EPA REGION III

Office of Public Affairs

PM Headlines

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*** PM HOT LIST ***

EPA Completes Drinking Water Sampling in Dimock, Pa.

EPA PRESS RELEASE **PHILADELPHIA** (July 25, 2012) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today that it has completed its sampling of private drinking water wells in Dimock, Pa. Data previously supplied to the agency by residents, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and Cabot Oil and Gas Exploration had indicated the potential for elevated levels of water contaminants in wells, and following requests by residents EPA took steps to sample water in the area to ensure there were not elevated levels of contaminants. Based on the outcome of that sampling, EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the Agency.

Maryland legislative panel approves new septic regulations requiring best available technology

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.) ANNAPOLIS, Md. — A panel of Maryland lawmakers has approved regulations requiring new construction to use the best technology in septic systems to fight pollution in the Chesapeake Bay.The Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive and Legislative Review voted 11-8 on Tuesday for the regulations proposed by Gov. Martin O'Malley's administration.Now, the Maryland Department of the Environment will consider public comments until Aug. 15 before deciding on the final regulations, which could take effect within weeks after the comment period ends.Supporters say the regulations are aimed at working in tandem with a law passed this year to limit septic system development to remove nitrogen output adding up to about 31,000 households by 2026. Critics say the regulations will add at least $8,000 to the cost of a new home.

Fort Detrick panel member frustrated at cleanup pace

MARYLAND GAZETTE New testing finds dangerous levels of cancer-causing agent. At least one member of the advisory board overseeing the cleanup of chemical contamination at Fort Detrick in Frederick expressed frustration last week with the pace of the effort after a consultant hired by the U.S. Army revealed levels of a cancer-causing agent 3,000 times federal safe drinking-water standards. The consultant Arcadis, hired to test groundwater contamination on the base as part of cleanup efforts mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2009, identified trichloroethene, or TCE, tetracholoroethene, or PCE, and chloroform as having the highest levels of concentration in and around Area B, a disposal area for chemical, biological and radiological materials, including industrial and munitions waste. TCE was found in the highest concentrations at 3,000 times

the EPA's safe drinking-water standards. EPA lists TCE's maximum safe-contaminant level at 0.005 micrograms per liter, or five parts per billion. Arcadis found PCE at 14,000 to 15,000 parts per billion.

Talisman Energy to pay $62000 *EPA* fine

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.) PITTSBURGH (AP) - A gas drilling company is paying a $62,000 fine for reporting violations in Pennsylvania. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says in a release Wednesday that Talisman Energy USA discovered the violations at 52 gas drilling sites and reported them to the agency. The violations were for failing to file safety information about hazardous chemicals stored at the sites. The EPA says Talisman, which is based in Canada, corrected the violations swiftly. Talisman did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Hellertown mercury recycling company fined $100000 for alleged reporting violations

EXPRESS TIMES A Hellertown mercury recycling company has been fined $103,433 for alleged violations of the reporting and record-keeping requirements under the Toxic Substances Control Act. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Tuesday it had levied the fine the fine against Bethlehem Apparatus Company, a Front Street company that has been in the mercury recycling business for more than 50 years. The Toxic Substances Control Act requires the collection of information about existing chemicals on the market by mandating periodic reports about the production and use of chemicals, the EPA said. The requirement aims to help understand the risks the chemicals may pose to human health and the environment, the EPA said. Bethlehem Apparatus Company was charged with violating three notification requirements in the act, the EPA said. The company has corrected the violations and paid the $103,433 fine, the EPA said. Company President Eve Metzger declined comment on the violations and fine.

DEP launches air monitoring study in SW *Pa.*

POTTSTOWN MERCURY HARRISBURG — The Department of Environmental Protection announced today it has started a long-term, one-year air monitoring study of Marcellus Shale development. The study in Washington County will measure ambient airborne pollutants in an effort to determine potential air quality impacts associated with the processing and transmission of unconventional natural gas."We operate on facts and sound science, and this study will provide us with data on long-term air quality in an area of active natural gas extraction," DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. "There has been a documented downward trend in airborne pollutants across the state over the past 10 years, and Marcellus Shale development holds the promise of emissions benefits from the use of this cleaner-burning fuel in the transportation and electricity generation sectors."

Hydraulic fracturing protest to take place Saturday in DC

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL Thousands of "fracktivists" will travel to Washington D.C. this week for Stop the Frack Attack, billed as the first-ever national protest to stop hydraulic fracturing.The three-day summit will culminate in a rally on the west lawn of the Capitol on Saturday, July 28, at 2 p.m., followed by a march at 3:30 p.m. to the headquarters of America's Natural Gas Alliance and the American Petroleum Institute.The rally is organized by a coalition of community groups, citizen activists and environmental organizations from throughout the country. Its advisory council draws from eight states where hydraulic fracturing is or could be used by the oil and gas industry.A roster of 136 local, state and national organizations are joining the summit "to call on Congress to take action to protect community rights, public health, drinking water, and the global climate from the impacts of fracking," according to a media release."They also will demand the closure of legal loopholes that allow the oil and gas industry to ignore parts of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act and other bedrock environmental laws while fracking," the release reads.

Corbett Tells DEP to Expedite Permit Process

STATEIMPACT PENNSYLVANIA Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett has issued an executive order requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to set established timelines for processing permit applications. The DEP is responsible for issuing permits on industrial activity that may impact the environment. The department's resources have been stretched by the recent shale gas drilling boom. In a press release issued Tuesday, Corbett says he's responding to complaints about how long DEP takes to issue permits. "One of the biggest complaints I have received over and over again is the time it takes for businesses, non-profit organizations and local governments to work through the permitting process," Corbett said. "I promised to correct this, and today we are setting the wheels in motion to deliver on that promise. At the same time, DEP will continue its longstanding mission to protect our environment." The executive order also instructs DEP to coordinate the multiple permits often required by large or complicated projects. Josh McNeil, executive director of the Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania, says the order could jeopardize environmental protection. "[Corbett] has already cut $20 million from DEP's budget and now they're asking them to do things faster," says McNeil. "The Department is less than half the size it was a few years ago, that strikes me as egregious." The executive order also makes timely permitting process a factor in employee evaluation.

Senate committee moves chemicals bill without GOP support

THE HILL (DC) Senate Democrats moved forward Wednesday with a bill requiring more safety protections from chemicals manufacturers over the objections of Republicans. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved Sen. Frank Lautenberg's (D-N.J.) "Safe Chemicals Act." The bill would update the Toxic Substances Control Act by requiring more reporting from chemicals manufacturers and place the burden of proof on those companies to show their chemicals are safe. It also would give the Environmental Protection Agency more freedom to test chemicals. "This vote is a major milestone in our effort to fix America's broken system for regulating toxic chemicals," Lautenberg said Wednesday.

Something's Coming, Something Good: Despite Chemical Industry Opposition

NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL Today, something good will happen here in Washington. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will vote on the Safe Chemicals Act, legislation introduced by Senator Frank Lautenberg to reform the badly broken current law that is supposed to protect us from chemicals. ...The bill is the latest version of his efforts to reform the failed Toxic Substances Control Act which he has been working to reform since July 2005. ... On all of these issues, Senator Lautenberg has been criticized and opposed by the chemical industry.

WV House members call for delay of EPA rule

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL West Virginia officials are again trying to delay environmental protections that could impose additional costs on the state's coal industry. Officials have been fighting for the already-strained industry, particularly against the Environmental Protection Agency as it relates to proposed emissions standards. Rep. David B. McKinley, R-W.Va., introduced legislation that would "prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from implementing a rule requiring stringent emissions standards for new or existing coal fired power plants, until Carbon Capture Sequestration (CCS) technology is deemed economically and technically feasible." Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va. and Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., co-sponsored the bill. "This preliminary EPA rule could literally cripple the future of coal because the implementation of carbon capture is not yet technologically or economically feasible," McKinley said. "Utilities will simply stop building coal-fired power plants and switch to gas fired units. That would result in the loss of thousands of good paying coal jobs." This is not the first time a West Virginia official attempted to delay regulations. Several efforts have been made to block, stop or repeal environmental regulations affecting the coal industry, but this is also not the first

attempt to delay EPA rules.

