# EPA REGION III

## Office of Public Affairs

# PM Headlines

**Thursday, August 2, 2012**

## *** PM HOT LIST ***

## Myersville says no to natural gas compressor station

**ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)** MYERSVILLE, Md. — Myersville is saying no to Dominion Resources' plan for a natural gas compressor station near the intersection of Interstate 70 and Md. 17. The Frederick News-Post reports that the Town Council voted unanimously Wednesday against the company's request for a zoning amendment to allow construction of the project on a 21-acre site.The final decision is up to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Dominion says the unit is needed to maintain the flow of compressed gas through underground pipes. A citizens group says the facility would produce harmful noise and emissions, and might explode. The state Department of Natural Resources says the project could negatively affect nearby state parks and the Appalachian Trail.

## Pennsylvania man uses high-tech filter system to keep methane at bay

**FUEL FIX** Pennsylvania resident Michael Leighton had Chesapeake Energy install a high-tech filter system in his Bradford County home to prevent methane gas from seeping into his water well. NPR StateImpact interviewed Leighton, who lives a half mile from a Chesapeake well, about the situation on his property. The Department of Environmental Protection linked the methane migration problems to a nearby Chesapeake well. Chesapeake and the state agency are investigating what is causing the methane migration.

## Gas Drilling: Detailed Health Studies "Haven't Started"

**ASSOCIATED PRESS (W.Va.)** Is gas drilling ruining the air, polluting water, and making people sick? Scientists say the evidence is sketchy and inconclusive, but a lack of serious funding is delaying efforts to resolve the pressing questions. Bernard Goldstein, professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, says the kind of comprehensive research that's needed "just hasn't started." The Environmental Defense Fund says it is partnering with major universities and eight natural gas companies on ways to address environmental and health concerns, but it hasn't provided details. Experts including Goldstein say the lack of research could lead to a crush of lawsuits and expensive settlements for the industry.

## EPA's regulations would not be a burden on the natural gas industry

**NRDC** Bloomberg Government (BGov) recently released a report [subscription required for full report] that assesses the business implications of the EPA's regulations to control air pollution from the natural gas industry. While NRDC does not agree with some of the report's specific cost estimates, NRDC does echo some of the key

findings of the report: that the regulations will not be a burden on natural gas producers; that the price of natural gas drives production levels, while regulatory compliance costs have a minimal to imperceptible impact on production; and that the regulations will be lucrative and create jobs for many well service providers and equipment manufacturers, especially small and medium sized ones, which will be vital in this economy.

## Family near Fort Detrick wants well water tested

**MARYLAND GAZETTE** After reading that consultants at Fort Detrick had identified high levels of a cancer-causing chemical in its groundwater, the Degan family started to wonder and worry. Dennis Degan, 60, and his wife, Ann Clinton, 59, have raised their granddaughter Taleah, 4, in their home on Bowers Road since 2007. The family gets its water from a nearly 300-foot well. Their home is within the study area for cleanup efforts at the base, but the couple said they never knew that until they read a story in The Gazette last week. They said no one has contacted them or their neighbors about potential threats to their drinking water or asked to test their wells. Upon request, Fort Detrick officials have tested wells at residences near Area B, a 399-acre site once used as a dumping ground for chemical and biological waste, but has not yet gone looking for them, according to Joseph Gortva, project manager for cleanup at the U.S. Army post.The site was named to a Superfund site in 2009 because of its polluted groundwater. Ever since, efforts have been under way to find the contamination and clean it up.Now, the Degan family wants its well tested.

## Maryland to vote on $24M contract to remove hazardous waste at port

**BALTIMORE BUSINESS JOURNAL** The state's spending board will vote Wednesday on a contract worth up to $24 million for a Pennsylvania waste management company to remove hazardous and non-hazardous waste from Dundalk Marine Terminal. The contract is part of a partnership between the Maryland Port Administration and Morristown, N.J.-based Honeywell to remove chromium ore processing residue, or COPR, from Dundalk Marine Terminal. COPR, which contains the hazardous chemical hexavalent chromium, was transported from the former Baltimore Works site in the Orangeville neighborhood in East Baltimore and used as fill material at Dundalk Marine Terminal.

## Contaminant violations cost county $9600

**FREDERICK NEWS POST** Violations of state caps for contaminants released into the Potomac River have landed Frederick County with a $9,600 penalty, officials announced this week The Maryland Department of the Environment announced Tuesday that Frederick County commissioners had agreed to pay the fine for incidents at the New Design Road water treatment plant from January 2010 to October 2011. The violations could have netted a total civil penalty of up to $130,000, according to one county official, but negotiations between state and local officials reduced that figure and resulted in the five-page settlement agreement reached June 21.--A construction effort that churned up soil, coupled with a series of heavy rains, gave rise to many of the 13 infractions documented in the agreement, according to Kevin Demosky, county director of utilities and solid waste management. The project to expand the water treatment plant's capacity largely wrapped up in April 2011, he said.

## Coal wins, earth loses

**STATE JOURNAL** The federal judge who slapped down the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for being overzealous in its crusade for water quality in Appalachia is a hero to some – like Gov. Steve Beshear, known for his strident demand that the EPA "get off our backs," and the Kentucky Coal Association, party to a lawsuit by the National Mining Association challenging the agency's authority to set higher standards for Kentucky and other states. The decision is bad news, however, for those who lament what's being done as a matter of course to the land and water of this state's mountainous region. Judy Petersen, executive director of the Kentucky Waterways Alliance, told The Courier-Journal of Louisville the ruling marked a sad day for the people of eastern Kentucky and for the natural resources of their homeland. "Everyone knows that fish and aquatic life in Appalachian streams are dying at an alarming rate," she told the paper.

## Commentary: The Clean Water Act: 40 Years Later

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**... Celebrating the Clean Water Act (CWA) is a priority for me this year. Amidst a tumultuous political landscape, it is more important than ever that we recognize the significance of this landmark piece of legislation and raise awareness for the work that still needs to be done. In my lifetime, I have witnessed the transformative effect the CWA has had on our nation's water, and I do not want our hard fought gains to be reversed in a moment of shortsightedness. For the last 40 years, communities across the United States have used the Clean Water Act to take back their watersheds, and restore the treasured places that were once considered beyond repair. Looking out on the global community, it is clear the CWA's impact is not limited to this country—the Clean Water Act is widely viewed as the standard for water regulation around the world. ... -- *Learn more about the Clean Water Act at the EPA and American Rivers websites. Alexandra Cousteau is President of the DC-based non-profit Blue Legacy and a Senior Advisor for Oceana. She was also named a 2009 National Geographic Emerging Explorer. Her global initiatives seek to inspire and empower individuals to protect their watersheds.*

**ADDED:**

## Toughen mine permits, W.Va. board recommends

**CHARLESTON-GAZETTE** (yesterday) Read the decision CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- While a federal court has rejected Obama administration guidance aimed at reducing mountaintop removal pollution, a new state appeals board decision is demanding tougher permit reviews and tightening water quality limits.The state Environmental Quality Board said mining permits must include reviews of toxic pollution potential and new discharge limits for sulfates, total dissolved solids, and electrical conductivity.

## DEP urged to toughen drilling rules

**CHARLESTON-GAZETTE** (day before yesterday) CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Environmental and citizen groups on Tuesday evening urged the Tomblin administration to toughen its proposed rules to implement West Virginia's new law on large-scale natural gas drilling.

