginia's Division of Natural Resources spent another winter monitoring White Nose Syndrome in bats and found the disease spread to four more counties this year. The presence of the disease was confirmed in West Virginia about three years ago. Since then Division of Natural Resources Biologist Craig Stihler has been tracking its progress. This winter the DNR surveyed four caves in Tucker, Pendleton, Randolph and Monroe counties to determine whether the disease is present. Stihler said the two species most affected are the Little Brown Bat and the Tri-colored, which was formerly called Eastern Pipistrelle. "These are widespread bats, very common in our caves in the wintertime. They're being hit very hard," Stihler said. "In caves where we've had White Nose for two winters we're seeing 93 percent decline of those two species, so in two years we're losing 93 percent of those bats."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.)

From Early Bird State DEP targets drilling-related runoff CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- West Virginia regulators are developing a permit to control storm water runoff from drilling-related construction activities. The Department of Environmental Protection is seeking public comment on a draft general permit through April ...

From Early Bird Two Eastern U.S. mussels to be listed as endangered MORGANTOWN, W.Va. -- Two freshwater mussel species once common in the eastern U.S. but now found in only a handful of rivers are going on the federal

Endangered Species List. The sheepnose and spectaclecase mussels will be protected following an agreement ...

From Early Bird Lawyer seeks delay of UBB mine blast pleading BECKLEY, W.Va. -- The former superintendent of the Upper Big Branch mine was to enter a plea next week, but his lawyer wants a delay. U.S. District Judge Irene Berger scheduled a hearing in Beckley for March 22. But on Monday, defense attorney Tim Carrico ...

From Early Bird Jackson County made disaster area because of Nov. flooding CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Jackson County has been designated a federal disaster area because of flooding in November. Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin said Monday that the designation by the U.S. Department of Agriculture makes farmers in Jackson and six neighboring count...

From Early Bird DNR holding meetings on wildlife regulations SOUTH CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Hunters, trappers, anglers and others are getting their chance to weigh in on West Virginias wildlife regulations. The Division of Natural Resources is holding 12 public meetings at locations across the state to take comment ...

From Early Bird DNR warns of fish virus in four lakes (Saturday) CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- The Division of Natural Resources say recent samples of fish have revealed the presence of largemouth bass virus in four West Virginia lakes.Assistant wildlife resources chief Bret Preston says the virus was found at East Lynn Lake ...

BECKLEY REGISTER-HERALD

Coal tax debate breaks out Browning, also a member of Facebook, didn't respond on the network, but said Sunday he was asked by the West Virginia Coal Association to sponsor SB579 as a means of stabilizing West Virginia's mine permitting program. ... "The bill is needed because of two federal court orders, suggesting that if the special reclamation fund does not remain solvent, then the operation of West Virginia's bonding program would likely be taken over by the federal Office of Surface Mining," the incumbent senator said.A case is pending in the Southern District of West Virginia seeking a takeover, if the severance increase isn't approved. Browning said the hike was recommended by the Special Reclamation Advisory Council, comprised of industry, labor and public members, and was reached through an actuarial study performed by the Pinnacle Group last year.The West Virginia Coal Association said failure of the bill to become law would lead to "a devastating effect" on small and large coal operations across the state, particularly in southern counties. "It is critical to me that we keep our jobs and our people working under the long-standing bonding program for mining operations throughout the state," Browning said.

WOWKTV.COM

Watershed assessment project in Elk, Mon rivers seeks feedback A pilot project to make map-based information about watershed health and threats available online at a high level of detail has reached a milestone. Watershed groups, county planners and others looking for the highest conservation or restoration priorities will be helped by the West Virginia Watershed Assessment Pilot Project, a project of the Nature Conservancy and the state Department of Environmental Protection under funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Nature Conservancy is ready to share its progress over the past year with stakeholders in the Elk and Monongahela watersheds. "The goal for these workshops is to present what we are proposing as an interactive web tool and as a report and getting feedback about what works for (stakeholders), what they would like to see, what doesn't working for them," said Ruth Thornton, the Nature Conservancy's conservation information manager.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL

Huntington plan to address stormwater violations HUNTINGTON, W.Va. (AP) - Huntington officials have developed a plan to address the city's stormwater violations and reduce a $156,000 fine proposed by federal regulators. Media outlets report that City Council approved the plan Monday. It will be presented to the Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday. The EPA proposed the fine last October. The agency said the city hasn't adequately addressed several problems, including runoff from construction sites and pollution from municipal operations. The city's plan includes rain gardens, rain barrels and the planting of more trees. City officials say the EPA has agreed to reduce the fine if the city moves forward on the initiatives.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

From Early Bird Obama to visit Maryland, discuss energy President Barack Obama will visit Largo on Thursday to give an address on American energy, White House officials said Monday. The address comes at a critical time, when economists say rising gasoline prices are dragging on the nation's economic recovery. Polls indicate rising prices at the pump are also hurting Obama's approval rating as he heads into this year's election.Details of the event, including where the president will speak, were not immediately available. Nearly five in 10 voters gave Obama negative marks on energy, according to a *Washington Post*-ABC News poll released Monday. Republican presidential candidates Mitt Romney and Rick Santorum have both tried to cast the higher prices as a result of the administration's policies. Not including trips to Joint Base Andrews in Prince George's County, where he regularly boards Air Force One, Obama last visited Maryland in January when he spoke in Cambridge to the House Democratic issues conference. Before that he addressed students and officials at the University of Maryland during the debt limit debate in July.