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Neville plant pollution nets $1.75 million fine

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE Shenango Inc. will pay a $1.75 million penalty to settle serious air and water pollution violations from 2005 to the present at its coke works on Neville Island, according to a filing in U.S. District Court in Pittsburgh Tuesday. The consent agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, state Department of Environmental Protection and the Allegheny County Health Department also requires the company, owned since 2008 by DTE Energy Services, to control and reduce illegal emissions from its coke ovens and construct wastewater treatment and stormwater management facilities. The coke works has a 30-year history of air pollution problems that have resulted in federal consent orders in 1980, 1993 and 2000 and a county consent order in 2005. Between 1990 and 2010, the facility paid fines totaling more than $2 million. Emissions from the coke works were a contributing factor to Avalon, located downwind from the Shenango operations, having the dirtiest air in Allegheny County in 2010, according to county Health Department monitoring data. A statement issued about the settlement by DTE, based in Ann Arbor, Mich., said the company recognizes the long-term pollution problems of the Shenango facility and has already done much of the work needed to bring the industrial operation into compliance with environmental standards. "This settlement is a milestone in our efforts to resolve historical environmental issues and bring the operations and environmental performance of Shenango up to first-tier status," said Gary Gross, DTE vice president. "When we acquired the facility, we were well aware of its history. We would not have proceeded with the purchase unless we had confidence that we could dramatically improve performance and establish Shenango as a good neighbor and a valuable asset to the community."

DEP to monitor for shale-related air impacts in northeast counties

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE State environmental regulators plan to install a long-term air-monitoring device in Susquehanna and Wyoming counties to screen for impacts from natural gas operations in the region. The monitoring plan, which is still in its early stages, was inspired by public concerns raised at recent hearings for proposed natural gas compressor stations that move gas from the Marcellus Shale in the two counties, regional Department of Environmental Protection spokeswoman Colleen Connolly said. "We felt, given the number of compressor stations being put up in Susquehanna and Wyoming counties, they would be ideal locations," she said. DEP will use a canister device to monitor primarily for volatile organic compounds beginning at the start of 2013, she said. The device will likely operate for a year in one county and then be moved to the second county for a year. Regulators will be able to remove the device from a mount high in the air to collect results every two or three weeks, she said. The department has yet to secure locations and leases for the monitoring sites. Residents and environmental groups have criticized the department for not quickly or adequately expanding the state's existing air quality monitoring network to capture changes related to increased natural gas development, especially in rural areas with little if any established air monitoring. Three short-term studies the state performed near shale gas infrastructure in 2010 did not find any pollutants at concentrations likely to cause health impacts, but DEP could not tell from the short studies if the cumulative air emissions from all gas activities in an area would violate federal health standards. A new yearlong study, announced Monday, will test the air near large-scale gas compressor and processing stations in Southwestern Pennsylvania to determine if there are any chronic or long-term risks to the public. The department also plans to install a new monitoring site for ozone and nitrogen oxides downwind of Marcellus Shale drilling and gas processing in Bradford County this year. The Clean Air Council, which advocates for public hearings on proposed compressor stations and frequently testifies at the events, applauded the DEP for listening to residents on Tuesday.

Rivers groups assess water-friendly practices Va. localities within

Chesapeake Bay watershed

ASSOCIATED PRESS RICHMOND, Va. — An analysis of non-tidal Virginia localities that are part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed found wide variations in the adoption of development codes intended to keep sediment and runoff from entering rivers and streams. The analysis was contained in a report by conservation groups concerned with the well-being of three Virginia rivers: the James, the Potomac and the Rappahannock. The groups examined local development codes and ordinances of 41 cities, towns and counties to assess how well they're embracing "low-impact development" practices. These are rules designed to filter and store rainfall runoff, for example, instead of letting them flow freely into rivers and streams. One approach involves creating more green spaces. Each locality was rated on 76 low-impact principles grouped into categories. They include minimized land disturbances, the preservation of vegetation and reduction of impervious surfaces, such as narrower streets. The scores ranged from 3 percent to 72 percent, with the average locality scoring 27 percent. Each locality scored well in at least one category. Bill Street, executive director of the James River Association, said the study "shows that there's a lot of opportunities" to improve on those practices.

Commentary: Residents in Marcellus Shale want voice in the process

HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS On une 28, former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council for his contributions toward the state's environmental preservation. It was a decision met with disappointment by many environmental groups. No one questions the former governor's previous work in establishing the commendable Growing Greener program, a successful venture that has preserved and cleaned up Pennsylvania land since 1999. It is Ridge's more recent $900,000 "strategic adviser" contract with the Marcellus Shale Coalition that created the controversy. In his award acceptance speech, Ridge said, "Some groups fear the development of the shale gas fields, or at least find a thrill in causing others to fear it." Does this statement intend to imply that environmental groups and concerned Pennsylvania citizens are speaking out to terrorize the minds of fellow citizens just for kicks? The real motivation of these groups and individuals is to provide awareness and education of the actual impacts of shale gas extraction. No one is looking for a thrill; what they are looking for is a voice in the Marcellus Shale dialogue that to date remains largely unheard. A recently released report from the Penn State Center for Economic and Community Development, "Marcellus Shale: Land Ownership, Local Voice, and the Distribution of Lease and Royalty Dollars," proves this point. This report examines land ownership in 11 counties with Marcellus development and determines that the ability to make leasing decisions that affect the community lies mainly with nonresident landowners — public and private — and a small percentage of resident landowners who own large properties. Consequently, the majority of these county residents — small landowners and renters — have little or no voice in controlling local drilling activity through leasing decisions. Though they might benefit from increased business or jobs, they share little in royalty income.

Study finds toxins from surface mining

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING An on-going study by U.S. Geological Survey is finding that people in the southern West Virginia coalfields live with significantly higher levels of toxins in the air and water compared to residents in the rest of the state. After a year of testing air, water, and soil, researchers are concluding that people in mountaintop mining communities in southern West Virginia live in an environment with significant chemical discrepancies from the rest of the state. This could suggest that documented health problems in the region are linked, at least in part, to the mining operations. Research geo-chemist William Orem says the study is part of a project that is funded by the USGS Energy Resources program. The project aims to investigate energy resources and human health. Orem says recent studies published about the effects of surface mining in West Virginia attracted him to the area. "We've observed that the water quality in the surface mining area is affected by something. It's definitely different from what we call control sites—that is, sites where there is no surface mining. There's higher Ph, higher conductivity, to some degree higher organic compounds both in surface water and in ground water. And there's also higher levels of air particulates." Orem says the review will include epidemiological

studies that look to confirm recent publications' claims that surface mining adversely affects human health. "We've looked so far at respiratory disease and looking at statistics available from the [National Institute of Health] and other sources it does appear that in the counties where there's significant surface mining activity, there are higher rates of respiratory disease compared to the rest of the state, even after you've corrected for things like rates of smoking, obesity, rates of poverty, things like that."

Advisory group: Remove Presque Isle Bay from watch list

ERIE TIMES-NEWS A public advisory group recommended Monday that Presque Isle Bay come off a watch list it's been on for more than 20 years. The bay was named an "Area of Concern" in 1991 and was upgraded to an "Area of Concern in the Recovery Stage" in 2002. The Presque Isle Bay Public Advisory Committee voted 13-7 in favor of removing the bay from the AOC list altogether. "We will recommend to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to continue with the delisting process," advisory committee Chairman Jim Rutkowski said after announcing the results of the anonymous paper ballot. State DEP officials and some committee members had said they felt conditions had improved enough in the bay for it to come off the list. Rutkowski said comments from committee members who opposed the move would be included so that the state DEP, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the International Joint Commission would be aware of the concerns. Mike Campbell was one of several people who still had misgivings on Monday. "It's not how I wanted the vote to go," he said. Campbell and Marty Visnosky said they were happy that there was a plan for after delisting that involves future monitoring of the bay, including tumors in fish there. But they also said they feared that funding for such studies would dry up if the bay was no longer a concern area. Visnosky, who wasn't surprised by the vote, said implementation of the plan and funding for it would be "at the whim of politicians." The remedial action plan, which provides the rationale for the delisting and includes future monitoring, has to go through the DEP, EPA and IJC before the U.S. Department of State has the final say on taking the bay off the list. Local officials are hopeful that will occur by October.