# *** MORNING HOT LIST ***

## Officials: Shale zoning ruling will be upheld

**PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE** Saying they were locked in a "no-win situation" by the state's Act 13 and its wide-ranging zoning mandates involving the Marcellus Shale gas industry, local officials this week expressed confidence that a recent Commonwealth Court decision to overturn part of the law as unconstitutional will be upheld in an appeal to the state Supreme Court."We're confident that the Commonwealth Court decision was very well reasoned and supported by case law," said John Smith, a solicitor who represented Cecil and Robinson, Washington County, in the multi-municipality lawsuit challenging the statewide zoning provisions in Act 13. "These aren't novel concepts." Participants in the lawsuit -- which also included Peters and Mount Pleasant in Washington County; South Fayette in Allegheny County; two towns in Bucks County; an environmental group and several individuals -- have maintained that the law, supported by Gov. Tom Corbett and signed by him five months ago, stripped local governments of their local zoning rights and singled out the oil and natural gas industries for special, statewide zoning exceptions.

## Environmental Group Sues to Stop Compressor Station in Bradford County

**STATEIMPACT** The Clean Air Council has appealed a permit issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to Angelina Gathering Company for a compressor station expansion in Herrick Township,

Bradford County. Compressor stations push natural gas through pipelines toward processing plants or the end-user. In addition to emissions from the compressor station, nearby natural gas operations also create air pollution. The lawsuit, filed with the Pennsylvania Environmental Hearing Board, says the DEP should have aggregated nearby sources of air pollution, which include nine wells that serve the Greenzweig Compressor Station. If the state combined emissions from the nine wells, and the compressor station, more stringent environmental rules would apply. These include greater pollution limits, record keeping, monitoring and public input.

## Commentary: Taking the Marcellus Shale gas boom from rush to responsibility

**PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER** After four years of rapid growth, Marcellus Shale gas drilling has slowed. As The Inquirer reported last month, the number of drilling rigs in Pennsylvania has fallen 29 percent from a year ago. State data show the number of Marcellus wells drilled in July was 57 percent lower than in the same period last year. Gas production in the Marcellus and other shale basins got ahead of demand, depressing prices to unprofitable levels. "We are all losing our shirts today," Rex Tillerson, the CEO of Exxon Mobil, said recently. Most producers have cut back, leaving many wondering if Marcellus drilling is a long-term development or a short-lived bubble. Despite the current slump, though, gas production from the Marcellus and other formations is likely to keep growing for decades, according to a special report in the Economist magazine and other recent studies. And increasing shale-gas supplies will reduce energy costs, create jobs, and improve U.S. manufacturing competitiveness. For our nation and state to realize these benefits, however, gas producers must earn greater public acceptance by proving their practices are environmentally safe and socially responsible.

## Luzerne doctor sues over bans in new fracking law

**PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS**

A Luzerne County physician claims in a federal lawsuit that Pennsylvania's new oil and natural gas drilling law will force him to violate ethical rules in treating his patients. If someone were to be exposed to - and potentially sickened by - fluids used in the extraction of natural gas through the process known as hydraulic fracturing, kidney specialist Alfonso Rodriguez said in court documents, the law's confidentiality requirements would compromise his ability to discuss what chemicals the patient had been exposed to.

## Lack of funding slows research into possible public health effects of gas drilling

**ASSOCIATED PRESS**PITTSBURGH (AP) — Is gas drilling ruining the air, polluting water and making people sick? The evidence is sketchy and inconclusive, but a lack of serious funding is delaying efforts to resolve those pressing questions and creating a vacuum that could lead to a crush of lawsuits, some experts say. A House committee in June turned down an Obama administration request to fund $4.25 million in research on how drilling may affect water quality. In the spring, Pennsylvania stripped $2 million of funding that included a statewide health registry to track respiratory problems, skin conditions, stomach ailments and other illnesses potentially related to gas drilling

## EPA willing to consider renegotiating Alcosan consent decree

**PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW** The Environmental Protection Agency said on Wednesday that it's willing to consider changes to a costly consent decree that requires the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority to eliminate sewage overflows into rivers — signaling that a tough economy might be making the agency more flexible, observers say. "EPA is always willing to consider requests to modify the terms of a federal consent decree based on new and relevant information that can improve the remedies," the agency said a day after Alcosan said it would not go forward with a $3.6 billion plan to meet the 2008 EPA agreement. Reopening such agreements is unusual but not unprecedented. The EPA renegotiated consent decrees with Indianapolis, Atlanta, Honolulu and Toledo, Ohio. "EPA is being more flexible about how communities can meet these requirements. They do recognize

there is an economic downturn in the country and are certainly aware of how costly these projects are," said Nathan Gardner-Andrews, general counsel for the National Association of Clean Water Agencies in Washington.

## The red tides have returned to Hampton Roads

**HAMPTON ROADS DAILY PRESS** The red tides are back. The massive annual blooms of harmful algae that cloud the Chesapeake Bay, local waterways and shorelines every summer have been spotted floating from the lower Bay as far north as the Rappahannock River, according to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Point. They've also been spotted on the James River from the Warwick River to the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel. The algae are toxic or harmful microscopic phytoplankton that feed on nutrients in the water, living and dying en masse, discoloring the water red or mahogany and often emitting an odor of decay.

## EDITORIAL: What's in the ditches? Results of EPA's latest tests could bring tough news for Anniston

**HAMPTON ROADS DAILY PRESS** To clean Anniston of decades of environmental pollution, researchers have rolled up their sleeves and reached their hands -- figuratively -- into the town's dirt. The results haven't always been positive.That dirt, as has been well-documented, was often contaminated with PCBs and lead, byproducts of the city's industrial history. The saga of this part of Anniston's past is both lengthy and instructive, a sign of man's ability to repair the damage of his mistakes. We can be thankful cleanup efforts have transformed Anniston's contaminated neighborhoods into livable, safe areas in which front yards no longer contain deadly chemicals.That said, it's deeply disturbing to hear that tests finished this week on ditches in west Anniston may find new pockets of pollution that will need remediation.

## All of law firm's Tranguch spill suits settled

**WILKES-BARRE TIMES LEADER** WILKES-BARRE – A Philadelphia law firm representing hundreds of plaintiffs in an 11-year-old gasoline spill lawsuit has settled all its remaining cases, according to court documents filed Tuesday. The Locks Law Firm settled 258 outstanding lawsuits, stemming from a case in which more than 1,000 Hazleton-area residents said they were sickened or their properties were damaged by a spill that leaked hundreds of gallons of gasoline into the soil surrounding the Tranguch Tire and Service Center along Church Street. The area is commonly referred to as the Laurel Gardens area. Exxon Mobil was named as a defendant in the suits.

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# PENNSYLVANIA

### *PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER*

**From Early Bird** Commentary: Taking the Marcellus Shale gas boom from rush to responsibility After four years of rapid growth, Marcellus Shale gas drilling has slowed. As The Inquirer reported last month, the number of drilling rigs in Pennsylvania has fallen 29 percent from a year ago. State data show the number of Marcellus wells drilled in July was 57 percent lower than in the same period last year. Gas production in the Marcellus and other shale basins got ahead of demand, depressing prices to unprofitable levels. "We are all losing our shirts today," Rex Tillerson, the CEO of Exxon Mobil, said recently. Most producers have cut back, leaving many wondering if Marcellus drilling is a long-term development or a short-lived bubble. Despite the current slump, though, gas production from the Marcellus and other formations is likely to keep growing for decades, according to a special report in the Economist magazine and other recent studies. And increasing shale-gas supplies will reduce energy costs, create jobs, and improve U.S. manufacturing competitiveness. For our nation and state to realize these

benefits, however, gas producers must earn greater public acceptance by proving their practices are environmentally safe and socially responsible.