From Early Bird Three waterways opened for shellfishing Reduced bacteria levels permit oyster, clam harvests. Parts of three waterways have been opened to shellfish harvesting after tests showed declines in bacteria there, the Maryland

Department of the Environment announced Monday. An area of the Wicomico River on the Eastern Shore, at the border between Wicomico and Somerset counties, is now approved for commercial harvests. Waters below Bay Point had been closed because of high bacteria levels in the water. The headwaters of Broad Creek in Talbot County have been conditionally approved, meaning that oysters and clams can be harvested there except after a heavy rainfall. The area will be closed for three days whenever an inch of rain falls in a 24-hour period. The headwaters of a Potomac River tributary, also named the Wicomico River, which flows between Charles and St. Mary's counties, have been conditionally approved for shellfish harvesting as well, except after heavy rains. Harvest restrictions have been lifted without condition for a section of St. Catherine Sound inSt. Mary's Countynear the mouth of the Potomac.The state monitors bacteria levels and scouts for nearby pollution sources to determine which waters in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries are safe for shellfish harvesting. The department is required to close areas that do not meet water quality standards, and it reopens those areas where water quality improves. The closures are conducted to maintain seafood safety and to remain in compliance with the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

Grants to help localities clean Bay
Local government officials stressing out about the costs of cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay are being offered a little help - and a little cash - to take steps needed to control polluted runoff from their streets and parking lots.Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation announced they're offering local officials throughout the bay region $4 million in grants and technical assistance for designing and installing "green infrastructure." The "Local Government Green Infrastructure Initiative," as it's called, will let local officials compete for grants of up to $750,000 each on projects that both green their communities and help improve water quality in streams, rivers and the bay. Road maintenance, park enhancements and public facilities renovations would qualify.Some Maryland counties and Baltimore city project having to spend hundreds of millions of dollars each on storm drain retrofits and other costly pollution control projects to comply with the baywide "pollution diet" imposed by EPA. Officials says these grants are meant to encourage local officials to make those investments by demonstrating that the projects have other benefits for their communities besides clean water.

Glendening: Cardin protects small but vital transportation projectsAs Maryland's governor, I was privileged to be part of some of the state's largest transportation projects including the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Big projects like these receive a lot of press, but I know from my time in office that for many Marylanders it was the smaller neighborhood projects that made a big difference in their lives. Projects like Canal Place in Cumberland and the Harborwalk Promenade in Baltimore can provide neighborhood amenities, improve community safety and support local businesses. A bill in the U.S. Senate would have killed the small program that gave our local communities the opportunity to do these projects if not for the efforts of U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin.

EDGEWATER-DAVIDSONVILL PATCH

From Early Bird South County Receives 'Clean Water' Funding The money will go towards a water reclamation facility in Churchton and will help ensure cleanliness in water redistributed into the Chesapeake Bay. The Maryland Board of Public Works (MBPW) approved a $5.4 million grant to Anne Arundel County last week to reduce pollution, improve water quality and protect drinking water in south county. According to a press release by the MBPW, the money will go towards upgrading the Broadwater Water Reclamation Facility in Churchton, reducing its impact on the environment. Money will also go towards creating an Enhanced Nutrient Removal Facility in Churchton that will help decrease the facility's phosphorus, nitrogen and nutrient discharge. Owned and operated by Anne Arundel County and its Department of Public Works (DPW), the facility treats around 2 million gallons of domestic wastewater per day from more than 10,000 people in the county. The facility removes pollutants from wastewater before discharging it into the Chesapeake Bay. "Excessive amounts of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus lead to lowered levels of oxygen needed to support aquatic life in waterways, including the Chesapeake Bay," according to the release. Once upgraded, the facility will reportedly be able to reduce its nitrogen discharge by 62.5 percent and its phosphorus discharge by 85 percent.

EASTON STAR DEMOCRAT

From Early Bird Talbot commission, council want more flexibility in WIP EASTON -- The Talbot County Planning Commission and Talbot County Council concur that the best action plan for the state's Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) is for the county to have flexibility to pursue the best and most cost effective pollution reduction methods. The plan is a document of strategies on how each jurisdiction in the 64,000-square-mile Chesapeake Bay watershed will meet the federally mandated Bay pollution diet. That diet is a series of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) that prescribe how much pollution a body of water can handle and still meet water quality levels. Each jurisdiction, including Maryland, submitted WIPs during phase one, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved in late 2011. Phase two involves local governments, which also must develop detailed strategies on how to meet local pollution load requirements. At its March 7 meeting, the Talbot County Planning Commission discussed recommendations to forward to the state. "I just think they need to look at a cost benefit study," said Commissioner Michael Sullivan. "It's somewhere in the $60 to $80 million range to basically take care of a (37,000 pound) problem for nitrogen and 380,000 pound problem coming from agriculture. The number that was thrown out at the meeting last week was $66 million to remove 37,000 pounds. I would rather give the $66 million to farmers and solve the 380,000-pound problem and we'll deal with the 37,000 later. That is how I look at the whole thing."