Federal disaster declaration issued

PARKERSBURG NEWS AND SENTINEL PARKERSBURG - The president issued a federal disaster declaration for West Virginia Tuesday, allowing for federal aid to supplement state and local recovery efforts after last month's severe storms. The declaration came a week after U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin requested the federal disaster declaration on behalf of communities affected by widespread power outages and storm damage. "West Virginians are some of the most resilient people in the world, but the massive storms late last month took a tremendous toll on our state," Manchin said. "I'm pleased that the president quickly granted this disaster declaration, and I look forward to helping our communities as they work to rebuild our public infrastructure." The declaration provides assistance for emergency work and repair or replacement of public facilities damaged in the storms from June 29 to July 1. Hazard mitigation grants will be made available as a result of Tuesday's declaration. All counties are eligible to apply for this financial assistance for actions taken to prevent or reduce long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

From Early Bird A ban on new sewer hookups stalls construction in lower Bucks County In Northampton Township, Toll Bros. is seeking final approval for Leehurst Farm, a 40-home development. In Middletown Township, the Durham Ridge and Whispering Woods developments have lots for 10 to 12 new houses. But those houses and all new construction projects in most of lower Bucks County are blocked by a ban on new sewer

hookups issued last month by the state Department of Environmental Protection. The ban "will have a negative impact on growth and the revenue generated from growth," Northampton Township Manager Robert Pellegrino said Monday. "Northampton doesn't have a lot going on, but we do have projects in the process of approval, and [the ban] ultimately will affect them." "That would not be helpful, especially in this economy," he added. The DEP said it issued the ban because of a sewage pumping station that has been operating above capacity for years. An overloaded system can result in overflowing toilets and polluted streams, DEP spokeswoman Deborah Fries said. The Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority, which operates the Totem Road Pump Station, "strongly disagrees with the DEP's findings," spokesman Patrick Cleary said. "The station is not in an overload" condition, he said. "There is no indication of any overflows." The station has peak flows of 55 million to 58 million gallons per day (mgd), below its capacity of 60 mgd, Cleary said.

From Early Bird Blog: Enviro groups to Obama: Let it blow, baby, blow A coalition of 217 environmental and other groups delivered a letter to President Obama today, urging him to accelerate offshore wind development along the Atlantic Coast. The groups applauded the administration's efforts so far -- including the Department of the Interior's "Smart from the Start" initiative, which designates appropriate areas for wind development in federal waters off the coast of six Atlantic states — New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maryland, Delaware and Virginia. The idea is to reduce hurdles that development of offshore wind entails. And they urged "continued strong action" to move the nation away from fossil fuels. For an update on what could be the first offshore project in federal waters, off of Cape Cod, go to the Cape Wind website. Meanwhile, several projects have been proposed for New Jersey. While some seem to have stalled, Fishermen's Energy is moving forward with its test project in state waters. Last week, it received final permission from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the project. Today's letter to Obama read, "For the sake of our environment and the prospects of a vibrant clean energy economy in America, we must have numerous wind farms spinning off our shores within the next few years – and we need your continued leadership to make that vision a reality.... . We can no longer afford to ignore this massive domestic energy source that has been producing thousands of jobs and megawatts of clean energy in Europe for over a decade." Environment New Jersey was one of the groups that signed. “There are vast untapped reserves of wind energy off our coast that we can capture to reduce pollution and ramp up the clean energy economy. This letter demonstrates the broad agreement among environmental groups and a diversity of other stakeholders that our state and national leaders should act to steadily ramp up efforts to tap into this important resource,” said Matt Elliott, the group's clean energy advocate.

From Early Bird Still no clues to what ruptured a South Philly water main The forces that ruptured a water main in South Philadelphia Sunday night, transforming an intersection into a crater and forcing dozens of residents from their homes, remained a mystery Monday. Philadelphia Water Department officials said they would not know for several weeks what caused the break in the four-foot main pipe. While the city experiences many water-main breaks every year, Sunday's system failure at 21st and Bainbridge Streets was "one of the more devastating to the community," Deputy Water Commissioner Debra McCarty said.

From Early Bird Blog: Nation's first commercial, grid-tied tidal turbine deployed For a while, the tidal turbines in New York City's East River were making all the news. Today, Maine is in the spotlight. The Ocean Renewable Power Company launched a tidal energy project in Cobscook Bay, which is connected to the Bay of Fundy, famous for its tides. The first of several turbines was to be lowered into the water, and the goal is that it will start cranking out the power by Sept. 1. Natural Resources Defense Council energy expert Nathanael Greene blogs about it here. He notes that the project is "the first in the U.S. to receive a FERC license, negotiate a power purchase agreement, and install and operate a power-producing tidal generator. Initially, it will produce enough energy to power just 75 to 100 homes, but OPRC plans to add more devices and produce enough power for 1,000 homes. And here's the Department of Energy report on the project. It quotes U.S. Sen. Susan Collins: "Maine is well positioned to lead the nation in tidal energy development. The Cobscook Bay Tidal Energy Project is one example of the type of actions we need on a national scale to stabilize energy, prevent energy shortages, and achieve national energy independence."

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

From Early Bird Neville plant pollution nets $1.75 million fine Shenango Inc. will pay a $1.75 million penalty to settle serious air and water pollution violations from 2005 to the present at its coke works on Neville Island, according to a filing in U.S. District Court in Pittsburgh Tuesday. The consent agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, state Department of Environmental Protection and the Allegheny County Health Department also requires the company, owned since 2008 by DTE Energy Services, to control and reduce illegal emissions from its coke ovens and construct wastewater treatment and stormwater management facilities. The coke works has a 30-year history of air pollution problems that have resulted in federal consent orders in 1980, 1993 and 2000 and a county consent order in 2005. Between 1990 and 2010, the facility paid fines totaling more than $2 million. Emissions from the coke works were a contributing factor to Avalon, located downwind from the Shenango operations, having the dirtiest air in Allegheny County in 2010, according to county Health Department monitoring data. A statement issued about the settlement by DTE, based in Ann Arbor, Mich., said the company recognizes the long-term pollution problems of the Shenango facility and has already done much of the work needed to bring the industrial operation into compliance with environmental standards. "This settlement is a milestone in our efforts to resolve historical environmental issues and bring the operations and environmental performance of Shenango up to first-tier status," said Gary Gross, DTE vice president. "When we acquired the facility, we were well aware of its history. We would not have proceeded with the purchase unless we had confidence that we could dramatically improve performance and establish Shenango as a good neighbor and a valuable asset to the community."

From Early Bird Insurance companies are slow to cover risks of drilling As gas drilling expands across Pennsylvania and into neighboring states, the insurance industry is trading memos expressing trepidation and uncertainty over how to assess the risk involved in covering the controversial development. One company has written an exclusion that forces clients working with oil and gas companies to obtain additional coverage. An industry group drafted a memo encouraging brokers to brush up on potential liabilities, even including knowledge of the rare earthquakes said to be a byproduct of some industry practices. The changes represent another form of growing pains for the far-reaching drilling industry and the ancillary businesses it involves. Proponents of industry-wide insurance practices say such standards could protect landowners and serve as a watchdog as companies use safety records to jockey for lower rates. Other regions home to Marcellus Shale drilling have seen legislation passed requiring that insurance be secured before any dirt is moved for a rig, rules that aren't found in Pennsylvania. The issue is cropping up in places like Ohio that are new to the shale development that has already brought thousands of wells to Pennsylvania over the past several years. Experts say shale drilling often moves into more heavily populated regions than other types of industry activity, making millions of homeowners part of the community affected by gas drilling. Questions around drilling insurance made national news last week, when an internal memo circulated at Columbus, Ohio-based Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co. revealed the company was not covering damage caused by gas drilling in policies signed by contractors and landowners who've leased their land for drilling.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

From Early Bird Westmoreland residents give ideas for shale revenue Westmoreland County in December will find up to $2 million extra in its wallet because of a Marcellus shale drilling impact fee, and 10 residents on Monday offered suggestions on how to spend it. About 15 residents, including township supervisors from Mt. Pleasant, Donegal and Unity, attended the third of five county-sponsored meetings seeking ideas of how to use the funds. Suggestions included public health, environmental and economic concerns. The money is generated through Act 13, a state law that collects a drilling fee and could dole out about $2 million to the county. Of that, $1.3 million is discretionary, and commissioners are allowed to spend it on 13 categories specified in the act. Smaller portions of the $2 million are allocated for bridges and for open space or recreation. Act 13 specifies the following permitted uses for impact fee funds: work on roads and bridges; water, storm water and sewer work; law enforcement and emergency response; environmental programs; preservation and reclamation of water supplies; tax reductions; safe and affordable housing; records management; social services; judicial services; capital reserve;

career centers for drilling workers; planning. Charles Duritsa, chairman of the Westmoreland Land Trust, asked commissioners to consider giving Act 13 funding to the organization. The money would be used to buy and maintain properties or easements, he said. Greg Phillips, district manager and CEO of Westmoreland Conservation District, requested $100,000 per year for three years to work on storm-water management, reforestation and erosion control, among other projects, at drill sites.