**From Early Bird** Luzerne doctor sues over bans in new fracking law
A Luzerne County physician claims in a federal lawsuit that Pennsylvania's new oil and natural gas drilling law will force him to violate ethical rules in treating his patients. If someone were to be exposed to - and potentially sickened by - fluids used in the extraction of natural gas through the process known as hydraulic fracturing, kidney specialist Alfonso Rodriguez said in court documents, the law's confidentiality requirements would compromise his ability to discuss what chemicals the patient had been exposed to. Rodriguez frequently treats such patients, including well workers exposed to fluids in a blowout, said his attorney, Paul A. Rossi of Kennett Square. "He is the doctor fracking-fluid exposees go to. It's not hypothetical that he's going to need to make use of this law," Rossi said. "He may have to go to the gas companies to get information on an ongoing basis."

**From Early Bird** ECOtality offers free electric-car-charging stations A California company, infused with millions of federal dollars, is offering to install free charging stations in the homes of some Philadelphia-area owners of electric vehicles. In return, it wants your data. ECOtality Inc. announced Wednesday that it was expanding its federally funded EV Project to Philadelphia, as well as Atlanta and Chicago. The two-year-old project, which is now in seven states, is aimed at developing the infrastructure to support the electric-vehicle market, while also gathering data on how EVs are being used and recharged.

## *PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS*

**From Early Bird** Editorial: WATER WORLD Old city. Old pipes. Old problems for Philadelphia Is the world falling apart? On Wednesday, one day after 670 million people in India —about 10 percent of the world's population — lost electrical power, residents of North Philly coped with the third water-main break in the city in 10 days. Philadelphians and New Delhians are sharing more than a miserable summer (though, actually, it's the rainy season in India); they are forced to cope with a history of inattention to infrastructure that suggests that there is no end in sight for such disasters. This week hits home that infrastructure is literally a global problem, one that must be addressed far better than it has to date. In point of fact, Philadelphia's water system is in pretty good shape — relatively speaking.

## *PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE*

**From Early Bird** Officials: Shale zoning ruling will be upheld
Saying they were locked in a "no-win situation" by the state's Act 13 and its wide-ranging zoning mandates involving the Marcellus Shale gas industry, local officials this week expressed confidence that a recent Commonwealth Court decision to overturn part of the law as unconstitutional will be upheld in an appeal to the state Supreme Court."We're confident that the Commonwealth Court decision was very well reasoned and supported by case law," said John Smith, a solicitor who represented Cecil and Robinson, Washington County, in the multi-municipality lawsuit challenging the statewide zoning provisions in Act 13. "These aren't novel concepts." Participants in the lawsuit -- which also included Peters and Mount Pleasant in Washington County; South Fayette in Allegheny County; two towns in Bucks County; an environmental group and several individuals -- have maintained that the law, supported by Gov. Tom Corbett and signed by him five months ago, stripped local governments of their local zoning rights and singled out the oil and natural gas industries for special, statewide zoning exceptions. In a 57-page majority opinion written last week by President Judge Dan Pellegrini, Commonwealth Court largely agreed, overturning the statewide zoning provisions in the law as unconstitutional. Other parts of the act, including the establishment of new environmental guidelines and gas well impact fees, were left intact.

**From Early Bird** Local officials confident in *Marcellus* Shale zoning ruling Local officials are applauding a court decision that supports the right of municipalities to decide where Marcellus Shale development can occur. But, they are keeping their eyes on an appeal to overturn that decision and revoke the right of communities to enforce their own regulations. A panel of Commonwealth Court judges ruled July 26 that zoning provisions in Act 13 were

unconstitutional, and the state cannot force towns to allow natural gas drilling and facilities in areas where local zoning rules prohibit them. The state immediately appealed the finding to the state Supreme Court and requested an October hearing. Among plaintiffs in the lawsuit are South Fayette, Cecil, Peters, Mount Pleasant and Robinson, Washington County.

**From Early Bird** Far from pro-coal In his July 19 Perspectives piece "Our Pro-Coal President," United Steelworkers president Leo Gerard uses Orwellian logic to invert the facts behind administration policies that Democrats as well as Republicans have likened to a "war on coal." In Pennsylvania, one company has just idled five mines affecting 225 permanent employees and in eastern Kentucky alone some 1,500 miners have recently lost their jobs in 23 counties. The Environmental Protection Agency's power plant regulations have already led utilities to retire 20 percent of generating capacity with more closures on the way. With 92 percent of coal mined in this country going to electricity generation, the impact on coal mining employment should be obvious.

**From Early Bird** Officials seek speedy review of Act 13 ruling
HARRISBURG -- State officials are seeking a speedy review by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court of their appeal to a decision last week overturning statewide zoning for shale gas drilling. That request, outlined in a legal brief filed on Monday, asks the Supreme Court to hear the case during its mid-October session in Pittsburgh. Attorneys representing the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection are appealing the decision from a panel of Commonwealth Court judges, who ruled that Pennsylvania can't require municipalities to allow drilling in areas where local zoning rules would prohibit it. ... A final decision in the matter will come from the Supreme Court, which currently is split between three Democrats and three Republicans.

## *PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW*

**From Early Bird** Leak from Drilling leak leads to violation notice
A gas-drilling site leaked sediment above a drinking-water reservoir in Westmoreland County, leading state environmental regulators to issue a violation notice. A solid, non-toxic substance seeped out of a hillside above Beaver Run Reservoir in Bell when drillers nearby bored through a previously unknown spring on July 21, officials at the Department of Environmental Protection and the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County said Wednesday. The substance was a grout that included the clay bentonite — a mix that drillers call liquid cement, officials said. There were no signs that bentonite entered the drinking-water supply, according to testing done by the authority and a group the driller Consol Energy hired, said John Ashton, the authority's assistant manager. Consol officials told state inspectors they saw bentonite in the water, according to a preliminary report from the DEP, but state officials are reviewing the details, the department's regional spokesman John Poister said.

**From Early Bird** EPA willing to consider renegotiating Alcosan consent decree The Environmental Protection Agency said on Wednesday that it's willing to consider changes to a costly consent decree that requires the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority to eliminate sewage overflows into rivers — signaling that a tough economy might be making the agency more flexible, observers say. "EPA is always willing to consider requests to modify the terms of a federal consent decree based on new and relevant information that can improve the remedies," the agency said a day after Alcosan said it would not go forward with a $3.6 billion plan to meet the 2008 EPA agreement. Reopening such agreements is unusual but not unprecedented. The EPA renegotiated consent decrees with Indianapolis, Atlanta, Honolulu and Toledo, Ohio. "EPA is being more flexible about how communities can meet these requirements. They do recognize there is an economic downturn in the country and are certainly aware of how costly these projects are," said Nathan Gardner-Andrews, general counsel for the National Association of Clean Water Agencies in Washington.