HAVRE DE GRACE PATCH

From Early Bird $4M In New Bay-Related Funding The new funding will be unveiled today in Havre de Grace. Local governments in need of assistance in helping to restore the Chesapeake Bay will get a boost starting Tuesday. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will introduce a new $4 million grant initiative to assist local municipalities with Bay-related programs. As initially reported by Patch on Friday, the program announcement will be made at Concord Point in Havre de Grace at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday. Grants as much as $750,000 will be made available in various stages. "Now more than ever, the Chesapeake Bay needs the creativity, innovation and ingenuity of local governments," EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin said in a prepared statement. "This new EPA funding will enable local governments to implement the best solutions to on-the-ground challenges they face in helping to restore the Bay, and share those approaches with other towns throughout the entire watershed." According to a statement from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, funding is available in three forms.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation says Maryland restoration plan may not get the job done
BALTIMORE — The Chesapeake Bay Foundation says Maryland's bay restoration strategy is underfunded and may not get the job done as promised.The foundation said Tuesday that it has raised the concerns in formal comments submitted on the second phase of the state's restoration strategy. The six states in the bay watershed are being required by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to submit detailed bay restoration plans.The foundation says Maryland is more than

halfway toward meeting its goals, but state lawmakers must provide dedicated funding for upgrading sewage treatment plants and stormwater systems. Policies also must be changed to manage pollution from sprawl development.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

From Early Bird Editorial: Uranium Studies: More sun The sun will shine. A study of uranium mining in Pittsylvania County will be more transparent than a Monday editorial said it feared. According to a letter to Del. Lee Ware from Gov. Bob McDonnell's chief of staff: "The working group will periodically report its progress and accept input from the public during four open meetings." The topics will include environmental impact, public safety, emergency preparedness and related issues. This is good. And if the study is to earn the citizenry's confidence, then maximum sunshine must apply.

North Anna nuke unit shut down for scheduled refuelingDominion Virginia Power has shut down one of the two units at its North Anna nuclear power plant for a scheduled refueling.Figures released by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission show Unit 1 was powered down over the weekend.Refueling, generally done in intervals of about 18 months, typically takes 3-4 weeks.This marks the second time Unit 1 has been powered down since both North Anna reactors were knocked offline by a magnitude-5.8 earthquake Aug. 23. Both units restarted in November, but Unit 1 was powered down again in January for a few days to repair an air line leak.

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN-PILOT

From Early Bird Bill seeks to soften Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan (Saturday) Worried about government overreach and financial burdens to farmers, developers and localities, a Virginia congressman introduced legislation this week to significantly change how the Obama administration aims to clean up the Chesapeake Bay. It is the latest attempt by U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, a Republican whose district covers much of the farm-rich Shenandoah Valley, to soften plans endorsed by President Barack Obama for reducing nitrogen, phosphorus and sediments that pollute the Bay from six states, including Virginia. Goodlatte tried last year to block all funding for the plans, known as a pollution diet or a TMDL, short for total maximum daily load. Those efforts failed after winning some favor in the House of Representatives. Environmental groups are assailing Goodlatte's new bill, called the Chesapeake Bay Program Reauthorization and Improvement Act, saying it not only would derail the push to restore the Bay over the next 15 years but also would roll back federal authority to protect water quality in rivers, lakes and streams nationwide. "It would undercut the balance of power between the federal government and the states that's been in place for 40 years now" under the Clean Water Act, said Doug Siglin, federal programs director for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, an advocacy group. "This would have huge national implications." In an interview, Goodlatte said this criticism is "a bogus claim." "For 40 years, Republicans and Democrats have correctly interpreted the Clean Water Act whereby the federal government sets the standards and the states get to implement them," he said. "That's all we're asking for here."

ROANOKE TIMES

From Early Bird Uranium group will keep secretsThe working group created by the governor to study uranium mining will hide much of its work from the public. Cartoons and mad scientists' labs aside, uranium does not glow in the dark. That's too bad because Gov. Bob McDonnell's uranium working group will be doing its work outside the light of public scrutiny. It could use the illumination. Virginia Uranium Inc. wants to mine the ore in Pittsylvania County and has asked the General Assembly and governor to lift a moratorium. Lawmakers and the governor chose caution and delayed the decision this year. That gives everyone time to digest fully the science and the risks. A National Academy of Sciences study released mere weeks before the General Assembly convened warned that a lot more needs to be known before anyone concludes mining could be done safely. In January, McDonnell formally announced his support for postponement and created a working group to study the issue further. In his announcement, he said, "I have directed the group ... to allow thorough opportunity for public participation in its work." The work group has other ideas. It invokes the oft-abused governor's working papers exemption to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to keep its work out of the public eye. Virginians whose health and environment are most at risk if uranium mining goes badly, and who stand to gain tax revenue if it goes well, will be kept in the dark.

Virginia Tech transportation program gets national award (Sunday) For the third year in a row, Virginia Tech's alternative transportation program has received an award from the Best Workplaces for Commuters program, managed by the National Center for Transit Research.Tech is one of 15 employers nationwide to receive the award. The program was lauded for meeting the National Standard of Excellence in commuter benefits established by the Environmental Protection Agency and maintained by NCTR. Tech met those standards by providing transportation options or telework and compressed workweeks for its employees.