From Early Bird Toxic waste cleanup in Parks Twp. 'a good while' away (July 14) Don't expect removal of radioactive and chemical toxic waste any time soon at the BWX Technologies dump along Route 66. U.S. Sen. Bob Casey Jr., who on Wednesday met with Jo-Ellen Darcy, assistant secretary of the Army in Washington, said digging at the site likely will not resume until late next year. Casey met with Darcy to push for action on Congress' mandated cleanup by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the 44-acre site, which stalled last fall. "It's going to take a good while to have a new contractor in place and do the work," Casey said. "The main thing is that they move forward to get started." Candice Walters, a spokeswoman for the corps, which has headquarters in Washington, said: "It is going to depend upon who the lead agency is for the project and when a contract is awarded. At this point, we are not sure." Known as the Shallow Land Disposal Area, radioactive and chemical waste from Babcock & Wilcox (now BWX) and formerly from Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corp. (NUMEC) was buried in 10 trenches from 1960 to the early 1970s. After decades of wrangling, excavating of the buried waste pits began last year but stopped six weeks later because a contractor allegedly mishandled some waste and greater-than-expected quantities of "complex" nuclear material were found. Federal officials in Washington are trying to decide what to do with the site. As the complexity of the project increases, costs for the cleanup and disposal off site could escalate from the current $170 million to an estimated $500 million.

Shenango Inc. to pay $1.75M to settle old pollution complaintsThe owner of a Neville Island coke battery said on Tuesday it will pay a $1.75 million fine to settle longstanding air and water pollution complaints and will invest $34 million through 2017 on a water treatment system and other upgrades. DTE Energy Services bought the Shenango Inc. plant in 2008 and has spent about $8 million on improvements such as welding oven wall joints, spokesman John Austerberry said. The settlement was announced as the federal Environmental Protection Agency, state Department of Environmental Protection and Allegheny County Health Department filed a complaint against the company in U.S. District Court in Pittsburgh.

HARRISBURG PATRIOT NEWS

From Early Bird Commentary: Residents in Marcellus Shale want voice in the process On une 28, former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council for his contributions toward the state's environmental preservation. It was a decision met with disappointment by many environmental groups. No one questions the former governor's previous work in establishing the commendable Growing Greener program, a successful venture that has preserved and cleaned up Pennsylvania land since 1999. It is Ridge's more recent $900,000 "strategic adviser" contract with the Marcellus Shale Coalition that created the controversy. In his award acceptance speech, Ridge said, "Some groups fear the development of the shale gas fields, or at least find a thrill in causing others to fear it." Does this statement intend to imply that environmental groups and concerned Pennsylvania citizens are speaking out to terrorize the minds of fellow citizens just for kicks? The real motivation of these groups and individuals is to provide awareness and education of the actual impacts of shale gas extraction. No one is looking for a thrill; what they are looking for is a voice in the Marcellus Shale dialogue that to date remains largely unheard. A recently released report from the Penn State Center for Economic and Community Development, "Marcellus Shale: Land Ownership, Local Voice, and the Distribution of Lease and Royalty Dollars," proves this point. This report examines land ownership in 11 counties with Marcellus development and determines that the ability to make leasing decisions that affect the community lies mainly with nonresident landowners — public and private — and a small percentage of resident landowners who own large properties. Consequently, the majority of these county residents — small landowners and renters — have little or no voice in controlling local drilling activity through leasing decisions. Though they might benefit from increased business or jobs, they share little in royalty income.

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

From Early Bird DEP to monitor for shale-related air impacts in northeast counties State environmental regulators plan to install a long-term air-monitoring device in Susquehanna and Wyoming counties to screen for impacts from natural gas operations in the region. The monitoring plan, which is still in its early stages, was inspired by public concerns raised at recent hearings for proposed natural gas compressor stations that move gas from the Marcellus Shale in the two counties, regional Department of Environmental Protection spokeswoman Colleen Connolly said. "We felt, given the number of compressor stations being put up in Susquehanna and Wyoming counties, they would be ideal locations," she said. DEP will use a canister device to monitor primarily for volatile organic compounds beginning at the start of 2013, she said. The device will likely operate for a year in one county and then be moved to the second county for a year. Regulators will be able to remove the device from a mount high in the air to collect results every two or three weeks, she said. The department has yet to secure locations and leases for the monitoring sites. Residents and environmental groups have criticized the department for not quickly or adequately expanding the state's existing air quality monitoring network to capture changes related to increased natural gas development, especially in rural areas with little if any established air monitoring. Three short-term studies the state performed near shale gas infrastructure in 2010 did not find any pollutants at concentrations likely to cause health impacts, but DEP could not tell from the short studies if the cumulative air emissions from all gas activities in an area would violate federal health standards. A new yearlong study, announced Monday, will test the air near large-scale gas compressor and processing stations in Southwestern Pennsylvania to determine if there are any chronic or long-term risks to the public. The department also plans to install a new monitoring site for ozone and nitrogen oxides downwind of Marcellus Shale drilling and gas processing in Bradford County this year. The Clean Air Council, which advocates for public hearings on proposed compressor stations and frequently testifies at the events, applauded the DEP for listening to residents on Tuesday.

ERIE TIMES NEWS

From Early Bird Advisory group: Remove Presque Isle Bay from watch list A public advisory group recommended Monday that Presque Isle Bay come off a watch list it's been on for more than 20 years. The bay was named an "Area of Concern" in 1991 and was upgraded to an "Area of Concern in the Recovery Stage" in 2002. The Presque Isle Bay Public Advisory Committee voted 13-7 in favor of removing the bay from the AOC list altogether. "We will recommend to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to continue with the delisting process," advisory committee Chairman Jim Rutkowski said after announcing the results of the anonymous paper ballot. State DEP officials and some committee members had said they felt conditions had improved enough in the bay for it to come off the list. Rutkowski said comments from committee members who opposed the move would be included so that the state DEP, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the International Joint Commission would be aware of the concerns. Mike Campbell was one of several people who still had misgivings on Monday. "It's not how I wanted the vote to go," he said. Campbell and Marty Visnosky said they were happy that there was a plan for after delisting that involves future monitoring of the bay, including tumors in fish there. But they also said they feared that funding for such studies would dry up if the bay was no longer a concern area. Visnosky, who wasn't surprised by the vote, said implementation of the plan and funding for it would be "at the whim of politicians." The remedial action plan, which provides the rationale for the delisting and includes future monitoring, has to go through the DEP, EPA and IJC before the U.S. Department of State has the final say on taking the bay off the list. Local officials are hopeful that will occur by October.

From Early Bird DEP: Lake Erie fish kill result of natural causes Hundreds of dead and dying sheepshead showed up along the Lake Erie shore in recent days. The fish, also known as freshwater drum, were spotted over the weekend along North East Township near the Pennsylvania-New York state line and also in western Erie County between Elk Creek in Girard Township and Crooked Creek in Springfield Township. Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection officials said the die-off was due to a "natural phenomenon" called a seiche and was unrelated to pollution or other stresses caused by humans. Jim Grazio, a Great Lakes biologist with the state DEP, investigated, spokesman Kevin Sunday said. "His investigation led DEP to the conclusion that the

event was likely the result of a recent 'upwelling' of cold water in Lake Erie," Sunday said. Similar die-offs were reported in the Ohio waters of Lake Erie, he said. "Recent strong winds from the east/northeast forced Lake Erie surface waters toward the western end of the lake. When the winds calmed, gravity pulled the water back setting up the classic 'sloshing' of water that is the surface seiche," Sunday said. "Amazingly, Lake Erie can simultaneously experience internal seiches during the summer, when cold bottom waters slosh into the overlying warmer surface waters. These internal seiches or gravity waves are barely visible from the surface but are much larger in magnitude," he said. Some fish, like the drum, get trapped in the seiche and are killed by the temperature change, Sunday said.

From Early Bird Erie County to receive air-quality forecasts The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection will soon provide air-quality forecasts and alerts for Erie County. Erie County, Mercer County and six other areas of Pennsylvania will receive daily ozone pollution forecasts beginning Aug. 1. "Erie County will receive it's own separate forecast," DEP spokesman Kevin Sunday said. "You will be able to go online and sign up to receive them via e-mail." The forecasts will be posted online at enviroflash.info, Sunday said. They will also be available at airnow.gov. The DEP currently provides forecasts and alerts to just five areas in the state: Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Lehigh Valley, Susquehanna Valley and the Liberty/Clairton area. Erie County was not included because it doesn't have a history of high levels of ozone or particle pollution, Sunday said. However, the county has exceeded safe levels of ozone pollution seven times in 2012. Now residents will know ahead of time if high pollution levels are predicted. "If people know the forecast, they can arrange their schedules and not expose themselves to unhealthy air," said Deborah Brown, chief executive of the American Lung Association of the Mid-Atlantic. "It's important especially for children, the elderly and those with chronic lung and heart diseases who are most at risk of problems." High amounts of ozone or particle pollution at ground level make it difficult for some people to breathe, especially those with chronic lung diseases such as asthma. The daily air-quality forecasts will be available during the summer months, DEP officials said in an e-mail. "Ozone season typically runs from late April/early May through September," Brown said.