**From Early Bird** Shale drilling boosts developmentSome stalled residential developments in Cecil are picking up steam, fueled in part by the Marcellus shale drilling industry's expansion in the area, township officials said. Planned projects include The Reserve at Southpointe, a 370-unit apartment complex that will be the largest apartment

complex in Cecil when it's done, and Overlook at Southpointe, which will include 363 homes, including 240 single-family houses and 87 townhouses when completed. "Well, it's certainly going to help our tax base, but it also maybe shows the strength of the industry in this area," Cecil Manager Donald Gennuso said. Several new developments are playing off their close proximity to Southpointe, a business park that is being called the hub of the energy sector in Western Pennsylvania. More than 50 energy-related companies, including Range Resources and Consol Energy, have opened offices there recently. The park now has 8,000 employees, said Mary Stollar, director of business investment at the Washington County Chamber of Commerce.

## HARRISBURG PATRIOT NEWS

**From Early Bird** Editorial: 'Irrational' gas policy: Act 13 local zoning pre-emption is a mistake Sometimes, even in politics, you have to admit you're wrong. Gov. Tom Corbett and members of the Legislature were wrong to strip local municipalities of their zoning rights in Act 13, the Marcellus Shale law. Even zoning land "residential" would not make any difference if drillers want access to the land. That part of the Marcellus Shale bill has become so unpopular that it is being challenged in court, and the "little guys" are winning. Commonwealth Court struck down that part of the law last week, going so far as to call it "irrational."

## WILKES-BARRE TIMES LEADER

**From Early Bird** All of law firm's Tranguch spill suits settled WILKES-BARRE – A Philadelphia law firm representing hundreds of plaintiffs in an 11-year-old gasoline spill lawsuit has settled all its remaining cases, according to court documents filed Tuesday. The Locks Law Firm settled 258 outstanding lawsuits, stemming from a case in which more than 1,000 Hazleton-area residents said they were sickened or their properties were damaged by a spill that leaked hundreds of gallons of gasoline into the soil surrounding the Tranguch Tire and Service Center along Church Street. The area is commonly referred to as the Laurel Gardens area. Exxon Mobil was named as a defendant in the suits.

## HAZLETON STANDARD-SPEAKER

**From Early Bird** Experts disagree over potential effects of Dorrance Townshipquarry expansion Water and sound issues were the main topics at a second hearing in Dorrance Township on a new conditional use application for a controversial quarry expansion project.The four-hour-long hearing Tuesday night was highlighted by testimony from two hydrogeologists in disagreement over water issues at the Small Mountain Quarry.Gerald Ahnell, a hydrogeologist from the Harrisburg area, testified on behalf of Pennsy Supply, owners of the Small Mountain Quarry, and the applicant of the conditional use permit needed for expansion of its operation from the north side to the south side of Small Mountain Road in Dorrance Township.Ahnell presented himself as an expert witness based on his 35 years as a ground water consultant for underground mining landfill operations and hard rock quarries.

## SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

**From Early Bird** State agency distributing Marcellus housing aid
FHA projects could collect gas revenue. Agency has $2.5 million to distribute HARRISBURG - The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency is seeking proposals for projects to receive revenue from gas drilling impact fees earmarked to meet affordable housing needs in the Marcellus Shale region, officials announced Wednesday. The agency will distribute $2.5 million collected in impact fee revenue for 2011 gas production and $5 million collected in each year thereafter. Those amounts are specified in the impact fee law enacted last March.

## STATEIMPACT

**From Early Bird** Environmental Group Sues to Stop Compressor Station in Bradford County The Clean Air Council has appealed a permit issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to Angelina Gathering Company for a compressor station expansion in Herrick Township, Bradford County. Compressor stations push natural gas through pipelines toward processing plants or the end-user. In addition to emissions from the compressor station, nearby natural gas operations also create air pollution. The lawsuit, filed with the Pennsylvania Envi-

ronmental Hearing Board, says the DEP should have aggregated nearby sources of air pollution, which include nine wells that serve the Greenzweig Compressor Station. If the state combined emissions from the nine wells, and the compressor station, more stringent environmental rules would apply. These include greater pollution limits, record keeping, monitoring and public input.

## PHILADELPHIA WEEKLY

**From Early Bird** Fracking Unbelievable: Natural Gas Drilling is Responsible for Satanism? Is fracking responsible for bird deaths? Hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking"—the process of pumping water and chemicals into the ground at a pressurized rate exceeding what bedrock can withstand to harvest sweet, sweet natural gas—was an inevitability in Pennsylvania. There's big money in this new kind of drilling; both candidates for governor in 2010 were eager to welcome the gas companies with open arms. Environmentalists, of course, have a pesky tendency to ask how such things might be impacting the whole ecosystem in the long term, not just the economy in the short term—and, indeed, they've suggested that fracking may contaminate our water supply. After the controversial documentary *Gasland* brought information about fracking to the mass consciousness, the process has subsequently found itself at the heart of several scientific mysteries and conspiracy theories you may not have heard of. And, damn, if any of these are true, we're all in grave danger.

## FUEL FIX

**From Early Bird** Blog: Critics' latest fracking claim goes biblical
Fracking has been blamed for everything from illness to earthquakes to water contamination. But the latest accusation is a bit out of this world. The Philadelphia Weekly posted a story about fracking with a bit of a twist — what if fracking isn't a process to develop the U.S.'s natural resources but a satanic ritual. Here is the comment in all of its absurdity:

Pennsylvania man uses high-tech filter system to keep methane at bay
Pennsylvania resident Michael Leighton had Chesapeake Energy install a high-tech filter system in his Bradford County home to prevent methane gas from seeping into his water well. NPR StateImpact interviewed Leighton, who lives a half mile from a Chesapeake well, about the situation on his property. The Department of Environmental Protection linked the methane migration problems to a nearby Chesapeake well. Chesapeake and the state agency are investigating what is causing the methane migration.

## POTTSTOWN MERCURY

Pottstown to cease adding *fluoride* to water on Sept. 1
POTTSTOWN — Three years after it was first discussed and nearly a year after the local decision was made, permission was finally granted last week for fluoride to be removed from Pottstown's tap water.
Utilities Supervisor Brent Wagner said permission from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection was received in a letter last week.

Developer withdraws lawsuit over Pottstown permits
POTTSTOWN — A lawsuit filed last year by a developer which charged that the borough did not have the authority to charge fees for certain kinds of permits has been withdrawn. In an unrelated development, that developer, Frank McLaughlin, was arrested in June and charged with stealing borough water by bypassing water meters in a number of properties he owns in Pottstown and Stowe.

NRC finds only 2 safety issues in Limerick plant re-licensing

## PENN ENERGY

Regulators lack reliable research on impacts of fracking Experts continue to disagree on the environmental and health consequences of new unconventional natural gas exploration methods, but regulators are finding themselves hampered by a lack of solid research on the topic, according to The Associated Press.The boom in hydraulic

fracturing, also known as fracking, has led to significant concerns about its potential impacts both because the process itself is comparatively new and because the communities that have been a part of the boom are generally unaccustomed to the presence of the oil and gas industry.A number of medical incidents have been blamed upon fracking, ranging from rashes to sickened and dying livestock, but Congress has thus far refused to fund any extensive reviews of the potential effects the process has had on affected communities."Right now, the kind of comprehensive research that's needed just hasn't started," Bernard Goldstein, a professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, told the AP. Meanwhile, he noted, "There's literally hundreds of millions of dollars being spent on environmental health and human health research every year."The New York Times notes there is also a growing distrust of research funded by industry money, even if some of it has proven reliable. An analysis of the Marcellus shale is available at PennEnergy's Research area.