LYNCHBURG NEWS AND ADVANCE

From Early Bird Goodlatte says EPA stormwater measures may cost city Congressman Bob Goodlatte introduced legislation to stop a federal push to introduce aggressive new stormwater quality measures. On Monday, during a stop in Lynchburg, Goodlatte, R-6th, said his bill would "halt this EPA power grab" and restore authority to the states where it belongs. "This has really been federal bureaucracy run wild without any check against it," he said of the recent action taken by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "This legislation is about providing a check against what they're trying to do." Goodlatte, whose district includes Lynchburg, has been a vocal critic of the EPA's new stormwater program and its plan to impose harsher penalties on non-complaint localities. The requirements, aimed at cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, led the city to create a new stormwater management fee, effective July 1. The fee will be levied against all developed city properties. Exact rates have not yet been set. City Council has not been able to agree on how much to charge. Under the rate proposed by staff, first-year fee revenues would reach $2.6 million. Councilman Turner Perrow — a critic of the EPA who testified before a Congressional subcommittee about his concerns last November — said revenues eventually may need to reach $15 million or more. Goodlatte said the EPA is expanding its authority in ways not authorized by the law. By threatening to take action against areas that do not meet their standards, he said the agency is usurping the authority Congress intended to rest with the states. "We need to halt this EPA power grab and do it the right way," he said. "… The states have the authority here and ought to be allowed to move forward in a fashion that makes sense." States in the bay watershed are not getting credit for the strides made over the past 25 years, including reducing sediment pollution by

more than 50 percent and phosphorous and nitrogen pollution by more than 40 percent, Goodlatte said.

From Early Bird Be a 'River Hero' to help protect the Chesapeake watershed Move over, Aquaman. The ocean is about to get a whole lot more heroes. The James River Association is kicking off a new program designed to help homeowners fight pollution and possibly defray future utility costs. The program, "River Hero Homes," is being launched in Lynchburg and Richmond. "The James River belongs to all of us, and we all play an important part in protecting it for future generations," said Bill Street, executive director of the nonprofit river association. "We often get the question, 'What can I do? This program will help provide ideas people can do themselves." River Hero Homes will help property owners develop easy-to-understand plans to reduce stormwater runoff pollution with steps like reducing fertilizer use, picking up after pets or installing rain barrels. The program provides an online calculator demonstrating how much runoff leaves a property in a year and how much could be saved by making improvements. Once an improvement is made, participants can apply for official River Hero Home certification. In Richmond, homeowners can use certification to earn a credit against the city's stormwater fee. The James River Association is working with Lynchburg officials to design a credit for the stormwater fee the Hill City plans to start later this year. "Not only can you help the river, but you can help your wallet," Street said. Stormwater runoff travels over rooftops, yards and pavement, picking up pollutants it later deposits in local rivers and, ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay. The federal government is making a big push to combat runoff pollution as part of its effort to clean up the bay. Environmental mandates are driving the city's new stormwater fee.

STAUNTON NEWS LEADER

From Early Bird Goodlatte visits to oppose EPA mandates **VERONA —** U.S. Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-6th, organized a stakeholders' roundtable on the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay Cleanup plan at the Augusta County Government Center on Monday afternoon. The hour and a half meeting ranged from suggestions to improve the EPA plan, to criticism of the plan, to ways to prevent the EPA from continuing to implement the plan. "Every community in Virginia is going to be facing a much higher burden than competing states like North Carolina (that aren't in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed," Goodlatte told the group of agriculture industry representatives and state and local government officials. One purpose of the meeting was to rally support for the Chesapeake Bay Reauthorization and Improvement Act, which Goodlatte introduced to the House Agriculture Committee last week. Goodlatte hopes to hold hearings on the bill soon, he said. "We have a lot of work to do" to pass the bill, Goodlatte said, but the bill "has got to be pursued along with other avenues such as cutting off funding to the EPA and the lawsuits" that have been filed against the EPA by the American Farm Bureau and others. Some environmental groups, notably the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, have criticized the bill as an attempt to "undermine the pollution limits currently in place, derail clean-up efforts and undercut the federal government's role in making sure all Americans have access to clean, swimmable, fishable waters."

NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS

From Early Bird Dominion Power plans electric power line over James River Dominion Virginia Power is considering building an electric transmission line that would cross the James River at Surry and James City counties. The line would originate at Surry nuclear power station, run above the river along nine towers between 150 feet and 295 feet tall, and terminate at a substation in James City. It is an alternative to a route Dominion announced in December that would snake up James City to a substation in Chickahominy.The proposal drew the ire of James City officials who are concerned that it will affect Freedom Park, which includes a Revolutionary War battle site. It also upset the Eastern Virginia Mountain Bike Association, which built and maintains trails in the park. Dominion, a subsidiary of Richmond-based Dominion Resources, estimates the Chickahominy line will cost $150 million to $200 million. The Surry route could be $50 million less, spokeswoman Bonita Harris said. Dominion will host a meeting from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on March 26 at James River Elementary School, 8901 Pocahontas Trail in Williamsburg, to discuss the proposal and listen to public comment. It will then decide which line it prefers and send the recommendation to the Virginia State Corporation Commission. A ruling from the commission usually takes nine to 18 months, said Stephenie Harrington, another Dominion spokeswoman.