From Early Bird One swimming advisory lifted, another posted at Presque Isle A swimming advisory issued Monday for one Presque Isle State Park beach has been lifted, but another beach is now under advisory because of high E. coli counts. The advisory for Barracks Beach was lifted at 10:30 a.m. after bacteria counts returned to levels considered safe. But a swimming advisory has been issued for Beach 11, park officials said. Beach under swimming advisories remain open to the public, but users are asked to take precautions such as not swallowing lake water and not swimming with an open wound.

From Early Bird Discover turtles at Presque IsleTurtles, more than 150, stacked up to five deep, bask in the sun some days on the dead tree anchored in Presque Isle State Park's Graveyard Pond.

ESSENTIAL PUBLIC RADIO

From Early Bird State Looking at Air Quality in Washington County Long-Term Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is starting a long-term air quality study to collect accurate data, monitor, and analyze potential health risks associated with "wet" Marcellus Shale gas. Wet Marcellus Shale gas has condensate and more liquid compounds than dry gas and is more prevalent on the western edges of the shale formation. Other studies that the DEP conducted in the northwestern, northcentral and southwestern part of the commonwealth showed no contaminants that would have presented any air-related health issues. This study will be conducted at four sites in Washington County. Deputy Press Secretary for the DEP Kevin Sunday said at the sites ambient airborne pollution will be measured upwind and downwind of wet shale gas compressor and processor sites.

EPA PRESS RELEASE

EPA Completes Drinking Water Sampling in Dimock, Pa. **PHILADELPHIA** (July 25, 2012) – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today that it has completed its sampling of private drinking water wells in Dimock, Pa. Data previously supplied to the agency by residents, the Pennsylvania Department of

Environmental Protection and Cabot Oil and Gas Exploration had indicated the potential for elevated levels of water contaminants in wells, and following requests by residents EPA took steps to sample water in the area to ensure there were not elevated levels of contaminants. Based on the outcome of that sampling, EPA has determined that there are not levels of contaminants present that would require additional action by the Agency.

STATEIMPACT PENNSYLVANIA

Corbett Tells DEP to Expedite Permit ProcessPennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett has issued an executive order requiring the Department of Environmental Protection to set established timelines for processing permit applications. The DEP is responsible for issuing permits on industrial activity that may impact the environment. The department's resources have been stretched by the recent shale gas drilling boom. In a press release issued Tuesday, Corbett says he's responding to complaints about how long DEP takes to issue permits. "One of the biggest complaints I have received over and over again is the time it takes for businesses, non-profit organizations and local governments to work through the permitting process," Corbett said. "I promised to correct this, and today we are setting the wheels in motion to deliver on that promise. At the same time, DEP will continue its longstanding mission to protect our environment." The executive order also instructs DEP to coordinate the multiple permits often required by large or complicated projects. Josh McNeil, executive director of the Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania, says the order could jeopardize environmental protection. "[Corbett] has already cut $20 million from DEP's budget and now they're asking them to do things faster," says McNeil. "The Department is less than half the size it was a few years ago, that strikes me as egregious." The executive order also makes timely permitting process a factor in employee evaluation.

POTTSTOWN MERCURY

DEP launches air monitoring study in SW *Pa.* HARRISBURG — The Department of Environmental Protection announced today it has started a long-term, one-year air monitoring study of Marcellus Shale development. The study in Washington County will measure ambient airborne pollutants in an effort to determine potential air quality impacts associated with the processing and transmission of unconventional natural gas."We operate on facts and sound science, and this study will provide us with data on long-term air quality in an area of active natural gas extraction," DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. "There has been a documented downward trend in airborne pollutants across the state over the past 10 years, and Marcellus Shale development holds the promise of emissions benefits from the use of this cleaner-burning fuel in the transportation and electricity generation sectors." The data from the study will allow DEP to assess any potential long-term impact of air emissions from unconventional natural gas operations to nearby communities, and it will help DEP address the cumulative impact of the operations in the Marcellus Shale region. In 2010 and 2011, the agency conducted short-term ambient air quality sampling in the southwest, north-central and northeast parts of the state, where Marcellus Shale drilling was taking place. The sampling did not identify concentrations of any compound that would likely trigger air-related health issues. DEP also tested for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and ozone, but did not detect concentrations above National Ambient Air Quality Standards at any of the sampling sites. The primary site of the long-term study will be downwind of the Houston gas processing plant in Chartiers Township, Washington County, where DEP will monitor for ground-level ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, hydrogen sulfide and methane. The ambient air will also be tested for more than 60 volatile organic compounds, including hazardous air pollutants, and meteorological data will be collected continuously.

ROBINSON-MOONPATCH

Neville Island Coke Plant Agrees to $1.75 Million SettlementA Neville Island coke plant has agreed to pay a $1.75 million fine as part of a settlement to resolve violations dating back to 2005, the company announced Monday. The settlement with Shenango Inc. was filed in federal court in Pittsburgh by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and Allegheny County Health Department. DTE Energy Services, based in Ann Arbor, MI, purchased the plant in 2008 and, according to the company, began a series of upgrades to reduce emissions and bring the plant into compliance with local, state and federal environmental standards. Shenango Inc. produces metallurgical coke, coke oven gas and other salable byproducts

"This settlement is a milestone in our efforts to resolve historical environmental issues and bring the operations and environmental performance of Shenango up to first-tier status," Gary Gross, Vice President of DTEES said in a news release. "When we acquired the facility, we were well aware of its history. We would not have proceeded with the purchase unless we had confidence that we could dramatically improve performance and establish Shenango as a good neighbor and a valuable asset to the community."

EXPRESS TIMES

Hellertown mercury recycling company fined $100000 for alleged reporting violations A Hellertown mercury recycling company has been fined $103,433 for alleged violations of the reporting and record-keeping requirements under the Toxic Substances Control Act.
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced Tuesday it had levied the fine the fine against Bethlehem Apparatus Company, a Front Street company that has been in the mercury recycling business for more than 50 years. The Toxic Substances Control Act requires the collection of information about existing chemicals on the market by mandating periodic reports about the production and use of chemicals, the EPA said. The requirement aims to help understand the risks the chemicals may pose to human health and the environment, the EPA said. Bethlehem Apparatus Company was charged with violating three notification requirements in the act, the EPA said. The company has corrected the violations and paid the $103,433 fine, the EPA said. Company President Eve Metzger declined comment on the violations and fine.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

Talisman Energy to pay $62000 *EPA* fine
PITTSBURGH (AP) - A gas drilling company is paying a $62,000 fine for reporting violations in Pennsylvania. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says in a release Wednesday that Talisman Energy USA discovered the violations at 52 gas drilling sites and reported them to the agency. The violations were for failing to file safety information about hazardous chemicals stored at the sites. The EPA says Talisman, which is based in Canada, corrected the violations swiftly. Talisman did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

From Early Bird Blog: US exports *fracking* to the rest of the world Quick, name the most significant American innovation of the past ten years. How about hydraulic fracturing? Okay, that's not an entirely *new* invention. As T. Boone Pickens has pointed out, people have been using pressurized fluid to split open rocks underground since the 1940s. But it wasn't until very recently that the U.S. natural gas industry, with support from the Energy Department, managed to refine fracking techniques in order to drill horizontally into shale rock and extract natural gas and oil. Lots and lots of natural gas and oil. In the past few years, the shale gas boom has upended the U.S. energy landscape. With large and small companies drilling wells around the country, cheap natural gas is now displacing coal as the nation's top source of electricity. That, in turn, has helped contribute to a drop in U.S. carbon-dioxide output: According to the International Energy Agency, the United States has cut its emissions 7.7 percent since 2006, more than any other country or region in the world. (A natural gas plant emits about half the carbon-dioxide that a coal plant does, although fracking for gas can release heat-trapping methane.) That's a major turn of events. But, for now, the fracking boom has largely been confined to the United States. Other nations, from China to Australia to France, also have vast shale formations that contain "unconventional" natural gas and oil. But they've barely started tapping those resources, either because of technical hurdles or political obstacles.