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# DELAWARE

## *WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL*

**From Early Bird** Utility may buy sewer system Tidewater Environmental Services is negotiating to acquire and upgrade an ailing wastewater treatment system in Sussex County, Delaware's natural resources secretary said. The aerial-spray wastewater system at The Plantations, a residential development near Lewes, apparently had a leak in the treatment lagoon's liner.The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control fined the facility's owner, YMG Corp., about $300,000 for violating the Clean Water Act. DNREC Secretary Collin O'Mara said he was concerned that the lack of maintenance, and the company's lack of money to perform the repairs needed, had the potential to affect local drinking water wells if not addressed. ... The News Journal reported last year that it took seven years of high nitrate levels in the groundwater for DNREC to fine YMG.

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# WASHINGTON, D.C.

## *WASHINGTON POST*

**From Early Bird** Kaine: 'Feds feel like they're being attacked' Sequestration could cause extensive unemployment among the federal work force, former Virginia governor Tim Kaine said at a campaign event Wednesday evening in Arlington.

**From Early Bird** Mercury spill investigated in D.C.Fire officials are investigating a mercury spill at an office building in downtown D.C.The spill happened about noon Tuesday at a building in the 1300 block of I Street NW, Assistant Chief Brian Lee said.Lee, who was on his way to the site of the incident, did not know what caused the spill or the type of business being conducted in the affected office.He said "a few ounces" of mercury were spilled.No injuries have been reported, but emergency crews are checking employees for possible exposure. Mercury exposure can affect the brain, heart, kidneys and other vital organs.

Blog: Dry conditions, drought persist in Washington, DC area

## *WASHINGTON TIMES*

WISER: Frack attack — reports question science used by fracking criticsIt's been a rough couple of weeks for environmental groups and activists opposed to natural gas drilling. The latest blow came last week when the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency announced that it would take no "additional action" to address contaminants in the private drinking water wells of residents in Dimock, Pa. Dimock is the town infamous for a scene in "Gasland," an anti-drilling documentary made by filmmaker Josh Fox, in which a homeowner ignites his tap water. The EPA conducted the study in Dimock because of its proximity to the Marcellus Shale, a rock formation that drillers inject with a pressurized mixture of water, sand and chemicals (more than 99.5 percent of the mixture consists of water and sand) to release natural gas — a process known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. In a sampling of 64 homes, the EPA only found levels of hazardous substances posing health concerns in the well water at five homes. The substances, namely arsenic, barium, and manganese, are all naturally occurring. Fracking opponents have also had to contend with a recent report by the Associated Press questioning the science behind their indictment of the practice:

### *THE HILL (DC)*

Blog: Extreme weather from climate change increaes urgency of *pollution* reduction
The warnings about climate change have grown to a deafening roar. This summer we are experiencing deadly heat waves and costly drought. The recent heat led to at least 55 fatalities. The New York Times describes the widespread drought.The drought that has settled over more than half of the continental United States this summer is the most widespread in more than half a century. And it is likely to grow worse.

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# WEST VIRGINIA

### *CHARLESTON GAZETTE*

**From Early Bird** Blog: Does DEP really know what's best for West Virginia? In the rush to get a blog post and a print story finished about yesterday's big federal court ruling throwing out a major part of the Obama administration's crackdown on mountaintop removal (and get over to the state Department of Environmental Protection for a hearing on gas drilling rules), I didn't have a chance to check in with DEP Secretary Randy Huffman's (above, right, with then-Gov. Manchin and DEP lawyer Ben Bailey) reaction to the ruling by U.S. District Judge Reggie B. Walton.So I checked in with Randy this morning and he told me:

Toughen mine permits, W.Va. board recommends
(yesterday) Read the decision CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- While a federal court has rejected Obama administration guidance aimed at reducing mountaintop removal pollution, a new state appeals board decision is demanding tougher permit reviews and tightening water quality limits.The state Environmental Quality Board said mining permits must include reviews of toxic pollution potential and new discharge limits for sulfates, total dissolved solids, and electrical conductivity.

DEP urged to toughen drilling rules (day before yesterday) CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Environmental and citizen groups on Tuesday evening urged the Tomblin administration to toughen its proposed rules to implement West Virginia's new law on large-scale natural gas drilling.

Jim Sconyers: While we fiddle the planet burns CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- I recently had a slightly heated online exchange because I would not embrace natural gas as a "bridge fuel." Why not? Natural gas is methane. Methane is a greenhouse gas much more potent than carbon dioxide ($CO_2$) in driving global climate change. Methane is released, or deliberately discharged, at every step of the gas development process, from drilling to production to transmission and beyond. Methane is a hydrocarbon fossil fuel. That means it, too, pours $CO_2$ into the atmosphere when it is burned in a power plant or factory or home or car.

### *CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL*

**From Early Bird** *Marcellus* Shale gas boom triggers property records rush FAIRMONT - Roughly three years ago, Marion County Clerk Janice Cosco started to notice something unusual. The number of people in the courthouse's record room kept growing - and growing and growing. Soon, she realized that the room couldn't handle any more people. "One day, I went down to the record room and it was packed," Cosco said. "They were shoulder to shoulder." Cosco and her staff were witnessing the flood of lawyers, brokers and abstractors coming to the area to research property records for Marcellus Shale drilling. And as gas companies increased their drilling interest in West Virginia, activity in the courthouse increased.

TODAY: Mountaineer *Gas* seeks lower rate because of lower natural gas costs Mountaineer Gas Co. announced it wants to reduce its rate by almost 11 percent because of lower natural gas costs.The company said its request would lower the average monthly bill by $6.78 or 10.8 percent. "This represents an average annual decrease in the cost of residential gas usage of $81.36," Mountaineer Gas said in a prepared statement. The request was filed Wednesday with the West Virginia Public Service Commission, which regulates utilities in the state. ... Mountaineer Gas is the largest natural gas distribution company in West Virginia. The company provides natural gas to more than 226,000 customers in 48 of the state's 55 counties. Mountaineer Gas receives natural gas from two major interstate gas transmission pipelines and distributes it through a network of about 5,600 miles of pipeline.

## *PARKERSBURG NEWS & SENTINEL*

**From Early Bird** Reaction favorable to court's ruling on EPA
Tomblin hails ruling as a victory for coal. PARKERSBURG - Tuesday's ruling by a district court in Washington, D.C., against the Environmental Protection Agency was a victory for coal miners, the governor of West Virginia said Wednesday. U.S. District Judge Reggie Walton, siding with several states, including West Virginia, and the National Mining Association, said the EPA exceeded existing permitting responsibilities held by other state and federal agencies to block the issuance of new permits and overstepped its authority by establishing new Clean Water Act criteria for mining.