Rigell to host Chesapeake Bay meeting tonight Chesapeake Bay restoration has been a thorny issue for Rep. Scott Rigell, R-Virginia Beach.The freshman lawmaker, whose district includes parts of Hampton and Norfolk, was ushered into office on a platform of cost-cutting and government reform. The massive effort to clean up the bay, expected to cost billions, is exactly the type of spending many Republicans oppose. Yet Rigell has voted for and against bay-related legislation that would increase spending. It's a tightrope walk he'll continue on Tuesday from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Meyera E. Oberndorf Library, 4100 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach.

FREDERICKSBURG FREELANCE STAR

From Early Bird Editorial: Recycling realities Recycling is a good habit, but we can get better at it. RECYCLING EFFORTS have always faced twin obstacles: getting people to do it, and creating a market for the stuff that makes the effort worthwhile for localities. According to a recent report in The Free Lance-Star, however, the system is gaining momentum. While "exciting" might be too strong a term for news about empty Dasani bottles and two-month-old magazines, these tidings are certainly welcome, demonstrating not only that people will do their part in setting aside recyclables from their regular trash, but also that capitalism isn't particular about the commodity if there is money to be made from it. A key result of this new enthusiasm is a product that took less energy to produce--it's easier and more efficient to make a plastic bottle from another plastic bottle than to make one from scratch. The other good news is that when discarded items can be recycled, landfill space is filled up more slowly. Recycling is indeed a growth industry. A recent study found that across the country, some 56,000 recycling outlets employ about 1.1 million people with a payroll of more than $37 billion and annual revenues topping $236 billion. No doubt that's a significant increase over just a few years ago. Local figures also gathered by reporter Rusty Dennen put the Stafford/Fredericksburg recycling rate at 57 percent of total solid waste collected, while Spotsylvania reuses 40 percent of its solid waste. Other nearby counties don't do as well.

WSET-TV LYNCHBURG

From Early Bird Goodlatte Says New EPA Standards Costing Lynchburg Lynchburg, VA - Rep. Bob Goodlatte was in Lynchburg Monday touring CSO work and promoting legislation that would limit power to the EPA. Goodlatte says new storm water requirements--to filter rainwater that runs into the Chesapeake Bay --would cost the small City of Lynchburg between $120 to $140 million initially. Local governments, farmers and homebuilders that fail to comply with the EPA's new regulations could face stiff penalties. Goodlatte's proposing legislation that would let the states decide the best ways to comply with those standards instead of the federal government. He says that's what the law intended. "The EPA is acting at the federal level to threaten the states and localities and say if you don't do it our way we're going to bring punitive measures against states and localities. That's wrong, that's not what the law intended and that's what this legislation corrects," Goodlatte said after meeting with city officials. He says his proposal has bipartisan support and a good chance of passing the House. But he admits they still have a lot of work ahead to get there.

NBC-29 CHARLOTTESVILLE

From Early Bird Congressman Goodlatte Pushes Alternatives to EPA Regulations A Shenandoah Valley congressman says new rules designed to protect the Chesapeake Bay are overly burdensome and expensive, and perhaps useless. Now, Republican Bob Goodlatte is pushing an alternative cleanup plan through Congress. Congressman Goodlatte spent most of this day meeting with farmers, business owners and local government representatives, who he believes will pay a steep price for new regulations from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). He believes the federal agency is going beyond the authority it was given through the Clean Water Act. "We definitely want to help the bay, but we don't want to see it at a cost of $16 billion to the commonwealth of Virginia, or tens of millions of dollars to localities, or farmers mandated to do things they've never been required to do before," stated Goodlatte. Goodlatte has co-sponsored a bill that affirms states' rights, while forcing the EPA to conduct cost-benefit studies before putting new regulations in place. Augusta County said Monday that it has made $200 million in upgrades to its sewage treatment plants. But even that satisfies only one-tenth of 1 percent of the EPA standard for nitrogen levels.

PUBLIC NEWS SERVICE

EPA Takes On Carbon Polluters: This Week's Hot Topic in *Va.* (was inaccessible yesterday) RICHMOND, Va. - Smog and carbon pollution from power plants and their effects on health are hot-button issues with politicians, lobbyists and scientists these days. They are expected to heat up even more in Washington, D.C., this week when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is expected to release new rules for coal-burning power plants that limit the amount of pollution new facilities can emit.

RICHMOND.COM

Save the James With 'River Hero Homes' James River Association's new River Hero Homes program can help homeowners take steps to improve water quality and maybe save money in the process. The new certification initiative recognizes and educates homeowners throughout Virginia's watershed who are attempting to reduce the amount of stormwater and pollution leaving their property to improve water quality. River Hero Homes gives homeowners across the watershed easy-to-understand plans on how they can reduce stormwater runoff from their property. With steps like picking up after pets, reducing fertilizer and installing rain barrels, people can have a River Hero Home and help the environment. To get started, homeowners can visit JRA's free, online Runoff Calculator to determine how much runoff and pollution is leaving their home annually. After completing the calculator, users can review results and decide a pollution-reduction project that best fits the homeowner's needs. Projects range from installing rain barrels to planting a rain garden.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

From Early Bird White House Revises Guidance on Agency Greenhouse Gas Emissions Revised draft guidance to help federal agencies measure and report on greenhouse gas emissions is released by the White House Council on Environmental Quality. The draft clarifies previous guidance on how agencies should account for purchases of renewable energy and renewable energy certificates, or RECs. The draft would revise guidelines issued in October 2010 that established governmentwide requirements for calculating and reporting greenhouse gas emissions associated with federal agency operations, including the supply chain.