Wonkbook: The worst drought in 50 years **We're in a really, really bad 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. The latest outlook released by the National Weather Service on Thursday forecasts increasingly dry conditions over much of the nation's breadbasket, a development that could lead to higher food prices and shipping costs as well as reduced revenues in areas that count on summer tourism. About the only relief in sight was tropical activity in the Gulf of Mexico and the Southeast that could bring rain to parts of the South." *John Eligon in The New York Times.*/NHSJyo **The USDA boosted drought aid to farmers but wants Congress to act.** "USDA's latest assistance package will allow for haying and grazing to occur on Wetlands Reserve and Conservation Reserve land that have been impacted by the drought, including acres that are abnormally dry or suffering from moderate drought conditions. Until now only areas deemed to be in severe to extreme drought were eligible. The Conservation Reserve, created in 1985, pays farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers to idle environmentally sensitive land for 10 years or more on nearly 30 million acres. Landowners who use the land for emergency haying and grazing give up a small portion of the rent they receive. In a rare move, the USDA said on Monday farmers will be allowed to sell any hay harvested on the Conservation Reserve land." *Christopher Doering in USA Today.*

THE HILL (DC)

Senate committee moves chemicals bill without GOP support Senate Democrats moved forward Wednesday with a bill requiring more safety protections from chemicals manufacturers over the objections of Republicans. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved Sen. Frank Lautenberg's (D-N.J.) "Safe Chemicals Act." The bill would update the Toxic Substances Control Act by requiring more reporting from chemicals manufacturers and place the burden of proof on those companies to show their chemicals are safe. It also would give the Environmental Protection Agency more freedom to test chemicals. "This vote is a major milestone in our effort to fix America's broken system for regulating toxic chemicals," Lautenberg said Wednesday.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

Two *Delaware* hospitals receive federal grants When two of Delaware's hospitals receive grant money totaling nearly $14 million, it's reason to celebrate. And on Monday, an event to do just that took place at the University of Delaware, where representatives from Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital and Christiana Care were joined by Gov. Jack Markell, Sen. Tom Carper, Congressman John Carney, Sen. Chris Coons and others. The children's hospital and Christiana Care were among 81 recipients of Health Care Innovation Awards, through the U.S. Health and Human Services – an initiative part of the Affordable Care Act – funding novel projects improving health care while lowering costs. According to Nemours/A.I. duPont CEO, Dr. Kevin Churchwell, the Delaware hospitals were chosen among 3,000 applicants nationwide. Nemours/A.I. duPont will receive $3.7 million over three years for a large, partnership-based project aimed at reducing asthma-related hospitalization and emergency-room visits by 50 percent by 2015. At three sites around the state – Seaford, Dover and Wilmington – the focus will be on addressing root causes of asthma in the community, like mold in homes and day cares.

Eco-minded crowds don't leave post-festival wasteland

Clean power coming
Jul 23, 2012 | By Aaron Nathans The News Journal ... is concerned the construction of such projects could crowd out opportunities to help households and **small** businesses go solar. All electric **utilities** in Delaware are required under state law to ...

NRG to buy GenOn Energy
(Monday) NRG Energy Inc., which owns two Delaware power plants along with dozens nationwide, is buying GenOn Energy Inc. for about $1.7 billion in stock to create the nation's largest independent power generation company.Top officers of the two companies were expected to provide more details during a briefing Sunday on the

merger, which will create an enterprise valued at $18 billion, with some 47,000 megawatts of combined capacity. ... Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary Collin P. O'Mara said on Sunday that he hopes the merger will lead to a more comprehensive effort to deal with the long-distance movement of plant emissions that feed ozone and soot pollution in neighboring states."We're hopeful that this helps to make it more possible to reduce the pollution coming into Delaware from other states," O'Mara said.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

From Early Bird Commentary: Pattern of complaints arises near fracking CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- One of the most remarkable features of today's news is the disparity between the shale gas drilling industry claims and the claims of people and organizations where they drill. Drillers say no harm is done and great economic benefits result. Certainly, a vast building project is involved, the investment is in the billions, with money coming from all over the world. A map showing the shale areas of the United States where natural gas is believed to be recoverable is impressive. Politicians in some big shale states are ecstatic about what they have been told. At the same time, newspapers and TV stations carry numerous accounts of complaints of injury by people who live in those areas when shale drilling takes place. No matter where it is done, it is the same constellation of damages. Most prominently these include destruction of aquifers, contamination of surface waters, and air pollution resulting in health claims. There also are reports of road damage, sick and dead livestock, soil contamination. Property devaluation figures into these complaints too. The countryside where drilling occurs is abuzz with such stories. The drilling industry has numerous public relations organizations to counter these claims. They will provide speakers for your meetings, articles to be published wherever possible, and "experts" on demand. Every company has one or more spokesmen primed to answer any question or negate any assertion. Opposition to shale drilling has produced some 200 Internet sites in the United States and more in a dozen other countries, Canada foremost among them. The diversity of these sites is remarkable. Some want to preserve clean water, some emphasize clean air, some want to exercise political pressure by meetings, some focus on the compounds used in fracking, some on property damage, and a few are displays of aggrieved individuals. My personal favorite of the last category is Harry Boyd's once-certified organic farm for ginseng in Ohio. Shale drilling has reduced it to an open toxic dump.

From Early Bird Blog: Steelworkers union defends 'our pro-coal president' Yes, you read that headline right … The United *Steelworkers* union has come out with a strong statement describing President Obama as the nation's "pro-coal" president. It came in the form of this op-ed commentary published late last week in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette under the byline of Steelworkers President Leo Gerard

From Early Bird Blog: Jobs vs. environment: Fostering false choices There was a fascinating new report out recently about media coverage of environmental and public health regulations, and how journalists are so quick to talk about how such rules kill jobs, often with little if any evidence to support such claims. The report, "Job Killers" in the News: Allegations without Verification" concluded:

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

From Early Bird Editorial: West Virginians do value electric power Customers have to be willing to shoulder the costs involve.TWO terrible storms in December 2009 knocked out electric power for half the people in Southern West Virginia. Utility crews from all over worked in the cold and the dark to restore service. Appalachian Power's work in West Virginia cost $31.6 million. The company had some money set aside for such an emergency, but sought a temporary rate increase to cover $22.8 million of those costs. The Public Service Commission approved an $18 million rate increase that will cost the average residential customer 14 cents a month for eight

years. Then last month, a rare and powerful straight-line windstorm knocked out power to about 60 percent of Appalachian's West Virginia customers. It took crews from 22 states and Canada, working day after day in broiling heat, to resurrect civilization. Appalachian estimates it cost the company about $56 million to restore power in the Mountain State. Assuming that estimate proves accurate, and assuming the company is allowed to raise rates to cover those costs, using the math from the 2009 storm, customers would pay . . . .

From Early Bird Wells Inn sees second boom SISTERSVILLE - An inn in Sistersville built during the oil rush of the late 1800s is seeing new life at the hands of owners who took over just before the current Marcellus shale boom took hold of the northern part of the state...Because so many Marcellus shale workers stay at the inn, many guests sleep during daylight hours, and Charles doesn't want to disturb their slumber with loud **...**

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

From Early Bird WLU Campus Will Be Smoke-Free WHEELING - West Liberty University's campus will go smoke-free beginning next year, the Wheeling-Ohio County Board of Health learned Tuesday. The smoking ban includes electronic cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products and takes effect in January, said Dr. William Mercer, health officer. He read from a letter sent by WLU officials informing the board of the change. Mercer noted West Virginia Northern Community College also will be smoke-free when students return in the fall. The schools join the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg, W.Va. as the first three smoke-free college campuses in the state.West Virginia University officials also are making plans to eliminate smoking on its properties, Mercer said, but smoking is already banned in the WVU Health Sciences building in Morgantown.

PARKERSBURG NEWS AND SENTINEL

From Early Bird Federal disaster declaration issued PARKERSBURG - The president issued a federal disaster declaration for West Virginia Tuesday, allowing for federal aid to supplement state and local recovery efforts after last month's severe storms. The declaration came a week after U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin requested the federal disaster declaration on behalf of communities affected by widespread power outages and storm damage. "West Virginians are some of the most resilient people in the world, but the massive storms late last month took a tremendous toll on our state," Manchin said. "I'm pleased that the president quickly granted this disaster declaration, and I look forward to helping our communities as they work to rebuild our public infrastructure." The declaration provides assistance for emergency work and repair or replacement of public facilities damaged in the storms from June 29 to July 1. Hazard mitigation grants will be made available as a result of Tuesday's declaration. All counties are eligible to apply for this financial assistance for actions taken to prevent or reduce long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards.

BLUEFIELD DAILY TELEGRAPH

From Early Bird Blight removal projects continue across Mercer County BLUEFIELD — Both large and smaller-scale blight removal projects continue across Mercer County with crews working to remove everything from dilapidated homes to junk cars and a former motel site. Interim Bluefield City Manager and City Attorney Brian Cochran said the city public works department continues to make progress on removing blight and demolishing dilapidated houses throughout the city. “We took down four houses within the city last week on Mineral Street,” Cochran said. “We have one planned on Park Street and several on a list throughout the area we are working on. It is one of those long-term plans to continue with this program. I know we are working with the church on Park Street that has bought a property they are hoping to utilize for parking. There are several we are hoping to work on.” In addition to working on regular maintenance projects, Cochran said crews continue to work to repair storm damage from the June 29 derecho wind storm. “The city crews have painted (roadways) throughout the downtown area,” he said. “They have been working very hard. They had a lot of storm damage, and people are still cleaning up damage from the storm for them to haul off. I just can’t say enough about our city crews. They work so hard and do such a great job.”