**From Early Bird** Injection well panel: Information needed
MARIETTA - The public needs a lot more information about what's being pumped into 168 injection wells across Ohio, according to panelists who took part in a forum at Marietta College's McDonough Auditorium Tuesday. Approximately 50 people attended the injection well forum, sponsored by the Southeast Ohio Fracking Interest Group (SEOFIG).Organizers said the session was designed to educate citizens on concerns about the briny mixture of salt and other chemicals that make up wastewater from shale oil and gas hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, operations. That mixture includes specially developed fluids for gas and oil extraction as well as natural byproducts of the oil and gas released from shale beds in the process. ...Parkersburg resident Pavanne Pettigrew worked as a senior geologist with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection in Charleston for 17 years where she developed and administered the Underground Injection Control program for coal mining. She teaches geology and physics at West Virginia University-Parkersburg. Pettigrew said during her time with WVDEP, oil and gas companies were interested in injecting wastewater into abandoned coal mines.

## *WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING*

**From Early Bird** *DEP* proposes rule change to protect mining facilities
August 1, 2012 · The Department of Environmental Protection is still accepting public comments on proposed rule changes that would affect water quality regulations that mining operations abide by. Senate Bill 615 was passed March 10, making West Virginia's Water Pollution Control Act consistent with the federal Water Pollution Control Act, also known as the Clean Water Act. Since then coal facilities have reported to other media outlets that they've been receiving notices of intent to sue because of high water conductivity that flows off their sites into watersheds. Industry officials say since water conductivity standards haven't been set on state or national levels, they aren't typically included in their permits. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has, however, set water conductivity benchmarks.

## ASSOCIATED PRESS (W.Va.)

Gas Drilling: Detailed Health Studies "Haven't Started"

Is gas drilling ruining the air, polluting water, and making people sick? Scientists say the evidence is sketchy and inconclusive, but a lack of serious funding is delaying efforts to resolve the pressing questions. Bernard Goldstein, professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, says the kind of comprehensive research that's needed "just hasn't started." The Environmental Defense Fund says it is partnering with major universities and eight natural gas companies on ways to address environmental and health concerns, but it hasn't provided details. Experts including Goldstein say the lack of research could lead to a crush of lawsuits and expensive settlements for the industry.

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# MARYLAND

## BALTIMORE SUN

**From Early Bird** Severe weather renews climate-change talks in Washington, Annapolis

O'Malley administration pushing state to adapt to 'new' climate Policies to change building codes in flood plains and on shorelines, construct offshore wind turbines and manage suburban sprawl could gain political traction, officials hope, as recent extreme weather renews a conversation on climate change in Maryland and nationally. State efforts to adapt to what officials are calling a "new normal" climate took center stage in a U.S. Senate hearing on climate change Wednesday, the first in 21/2 years. The state plans to begin integrating expectations of higher sea levels and more violent weather into government programs and policies by year's end. Such changes are necessary, officials said, as Maryland and the nation endure a hot, dry summer, the latest in what seems like a surge in severe weather.

**From Early Bird** Letter: Carbon tax will put a true price on pollutionThanks for your excellent editorial on the value of a carbon tax ("Climate and conservatives," July 30). A carbon tax is a great policy instrument for internalizing the true costs — health risks, a destabilized climate — of carbon emissions. If conservatives or liberals want to pass a carbon tax, they will need public support. That is why 175 volunteers for the Citizens Climate Lobby traveled to D.C. from all over the country last week to meet with more than 300 members of theU.S. House of Representativeson Capitol Hill. If our elected representatives in Washington are to put a price on carbon they will need political courage, and we were there to show them that we have their backs.

Our View: Food or fuel?

Our view: With drought-fueled corn prices threatening to clobber consumers in the grocery store, it's time for the federal government to ease the ethanol mandateThis year's drought has already raised wholesale corn prices dramatically, and consumers will likely soon feel the pinch at the grocery store checkout. Economists are warning of a 3-4 percent rise in food prices this year and next as well, an especially poorly-timed circumstance given the recent weakness in the economy. Nobody is feeling this pain more sharply than Maryland's poultry producers, who have traditionally relied on corn above all else to feed their chickens. They have called on theU.S. Environmental Protection Agencyto reduce or waive the so-called ethanol mandate or "Renewable Fuel Standard," a 7-year-old requirement that will result in 40 percent of the U.S. corn crop being used in the production of biofuel. While we have had our differences with the poultry industry and their views on the EPA and the enforcement of Clean Water Act standards on poultry litter disposal, they are right on target on ethanol. Corn may be regarded as an important resource to ethanol producers, but it is vital as animal feed, and that needs to be the higher priority.

## SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

**From Early Bird** Coastal Bays: Consider 'green' energy impact
Finding alternative sources of energy is critical to reducing greenhouse gases, but the forward-thinking businesses that support, wind, solar and alternative fuels need to consider their impact on the environment, too. The latest Atlantic Wind Connection proposal is to run a transmission line across Assateague Island from its offshore wind facility and then west to Berlin. As it stands, the cable would be underground and run only along major roads and highways. We hope to work with Newport Bay farmers and property owners and our partners at the park service to keep cable underground to avoid above-ground intrusion of farmland, forests and wetlands south of Route 50. Millions of dollars have been spent by the state of Maryland and the federal government to protect this last remaining jewel in the mid-Atlantic region.

## BAY NET

**From Early Bird** Commissioners Regard *Septic* Bill as Punishment
Commissioner Evan Slaughenhoupt expresses frustration over Maryland's recently approved Septic Bill. Hall is the secretary of the Maryland Department of Planning. Calvert County Department of Community Planning and Building Director Charles Johnston updated the county commissioners on a recent meeting he (Johnston) and members of his staff had with Maryland Department of Planning officials. Johnston's summary, presented during the staff session prior to the commissioners' Tuesday, July 31 meeting was not well received. Johnston and department staff met with state officials about the possible impacts of the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012, which is better known as The Septic Bill. He indicated the possibility is strong that minor town centers such as St. Leonard, Dunkirk and Huntingtown, which are not served by public sewer, could have their priority funding area status compromised should the county fail to comply with The Septic Bill.

## SOUTHERN MARYLAND ONLINE

**From Early Bird** Fracking could tap into natural gas reserves here
Report shows potential in Southern Maryland. A new government assessment has identified several areas throughout Southern Maryland that have the potential for hydraulic fracturing to mine natural gas. The practice, known as fracking, has been under way for years in parts of Pennsylvania known as the Marcellus Shale, which also extends into some of Western Maryland. Mining companies drill wells into the shale and inject them with sand and water containing chemicals to essentially crack the rock and release recoverable natural gas or oil.

## FREDERICK NEWS POST

Contaminant violations cost county $9600 Violations of state caps for contaminants released into the Potomac River have landed Frederick County with a $9,600 penalty, officials announced this week The Maryland Department of the Environment announced Tuesday that Frederick County commissioners had agreed to pay the fine for incidents at the New Design Road water treatment plant from January 2010 to October 2011. The violations could have netted a total civil penalty of up to $130,000, according to one county official, but negotiations between state and local officials reduced that figure and resulted in the five-page settlement agreement reached June 21.--A construction effort that churned up soil, coupled with a series of heavy rains, gave rise to many of the 13 infractions documented in the agreement, according to Kevin Demosky, county director of utilities and solid waste management. The project to expand the water treatment plant's capacity largely wrapped up in April 2011, he said.

## BALTIMORE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Maryland to vote on $24M contract to remove hazardous waste at port The state's spending board will vote Wednesday on a contract worth up to $24 million for a Pennsylvania waste management company to remove hazardous and non-hazardous waste from Dundalk Marine Terminal. The contract is part of a partnership between the Maryland Port Administration and Morristown, N.J.-based Honeywell to remove chromium ore processing residue, or COPR, from Dundalk Marine Terminal. COPR, which contains the hazardous chemical hexavalent chromium, was transported from the former Baltimore Works site in the Orangeville neighborhood in East Baltimore and used as fill material at Dundalk Marine Terminal.