From Early Bird EPA Considering Smart Urban Growth as Part of Sustainability Plan EPA is considering ways to encourage smart urban growth as part of its overall plan for incorporating sustainability into its operations, an agency official tells federal and local government officials, city planners, architects, and others at a listening session on incorporating sustainability into EPA operations. "We're trying to incorporate more green infrastructure into wastewater and stormwater management," Bicky Corman, EPA deputy associate administrator for policy, says. As an example, she cites planting trees at water treatment facilities, which improves air quality, creates jobs for tree maintenance, and reduces the heat island effect in urban areas.

BLOOMBERG NEWS SERVICE

From Early Bird Top colleges shunning bottled water NEW YORK -- Bottled water is coming under attack on college campuses. More than 90 schools, among them Brown and Harvard universities, are banning the sale or restricting the use of plastic water bottles, unnerving the $22 billion retail packaged-water industry in the United States. Freshmen at colleges nationwide are being greeted with stainless-steel bottles in their welcome packs and encouraged to use hydration stations where free, filtered water is available. Brown, which once sold about 320,000 bottles of water a year in vending machines and campus stores, ended sales in dining halls in 2010. Harvard and Dartmouth College are installing hydration stations in new buildings to reduce trash. "The product just doesn't make common sense," said Sarah Alexander, 20, an environmental-studies major at Hanover, N.H.-based Dartmouth. "Companies are taking something that is freely accessible to everyone on the Dartmouth campus, packaging it in a non-reusable container and then selling it under the pretense that it is somehow better than tap water." In response to the growing movement, the water industry released a video on YouTube last month poking fun at "Ban the Bottle," an organization that advocates banning one-time-use plastic water bottles. The spot, which features "Star Wars"-like music and flashbacks of antiwar demonstrations, says bottled water is a safe, convenient product that is "one of the healthiest drinks on the shelf" and that its packaging is recyclable. There "are really serious issues over here, and now you're dealing with bottled water?" Joe Doss, president of the International Bottled Water Association, based in Alexandria, Va., said. While "there are anti-bottled-water groups going from campus to campus," Mr. Doss said he doesn't consider it "a big threat" at this point. More than 9 billion gallons of bottled water were sold domestically last year, and the industry is growing 5.4 percent a year, according to Gary Hemphill, senior vice president of the Beverage Marketing Corp., a New York City consulting firm. Sales to colleges and universities aren't tracked separately. The bottling industry may be worried about losing brand loyalty from college kids, said Eric Meliton, an industry analyst with Frost & Sullivan.

NASHVILLE PUBLIC RADIO

From Early Bird Mountain Top Removal Ban Still Alive in Senate The state Senate was expected tonight to easily pass an industry-approved bill to regulate coal mining that involves mountain-top removal. But a fired-up Senator Eric Stewart fought off industry-friendly changes and kept alive his proposal to ban the practice. Stewart says an amendment to his bill would make it easier to justify blowing the tops off mountains to get to coal. That amendment would allow ridge line removal, followed by the mining company "restoring" the ridge line...Stewart, a Democrat from Franklin County, says he has been attending prayer sessions held by Christians who think man is supposed to be a steward of the Earth. Republican Leader Mark Norris insisted the bill be put off three weeks, saying he didn't intend to bury it in a committee at the last minute. Instead, he wants the bill to be one of the few to be debated, in full, on the floor of the upper chamber

ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Early Bird Blog: Groundwater: It's fracking important (Monday) Today marks the start of National Ground Water Awareness Week—sandwiched between National Sleep Awareness Week and National Poison Prevention Week. While such designations have perhaps become too ubiquitous in public health, this year's National Ground Water Awareness Week may be the most important in its 13-year history. Clean, safe, ground water is essential for public health. In fact, it's essential to life and civilization as we know it. Ground water is water that exists between soil and rock underneath the earth. Seventy-eight percent of public water systems in the United States use ground water as their primary source, supplying about 90 million Americans. Ground water also quenches the thirst and washes the dishes of the 16 million households in the U.S. who get their water from private wells. The contamination of groundwater through industrial and consumer pollution has long been a public health concern. The recent proliferation of hydraulic fracturing to extract natural gas, however, has opened a Pandora's box of ground water contamination risk. The fracking process involves pumping large amounts of fluid containing highly toxic chemicals deep into the earth, right below the water table (as the Marcellus Shale Coalition, a pro-fracking group, shows on its website). As we have discussed in a series of earlier posts, and as the American Public Health Association noted this month in The Nation's Health, its monthly news publication, hydraulic fracturing poses serious risks to the safety of our ground water supply—and to the vitality of humans and animals. More and more, we are seeing that these risks are not hypothetical but real. Last year, the Environmental Protection Agency implicated hydraulic fracking as a cause of contaminated ground water in Pavillion, Wyo., corroborating work by Duke University researchers who found that well water was contaminated by fracking. Earlier this winter, the issue struck home as the EPA stepped in to deliver drinking water to residents of Dimock, Pa., whose well water was suspected to be contaminated by fracking chemicals. Our desire for national energy independence should not, and cannot, trump our need for a safe groundwater supply. If we're not careful, National Ground Water Awareness week could become National Ground Water Remembrance Week.