From Early Bird Appalachian Power mobilizes in preparation for severe storms BLUEFIELD — Appalachian Power crews are now getting into place in anticipation of a storm that could cause widespread outages in southern West Virginia and Southwest Virginia. "It is more in anticipation of damage from these storms," said Phil Moye, a spokesperson for Appalachian Power. "The June 29 storm came with very little or no warning. We've tried to get some resources in place." Approximately 500 line workers and 100 damage specialists are being dispatched to the region. They will be "split fairly evenly among the West Virginia and Virginia territories," Moye said.

WEST VIRGINIA METRO NEWS

From Early Bird They Say Shale Works For US An official with an organization within the U.S. Chamber of Commerce says the benefits from natural gas drilling in the Marcellus shale go beyond just the industry itself. "What we're focusing on is the part that doesn't get covered a whole lot and that's the economic benefit across the economy," U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for 21st Century Vice President Chris Guith said. Guith, a guest on Tuesday's MetroNews Talkline, says that is the message of a new effort being launched in West Virginia and in several other states where the industry could face additional taxes or environmental regulations for that drilling. Chamber officials say they'll spend millions on dollars on what they're calling an "advocacy and education" campaign called "Shale Works For US." An event to get the initiative started in West Virginia was held Tuesday at Walker Machinery in Kanawha County. Guith says Walker Machinery is an example of the wide reach natural gas drilling has. "Day after day, we're seeing new examples of businesses that you wouldn't normally associate with oil and gas production hiring new people or expanding their businesses," he said.

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

From Early Bird Study finds toxins from surface mining An on-going study by U.S. Geological Survey is finding that people in the southern West Virginia coalfields live with significantly higher levels of toxins in the air and water compared to residents in the rest of the state. After a year of testing air, water, and soil, researchers are concluding that people in mountaintop mining communities in southern West Virginia live in an environment with significant chemical discrepancies from the rest of the state. This could suggest that documented health problems in the region are linked, at least in part, to the mining operations. Research geo-chemist William Orem says the study is part of a project that is funded by the USGS Energy Resources program. The project aims to investigate energy resources and human health. Orem says recent studies published about the effects of surface mining in West Virginia attracted him to the area. "We've observed that the water quality in the surface mining area is affected by something. It's definitely different from what we call control sites—that is, sites where there is no surface mining. There's higher Ph, higher conductivity, to some degree higher organic compounds both in surface water and in ground water. And there's also higher levels of air particulates." Orem says the review will include epidemiological studies that look to confirm recent publications' claims that surface mining adversely affects human health. "We've looked so far at respiratory disease and looking at statistics available from the [National Institute of Health] and other sources it does appear that in the counties where there's significant surface mining activity, there are higher rates of respiratory disease compared to the rest of the state, even after you've corrected for things like rates of smoking, obesity, rates of poverty, things like that."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.)

From Early Bird W.Va. environmental agency to go partially solar CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection will soon have solar power at the agency's headquarters. Recently installed solar panels on the roof will start producing electricity this summer, making DEP the first West Virginia government agency building to be partially powered by the sun. The solar electricity and solar thermal hot-water system will help offset about 15 percent of the agency's electricity consumption annually, and produce nearly $4,000 in first-year savings. The 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funded the $291,000 project. The contractor was Mountain View Solar & Wind of Berkeley Springs.

From Early Bird W.Va. elder advocates to host home-energy talks HUNTINGTON, W.Va. -- Advocates for

older West Virginians plan to hold a gathering to discuss home-energy affordability and the impact of rising utility bills. AARP West Virginia and the Huntington Area AARP chapter say their community conversation will take place Thursday evening at the St. Mary's Center for Education in Huntington. At the discussion, AARP West Virginia officials will share information on pending West Virginia utility rate cases that could have an impact on monthly residential utility rates in the future. AARP officials say home-energy affordability and rising rates particularly can affect older people who live on fixed incomes.

From Early Bird WVDE provides gas-pipeline welding training CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- The West Virginia Department of Education is offering classes in a welding technique that would be utilized in the oil and gas extraction industries. The agency says that the two-day training in so-called downhill welding ends today at a summer technical education conference at the Carver Career Center. Downhill welding is a specific welding style performed on thin, mild steel pipes. It requires a different technique than that more commonly used in boiler piping. Superintendent Jorea Marple said in a statement Monday that the training is prompted by the discovery of the Marcellus Shale natural gas formation and the heightened demand for workers.

WEST VIRGINIA STATE JOURNAL

Hydraulic fracturing protest to take place Saturday in DCThousands of "fracktivists" will travel to Washington D.C. this week for Stop the Frack Attack, billed as the first-ever national protest to stop hydraulic fracturing.The three-day summit will culminate in a rally on the west lawn of the Capitol on Saturday, July 28, at 2 p.m., followed by a march at 3:30 p.m. to the headquarters of America's Natural Gas Alliance and the American Petroleum Institute.The rally is organized by a coalition of community groups, citizen activists and environmental organizations from throughout the country. Its advisory council draws from eight states where hydraulic fracturing is or could be used by the oil and gas industry.A roster of 136 local, state and national organizations are joining the summit "to call on Congress to take action to protect community rights, public health, drinking water, and the global climate from the impacts of fracking," according to a media release."They also will demand the closure of legal loopholes that allow the oil and gas industry to ignore parts of the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act and other bedrock environmental laws while fracking," the release reads.

WV House members call for delay of EPA rule West Virginia officials are again trying to delay environmental protections that could impose additional costs on the state's coal industry. Officials have been fighting for the already-strained industry, particularly against the Environmental Protection Agency as it relates to proposed emissions standards. Rep. David B. McKinley, R-W.Va., introduced legislation that would "prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from implementing a rule requiring stringent emissions standards for new or existing coal fired power plants, until Carbon Capture Sequestration (CCS) technology is deemed economically and technically feasible." Rep. Nick Rahall, D-W.Va. and Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., co-sponsored the bill. "This preliminary EPA rule could literally cripple the future of coal because the implementation of carbon capture is not yet technologically or economically feasible," McKinley said. "Utilities will simply stop building coal-fired power plants and switch to gas fired units. That would result in the loss of thousands of good paying coal jobs." This is not the first time a West Virginia official attempted to delay regulations. Several efforts have been made to block, stop or repeal environmental regulations affecting the coal industry, but this is also not the first attempt to delay EPA rules.Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., has introduced a bill in the past that would seek a delay, not a weakening of regulation.

US Chamber official makes case for shale energy in *WV* The world's largest business federation is throwing its weight behind shale gas, and one of its officials took the time to celebrate new "Shale Works for US" campaign in West Virginia on July 24. Karen Harbert, president and CEO of the Institute for 21st Century Energy of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said the Shale Works for US campaign educates the public about the burgeoning industry. The campaign, promoted at a news conference and other media events July 24, aims to promote the mission of building support "for the vast economic and energy security benefits of natural gas and oil produced from shale." "West Virginia has a long history of providing its natural energy resources to the rest of the country," Harbert said.

"Now the opportunity exists for West Virginia to build upon the strong coal industry by becoming a leader in shale energy production."

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

From Early Bird Test for leaky pipes to introduce bright green dye to harbor Non-toxic liquid not harmful to humans or animals; will help city identify problems. Baltimore residents and visitors "may notice a bright green liquid flowing through the Inner Harbor and other waterways" Wednesday, but they shouldn't be alarmed, city public works officials said Tuesday..

From Early Bird Maryland independent farm launches Kickstarter to build iPhone apps One Straw Farm , one of the biggest independent farms in Maryland and a familiar presence at farmers' markets across the Baltimore region, is on a quest to build two iPhone apps that will help modernize its business and better connect with its customers..

From Early Bird Letter: Fracking dangers are overstated While we agree with Katie Huffling that safe, responsible, tightly-regulated natural gas development must be done in a way that protects "the health of our communities and the environment," her recent op-ed ("The hidden health risks of fracking," July 20) lodges a series of claims that are simply unsupported by the facts. Her claim that rural communities are "being destroyed by drilling" is as inflammatory as it is false. We live and raise our families in these communities and care deeply about protecting our environment. We also understand the positive economic benefits tied to safe American natural gas development. Nearly 240,000 Pennsylvania jobs are tied to the Marcellus Shale industry, and more natural gas is being used to meet our growing energy needs, bringing about cleaner air and more consumer savings. Your readers should know, despite Ms. Huffling's claims, that Pennsylvania's new bipartisan natural gas law represents one of the most forward-leaning regulatory reforms in the nation, aimed at protecting our air and water, while ensuring natural gas is safely produced.