## MARYLAND GAZETTE

Family near Fort Detrick wants well water tested

After reading that consultants at Fort Detrick had identified high levels of a cancer-causing chemical in its groundwater, the Degan family started to wonder and worry. Dennis Degan, 60, and his wife, Ann Clinton, 59, have raised their granddaughter Taleah, 4, in their home on Bowers Road since 2007. The family gets its water from a nearly 300-foot well. Their home is within the study area for cleanup efforts at the base, but the couple said they never knew that until they read a story in The Gazette last week. They said no one has contacted them or their neighbors about potential threats to their drinking water or asked to test their wells. Upon request, Fort Detrick officials have tested wells at residences near Area B, a 399-acre site once used as a dumping ground for chemical and biological waste, but has not yet gone looking for them, according to Joseph Gortva, project manager for cleanup at the U.S. Army post.The site was named to a Superfund site in 2009 because of its polluted groundwater. Ever since, efforts have been under way to find the contamination and clean it up.Now, the Degan family wants its well tested.

Frederick County fined for discharging pollutants at water plant County official says violations posed no threat to public safety.Frederick County has paid the state a fine of $9,600 for exceeding limits of pollutants discharged from its water treatment plant between January 2010 and October 2010, according to the settlement agreement. The county negotiated the fine down from $130,000, said Kevin Demosky, the county director of the Division of Utilities and Solid Waste.

Pepco says it responded well to derecho; others disagree

## ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

Myersville says no to natural gas compressor station

MYERSVILLE, Md. — Myersville is saying no to Dominion Resources' plan for a natural gas compressor station near the intersection of Interstate 70 and Md. 17. The Frederick News-Post reports that the Town Council voted unanimously Wednesday against the company's request for a zoning amendment to allow construction of the project on a 21-acre site.The final decision is up to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Dominion says the unit is needed to maintain the flow of compressed gas through underground pipes. A citizens group says the facility would produce harmful noise and emissions, and might explode. The state Department of Natural Resources says the project could negatively affect nearby state parks and the Appalachian Trail.

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# VIRGINIA

## HAMPTON ROADS DAILY PRESS

**From Early Bird** EDITORIAL: What's in the ditches? Results of EPA's latest tests could bring tough news for Anniston

To clean Anniston of decades of environmental pollution, researchers have rolled up their sleeves and reached their hands -- figuratively -- into the town's dirt. The results haven't always been positive.That dirt, as has been well-documented, was often contaminated with PCBs and lead, byproducts of the city's industrial history. The saga of this part of Anniston's past is both lengthy and instructive, a sign of man's ability to repair the damage of his mistakes. We can be thankful cleanup efforts have transformed Anniston's contaminated neighborhoods into livable, safe areas in which front yards no longer contain deadly chemicals.That said, it's deeply disturbing to hear that tests finished this week on ditches in west Anniston may find new pockets of pollution that will need remediation.

**From Early Bird** The red tides have returned to Hampton Roads

The red tides are back. The massive annual blooms of harmful algae that cloud the Chesapeake Bay, local waterways and shorelines every summer have been spotted floating from the lower Bay as far north as the Rappahannock River, according to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Point. They've also been spotted on the James River from the Warwick River to the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel. The algae are toxic or harmful microscopic phytoplankton that feed on nutrients in the water, living and dying en masse, discoloring the water red or mahogany and often emitting an odor of decay.

**From Early Bird** Reduce pest problems around your home and landscape
No one really likes spiders, ants and other creepy crawlers invading home and yard. But, they are a natural part of our environment and there are some best-practice ways to deal with them. "An essential aspect of landscape maintenance is insect control," says Doug VanGundy, a board certified entomologist for Central Life Sciences, which includes Amdro pest-control products – www.amdro.com – sold at Lowe's and Home Depot. "Problem insects can affect the vigor of plants and landscapes, either through disease, insect feeding or other destructive activities. Insects can also invade the interior of a home in search of food, water and shelter, becoming a general nuisance." Here are VanGundy's tips on preventing insect infestations on your property:

## *ASOCIATED PRESS (Va.)*

**From Early Bird** Gold dredging on rise in Va. waters

**From Early Bird** Richmond celebrates the purple martin

**From Early Bird** NRC team to discuss possible role in Va. mining

## *WAVY.COM*

*Gas* leak capped in Norfolk NORFOLK, Va. (WAVY) - Virginia Natural Gas crews were called to the scene of a gas leak in Norfolk Thursday morning.Avenue I and Avenue J were blocked to traffic beginning at around 9 a.m., while crews secured the line.Once the leak was capped, about an hour later, construction crews were able to return to work.Battalion Chief Julian Williamson said no businesses or residents were affected, other than by the temporarily traffic stoppage.

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# MISCELLANEOUS

## *NEW YORK TIMES*

**From Early Bird** A Deeper Look at Undisclosed Conflicts of Interest in 'Frackademia'Opponents of expanded gas drilling have coined the term "frackademia" for university research on the potential impacts of the boom in shale gas drilling that involves industry money or experts with industry ties. The effort, of course, is aimed at conveying that industry money or relationships leads to bad science. I've seen studies of this kind that have robust findings. The "Future of Natural Gas" analysis of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Energy Institute, while undertaken with some industry money and (marginally disclosed) relationships of authors to energy companies, appears to have held up well to independent scrutiny, for instance. But there are troubling instances in which an undisclosed financial tie has created after-the-fact problems for substantial research projects. This was the case with the report and bundle of related material produced last February by the University of Texas Energy Institute assessing risks from gas drilling using hydraulic fracturing ("fracking" in both environmental and industry shorthand).

**From Early Bird** A Glimpse of the Alternative Fuel Future While a variety of new fuel technologies are advancing, policy makers can be assured that the internal combustion engine will remain dominant for decades, the National Petroleum Council told the Department of Energy on Wednesday in a report. The report from the council, an advisory agency, was drawn up in response to requests from the department for counsel on how to accelerate the adoption of new fuels and technologies, from compressed natural gas to fuel cells to biofuels, between now and 2050. One of the nation's biggest energy problems is that nearly all of its ground transportation fuel is derived from oil.

**From Early Bird** As Species Vanish, Taking Up a Mission to Protect Birds and Beasts
When Cristián Samper told his children, ages 3 and 6, that he might leave his post as director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in Washington for a job in New York, they were crestfallen. After all, it is hard to top having a father who oversees dinosaur skeletons and stuffed lions, all part of one of the world's largest collections of specimens and artifacts, 126 million in all.

**From Early Bird** Please, Don't Touch the Nature Our environment, we're told by climate scientists, is fragile. But are children learning that their natural environment — the trees, dirt and grass that surround us — is "fragile," too? Several educators, after observing years of children's being taught to "look, but don't touch," have argued this summer that many programs and policies designed to protect the natural world are actually preventing a new generation from developing an interest in it.