NORTHCENTRALPA.COM

Natural Gas Is a Long Haul Proposition A recent viewpoint article in the Binghamton Press by EID's Tom Shepstone lays out the potential benefits of natural gas development for the Southern Tier of New York based on a comparison with what's been happening along the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. You can read the original remarks on which the article is based here. This argument was met with some heavy skepticism by a Vestal Residents for Safe Energy (VeRSE) member who suggested the jobs would be short-term and mostly taken by temporary workers from outside the area, while the industry contaminates the air and water. Let me, a layman who has studied this issue in depth, attempt to correct the record.

PRESS & SUN BULLETIN

Guest Viewpoint: Tale of two cities shows benefits of gas drilling

At first glance, Williamsport, Pa., and Ithaca seem similar. The cities are alike in size and population with about 30,000 residents each. In both communities, per capita income is slightly above $19,000. They also both sit on vast reserves of a natural gas resource, the Marcellus Shale.Unfortunately, that's where the similarities end.Williamsport's economy is larger and more stable than Ithaca's, thanks in large part to its decision to develop shale gas. In 2010, when it started developing shale gas, Williamsport's local economy grew 7.8 percent — three times the national average — compared to Ithaca's 1 percent. The same year, Williamsport ranked seventh in the nation for GDP growth, while Ithaca grew at barely two-fifths of the national rate. The Williamsport/Lycoming Chamber of Commerce estimates that up to 3,000 local jobs have been created in just two years.

THE STATE COLUMN

Rick Santorum: Endangered Species Act places 'critters above people'Republican presidential candidate and former Pennsylvania U.S. Senator Rick Santorum on Monday expressed concerns with the Endangered Species Act, warning supporters that it could place "critters above people." "What we have seen under this administration is a truly radical environmental agenda," Mr. Santorum said in response to a question at the Gulf Coast Energy Summit in Biloxi, Mississipi. Mr. Santorum, who is campaigning in the state ahead of the Tuesday primary, warned that the law could me manipulated by Democrats seeking to "put critters above people

CENTRAL PENN BUSINESS JOURNAL

FirstEnergy files for feasibility study toward new generation

A subsidiary of Ohio-based FirstEnergy Corp. has filed a feasibility study application toward adding new generation capacity in Ohio related to a plan to take six coal-fired power plants out of service in Maryland, Ohio and Pennsylvania, the company said.FirstEnergy Generation Corp. said it has made the study request with Pennsylvania-based PJM Interconnection, an entity managing the transmission of electricity throughout a region of the country that includes the midstate.FirstEnergy plans to retire the plants because of new mercury and air toxics standards from the federal Environmental Protection Agency and other environmental regulations, according to a FirstEnergy news release. The plant retirements are subject to PJM review for potential reliability impacts, the release stated. FirstEnergy also is working with PJM on other ways to ensure reliable electric service in northern Ohio, according to the release.

NEWS & OBSERVER

Gov. Perdue takes unannounced trip to *Pennsylvania* to see fracking Democratic Gov. Bev Perdue and top administration officials flew to Pennsylvania last week to examine drilling rigs used for shale gas extraction, a controversial practice known as fracking.The March 5 trip occurred without public notice from the governor's office and included meetings with oil company representatives and local government officials who support fracking. (Perdue's office does not release a regular schedule like other state chief executives.) The governor did not visit with local environmental groups on the trip but her spokesman said she met days prior with Sierra Club and Environmental Defense Fund officials in North Carolina.

UNIVERSITY DAILY KANSAN

EPA administrator speaks about Hurricane Katrina, pollution standards Lisa Jackson grew up as a minority in the Ninth Ward of New Orleans, an area struck by four hurricanes in the last 100 years. ... Jackson fielded questions from students, faculty and guests about the EPA's role in boosting the economy and advocating for a cleaner environment at Spooner Hall yesterday during a visit to the University. One of the EPA's goals is to expand conversation on the environment, Jackson said. ..."The EPA sets national environmental and pollution standards, while states set their own policies and extent of regulation. Jackson said national standards are important because "the air doesn't stay in one state, and the water doesn't stay on the street." Regulations in one state can affect the level of pollution in neighboring states; environmental justice is important on the state and national level. "It's an issue of basic care and economic leveling of the playing field," Jackson said. "Everybody should play by the same set of rules."

LATEST EPA PRESS RELEASE

EPA Adds Nine Hazardous Waste Sites to Superfund's National Priorities List, Prposing an Additional 10 Sites "Protecting human health and the environment and restoring contaminated properties to environmental and economic vitality are EPA priorities," said Mathy Stanislaus, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. "When property is cleaned up and revitalized, the reuse may result in new income to the community in the form of taxes, jobs to local residents, increases to the values of properties nearby cleaned up sites, or it may provide recreational or other services to make the community a better place to live." Since 1983, 1,661 sites have been listed on the NPL. Of these sites, 359 sites have been cleaned up resulting in 1,302 sites currently on the NPL (including the nine sites added today). There are 62 proposed sites (including the 10 announced today) awaiting final agency action. ...
(One is in Maryland and another in Pennsylvania)

WALL ST. JOURNAL

Faulty Wells, Not Fracking, Blamed for Water Pollution

Some energy companies, state regulators, academics and environmentalists are reaching consensus that natural-gas drilling has led to several incidents of water pollution—but not because of fracking. (copy rovided)

WALL ST. JOURNAL

Faulty Wells, Not Fracking, Blamed for Water Pollution

Some energy companies, state regulators, academics and environmentalists are reaching consensus that natural-gas drilling has led to several incidents of water pollution—but not because of fracking.The energy officials and some environmentalists agree that poorly built wells are to blame for some cases of water contamination. In those cases, they say, wells weren't properly sealed with subterranean cement, which allowed contaminants to travel up the well bore from deep underground into shallow aquifers that provide drinking water. Many community activists have said that hydraulic fracturing itself—a process that uses water, sand and chemicals to break up shale rocks and release gas—can pollute drinking water. The energy industry has countered that the technique, which it has used for decades, isn't to blame for water contamination. The energy industry has been struggling to convince critics that fracking is safe. If the industry can persuade them that the chief pollution risk is poorly constructed wells—and that risk can be minimized—it might encounter less resistance from the public to expanding oil-and-gas production.Mark Boling, executive vice president and general counsel of Southwestern Energy Co., a major natural-gas producer, said he has examined several incidents in Colorado and Pennsylvania where gas drilling appears to have caused gas to get into drinking water. "Every one we identified was caused by a failure of the integrity of the well, and almost always it was the cement job," he said. A. Scott Anderson, a senior policy adviser with the Environmental Defense Fund who is working with Mr. Boling, agreed. "The groundwater pollution incidents that have come to light to date have all been caused by well construction problems," he said.Both men are calling for a stronger set of standards for well construction, including better cementing and more testing to ensure that wells and cement have no leaks. Cement failures have long plagued the industry. Mr. Anderson estimates that cement in about one in 10 wells fails to work properly and requires remedial work. Federal investigators have said that cement problems were a major cause of the Deepwater Horizon disaster in April 2010, when natural gas escaped from an offshore well in the Gulf of Mexico and exploded, killing 11 workers and setting off a mammoth oil spill.Pennsylvania and New York have adopted new well-construction standards to try to prevent pollution. Ohio is expected to issue new rules this week.Cementing is an essential aspect of drilling. Energy companies thread steel pipes into bored holes and squeeze cement around the pipes. The cement prevents gas or fluids from moving between the pipe and the exposed rock. A poorly cemented well can create a path for contaminants to migrate upward and leech into shallow porous rocks that hold drinking water.Some critics say it is the fracking process itself, which takes place far underground, that can cause pollution. Wilma Subra, chairwoman of Stronger, a nonprofit group made up mostly of state oil-and-gas regulators, said that cracks caused by fracking can extend out of the shale and "allow natural gas and frack fluids to migrate out."Others say that even if fracking is safe, it doesn't mean drilling poses an acceptable risk. "You may be able to fix one issue, but it doesn't make the whole drilling process OK," said Maya Van Rossum, head of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network and an opponent of gas development in the river's watershed. Mark Zoback, a Stanford University geophysicist who served on the National Academy of Engineering investigation into the Deepwater Horizon blowout and more recently sat on a U.S. Energy Department committee that studied shale production, said it is important to focus on the real risks."There are three keys—and those are well construction, well construction and well construction," he said.In its August report on shale production, the Energy Department committee recommended that companies run tests on every well to identify inadequate cementing, and it called for more inspections to confirm operators promptly "repair defective cementing jobs." One of the largest documented instances of water contamination occurred in Bradford County, Pa.—after wells had been drilled but before any fracking took place. Chesapeake Energy Corp., the nation's second largest natural-gas company, has conceded that poor well construction may have played a role in high levels of natural gas found in local aquifers, according to letters to state regulators.A state investigation concluded Chesapeake failed to cement its wells adequately, allowing gas to leak from pipes into the groundwater. Chesapeake agreed to pay $900,000 in fines and payments to the state, but never publicly acknowledged it caused the problem. In a news release last May, it said the investigation was "inconclusive." The company recently declined further comment, citing pending landowner lawsuits. In an August 2010 letter to the state, a Chesapeake executive said that one of its wells "may be considered to be the most compelling source" of gas that reached the surface. Chesapeake found evidence suggesting the cement in one well had developed small channels that allowed gas to flow through it.In the settlement, Chesapeake agreed to change how it built wells in Pennsylvania. It has begun using three interlocking pipes, instead of two, which adds an additional barrier to prevent gas movement.The Oklahoma City-based company said the changes would increase costs per well by up to $500,000, or about 10%. **Write to** Russell Gold at russell.gold@wsj.com