## *THE ATLANTIC MAGAZINE*

**From Early Bird** Maps: The States Where *Fracking* Can Happen in Secret A new analysis by the Natural Resources Defense Council shows that the majority of states where fracking occurs have no disclosure laws at all, and that those that do are woefully behind when it comes to revealing behind-the-scenes details of their operations. While the Obama administration has put some new rules in place, many decisions about what drillers are allowed to hide are left to the states; Interior Secretary Ken Salazar complained to Reuters that state-level regulation is "not good enough for me, because states are at very different levels, some have zero, some have decent rules." That's a problem, study author Amy Mall said, because unlike coal plants and other large-scale energy operations, fracked natural gas wells are often in close proximity to houses, schools, or other high-traffic areas.

## *ASSOCIATED PRESS*

**From Early Bird** Lack of funding slows research into possible public health effects of gas drilling
PITTSBURGH (AP) — Is gas drilling ruining the air, polluting water and making people sick? The evidence is sketchy and inconclusive, but a lack of serious funding is delaying efforts to resolve those pressing questions and creating a vacuum that could lead to a crush of lawsuits, some experts say. A House committee in June turned down an Obama administration request to fund $4.25 million in research on how drilling may affect water quality. In the spring, Pennsylvania stripped $2 million of funding that included a statewide health registry to track respiratory problems, skin conditions, stomach ailments and other illnesses potentially related to gas drilling. "It's almost as if it's a secret, that they don't want to know about people who are affected," said Janet McIntyre, who lives near a drilling area about 30 miles north of Pittsburgh. "There's a lot of people in my neighborhood that have rashes and little red spots." State officials say the air and water in the community is safe, and doctors haven't confirmed that drilling caused illnesses. But without a full-scale medical review or other research in such cases, the worries remain.

## *WALL ST. JOURNAL*

**From Early Bird** Fracking opponents put pressure on NY governor
ALBANY, N.Y. — Opponents of shale gas drilling that involves blasting chemical-laden water deep into the ground are asking Gov. Andrew Cuomo's top campaign contributors to pressure him to ban the practice in the state.

## REUTERS

**From Early Bird** U.S. CO2 emissions fall to lowest first-quarter level in 20 years: EIAWASHINGTON (Reuters) - Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from energy use in the first quarter of this year fell to their lowest level in the U.S. in 20 years, as demand shifted to natural gas-fired generation from coal-fired electricity due to record low gas prices, the energy department said. Energy-related carbon emissions fell 8 percent from the same period a year ago to 1.134 billion metric tons (1.25 billion tons), according to the latest monthly energy review by the Energy Information Administration (EIA) - the energy department's statistics arm.

## NRDC

EPA's regulations would not be a burden on the natural gas industry

Bloomberg Government (BGov) recently released a report [subscription required for full report] that assesses the business implications of the EPA's regulations to control air pollution from the natural gas industry. While NRDC does not agree with some of the report's specific cost estimates, NRDC does echo some of the key findings of the report: that the regulations will not be a burden on natural gas producers; that the price of natural gas drives production levels, while regulatory compliance costs have a minimal to imperceptible impact on production; and that the regulations will be lucrative and create jobs for many well service providers and equipment manufacturers, especially small and medium sized ones, which will be vital in this economy.

North American Emission Control Area goes into effect today

Today, after a bi-partisan, multi-stakeholder effort that spanned two administrations, the North American Emission Control Area (ECA) goes into effect. The ECA was adopted by the International Maritime Organization, which governs international shipping, in March 2010. (I wrote about it here). Implementing the ECA will dramatically reduce air pollution from all ships within 200 nautical miles of the U.S. and Canadian shores by the time it is fully implemented in 2016.Cleaning up these floating smokestacks is critical – they are some of the dirtiest engines in our midst. Before the ECA went into effect, the typical fuel used in a large ship contained as much sulfur pollution as 1,700 diesel trucks. Here's how it will work:

## NATIONAL POST

*Gas* liquids bloodbath brings shale pain to oil marketThe shale boom that sent natural-gas prices to a 10 year low is being felt for the first time in the oil markets.Williams Partners LP joined Marathon Oil Corp. and Devon Energy Corp. Wednesday in blaming a glut of propane and related products for lower profits in the second quarter. Next week more companies are expected to show the effects of falling prices for so-called natural-gas liquids used in backyard barbecues and motor fuels as producer Chesapeake Energy Corp. and Targa Resources Partners LP, a pipeline and storage company whose trading symbol is NGLS, release earnings. The "NGL bloodbath," as it was dubbed by Tudor, Pickering, Holt & Co. last month, is rippling across the oil and gas industry as explorers cut production and reduce cash flow projections, service companies forecast lower demand for drilling rigs, and pipeline partnerships suffer falling revenue for their gas liquids processing plants. The price of an ethane- propane NGL mix is down 58% from a high in January, outpacing the 19 percent drop in crude from a February peak.

## KMTV-NEWS

Researchers Find Caffeine In Waters Off Oregon

Portland, Oregon (CNN) Elevated levels of caffeine have been found in the water off the Oregon coast. You might be thinking it's because of the thousands of coffee shops in the Pacific Northwest, but that may not be the case. Researchers from Portland State University and Washington State University, Vancouver say they found the higher levels in areas not near heavily populated areas or potential pollution sources, like water treatment plants. The caffeine appears to come from sewers and septic tanks. These findings indicate that treatment plants are effective at removing caffeine from the water, and septic tanks, which are used at state parks, might not be doing a good enough job of containing pollutants. Caffeine is usually a marker of wastewater contaminants, so researchers say there may be other pollutants in the waters that have a human source.

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Commentary: The *Clean Water Act*: 40 Years Later... Celebrating the Clean Water Act (CWA) is a priority for me this year. Amidst a tumultuous political landscape, it is more important than ever that we recognize the significance of this landmark piece of legislation and raise awareness for the work that still needs to be done. In my lifetime, I have witnessed the transformative effect the CWA has had on our nation's water, and I do not want our hard fought gains to be reversed in a moment of shortsightedness. For the last 40 years, communities across the United States have used the Clean Water Act to take back their watersheds, and restore the treasured places that were once considered beyond repair. Looking out on the global community, it is clear the CWA's impact is not limited to this country—the Clean Water Act is widely viewed as the standard for water regulation around the world._ ... -- *Learn more about the Clean Water Act at the EPA and American Rivers websites. Alexandra Cousteau is President of the DC-based non-profit Blue Legacy and a Senior Advisor for Oceana. She was also named a 2009 National Geographic Emerging Explorer. Her global initiatives seek to inspire and empower individuals to protect their watersheds.*

## STATE JOURNAL

Coal wins, earth loses The federal judge who slapped down the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for being overzealous in its crusade for water quality in Appalachia is a hero to some – like Gov. Steve Beshear, known for his strident demand that the EPA "get off our backs," and the Kentucky Coal Association, party to a lawsuit by the National Mining Association challenging the agency's authority to set higher standards for Kentucky and other states. The decision is bad news, however, for those who lament what's being done as a matter of course to the land and water of this state's mountainous region. Judy Petersen, executive director of the Kentucky Waterways Alliance, told The Courier-Journal of Louisville the ruling marked a sad day for the people of eastern Kentucky and for the natural resources of their homeland. "Everyone knows that fish and aquatic life in Appalachian streams are dying at an alarming rate," she told the paper. Because Kentucky, in a bow to the cynical politics of majority rule, failed to answer the pleas of a relatively small number of residents unfortunate enough to live downstream from strip-mining operations, EPA stepped in and imposed tighter regulations which blocked 36 mining permits. EPA came to Frankfort in June to hold a public hearing on the issue.