From Early Bird GOP freshman Del. Neil Parrott challenges Maryland power structure Parrott is behind all three referenda set for ballot this November. By any standard measure, Neil Parrott's place in Maryland politics ought to be toward the very bottom. He's a freshman Republican delegate in a very blue state, without pedigree or government connections. Yet through dogged organizing and clever use of technology, this tea party leader from Hagerstown has turned a little-used provision of the Maryland Constitution into a tool capable of overturning chunks of the ruling Democrats' legislative agenda..

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Commentary: DNR is certainly not 'pulling a fast one' I am writing to address a recent column regarding the hunting proposals for Chesapeake Forest. We are still seeking input on these areas and will continue take into account and develop a plan based on citizen's suggestions. First and foremost, the Department of Natural Resources is not trying to "pull a fast one." Every management activity that occurs on state forestlands -- including the proposal at hand -- goes through a well-established, three-step review process:

From Early Bird Editorial: Get ready, because hurricane season is here Along the mid-Atlantic coast, the time of year when the majority of hurricanes typically form is fast approaching. Although the season officially begins June 1, and forecasters are expecting an average or below-average number of storms in 2012, complacency is not

advised. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is predicting a 70 percent chance of between nine and 16 named storms, of which four to eight are expected to become hurricanes, at least one to three of which would likely be Category 3 or higher. The 2012 tropical season started early with the first named tropic storm, Alberto, forming May 19. Beryl followed close on the heels of Alberto, and made landfall in Florida in late May. But if there is one thing about hurricanes and their season, it's a lack of predictability. If El Nino conditions develop -- as opposed to the La Nina conditions that have fostered storm formation in recent years -- the number of storms could be smaller. In 2011, only one hurricane made landfall in the United States --Irene. And no major storms have struck since the disastrous 2005 hurricane season, the year a trio of Category 5 storms --Katrina, Rita and Wilma -- wreaked havoc.

From Early Bird Editorial: Pony Penning can be magical Animals sometimes bring out the best in people. One of the longest-lived examples of this is Chincoteague's Pony Penning and Auction. This year, the 87th annual swim across the Assateague Channel takes place today. Early Thursday morning, the 87th annual pony auction will begin. Tens of thousands of visitors are in town for the event.Pony Penning was first held in 1925 as a fundraiser to pay for firefighting equipment for the island. The event received a huge boost from children's author Marguerite Henry, who wrote "Misty of Chincoteague" in 1947 and followed up with a number of sequels about Misty's descendants and the ponies of Chincoteague, fueling childhood dreams of pony ownership that persist to this day.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND ONLINE

From Early Bird Commentary: Pilot Project May Bring More Crabs, Fewer Rules to Crabbers (By Tom Horton) More crabs to catch and fewer rules by which to catch 'em. That'd be the Holy Grail for Chesapeake watermen. It's why top crabbers in Maryland, from Havre de Grace to Smith Island, have been traveling monthly, for the past 18 months, to long and sometimes contentious meetings with state regulators. Their Blue Crab Design Team is a unique and immensely hopeful development in the long history of harvesting the bay's seafood. I give watermen and Maryland's Department of Natural Resources lots of credit for trying it. The goal is to break with the commercial fisheries management that's been traditional here and other places—regulators trying to make it harder to fish for watermen who in turn try to fish harder. It recalls a dock builder who told me some creative ways to avoid regulations on the size of my dock. "You must lie awake every night thinking that up," I joked. "I do lie awake every night thinking that up—it's my living," he said. Regulators only thought about him eight hours a day, he figured. With blue crabs, however, the fishing rules have piled up on the fishermen in recent years, creating "a system that is no longer satisfactory to us or to the fishing industry," says Steve Early, a DNR official on the current design project. For crabs it's been fine. A welter of restrictions on harvests has dramatically increased their population from historic lows less than a decade ago.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

Maryland legislative panel approves new septic regulations requiring best available technology ANNAPOLIS, Md. — A panel of Maryland lawmakers has approved regulations requiring new construction to use the best technology in septic systems to fight pollution in the Chesapeake Bay.The Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive and Legislative Review voted 11-8 on Tuesday for the regulations proposed by Gov. Martin O'Malley's administration.Now, the Maryland Department of the Environment will consider public comments until Aug. 15 before deciding on the final regulations, which could take effect within weeks after the comment period ends.Supporters say the regulations are aimed at working in tandem with a law passed this year to limit septic system development to remove nitrogen output adding up to about 31,000 households by 2026. Critics say the regulations will add at least $8,000 to the cost of a new home.

WBAL NEWS

Green Energy Is Growing Fast In *Maryland* How would you like to turn the tables and let the utility to pay YOU for electricity? Some utility customers are doing just that with solar, wind, and geothermal energy in Maryland. John Sasser of Baltimore County can watch his electric meter spin backwards on sunny days. That means that as the electrons are going into the BGE system, money is basically flowing back into his pocket. Which is nice, since,

he laid out about $30,000 dollars for the panels and this system that was funded by nearly half through varied state and local green energy grants and a 30% federal tax credit."When do I get $30,000 back?" Sasser said. "I don't know, I think it's at least a 10 percent investment if its a seven year payback. Right now I could put my money in the stock market instead of solar panels and lose 40 percent. I think it's a safe investment."Sasser added, "It's good for the environment, and I like watching that meter go backwards."

MARYLAND GAZETTE

Fort Detrick panel member frustrated at cleanup pace

New testing finds dangerous levels of cancer-causing agent. At least one member of the advisory board overseeing the cleanup of chemical contamination at Fort Detrick in Frederick expressed frustration last week with the pace of the effort after a consultant hired by the U.S. Army revealed levels of a cancer-causing agent 3,000 times federal safe drinking-water standards. The consultant Arcadis, hired to test groundwater contamination on the base as part of cleanup efforts mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2009, identified trichloroethene, or TCE, tetracholoroethene, or PCE, and chloroform as having the highest levels of concentration in and around Area B, a disposal area for chemical, biological and radiological materials, including industrial and munitions waste. TCE was found in the highest concentrations at 3,000 times the EPA's safe drinking-water standards. EPA lists TCE's maximum safe-contaminant level at 0.005 micrograms per liter, or five parts per billion. Arcadis found PCE at 14,000 to 15,000 parts per billion.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND ONLINE

Pilot Project May Bring More Crabs, Fewer Rules to Crabbers More crabs to catch and fewer rules by which to catch 'em. That'd be the Holy Grail for Chesapeake watermen. It's why top crabbers in Maryland, from Havre de Grace to Smith Island, have been traveling monthly, for the past 18 months, to long and sometimes contentious meetings with state regulators. Their Blue Crab Design Team is a unique and immensely hopeful development in the long history of harvesting the bay's seafood. I give watermen and Maryland's Department of Natural Resources lots of credit for trying it. The goal is to break with the commercial fisheries management that's been traditional here and other places—regulators trying to make it harder to fish for watermen who in turn try to fish harder. It recalls a dock builder who told me some creative ways to avoid regulations on the size of my dock. "You must lie awake every night thinking that up," I joked.

VIRGINIA

NORFOLK VIRGINIAN PILOT

From Early Bird Norfolk council backs uranium mining moratorium NORFOLK -- The City Council called unanimously on Tuesday for a continuation of the state's moratorium on uranium mining to safeguard rivers and reservoirs that provide Norfolk's drinking water. "This is a vote for us to stand up for the system and against anything that may somehow taint the quality of the water," Mayor Paul Fraim said after the vote at the council's regular meeting. Fraim said the action intentionally echoed a similar resolution approved by Virginia Beach last month against mining and milling uranium ore. Norfolk Director of Utilities Kristen Lentz told the council before its vote that the proposed Coles Hills uranium mining project is near a river that drains into Lake Gaston, which feeds Norfolk's water supply. She said Norfolk's treatment plants could cleanse water adequately even if mining operations contaminated the water supply upstream. But she said if contamination occurred, lawsuits could prevent Norfolk from pumping water out of Lake Gaston for an extended period, squeezing the city's water supplies. Safety violations by the mining industry could also jeopardize that supply. Fraim said the city's water system serves 700,000 people a day, including naval bases. "We're very protective of that system," he said, and cautious about

anything that might interfere with the water quality.

ROANOKE TIMES

From Early Bird Uranium mining may be bad for business Does the potential benefit of uranium mining outweigh the risks for Virginia? That is the question that legislators will need to answer in the 2013 General Assembly. The public forum on uranium mining on Friday at Virginia Western Community College will have expert speakers to provide valuable information on the possibility of uranium mining in Virginia so that citizens can participate in this important decision. Most of the debate so far between supporters of keeping the ban on uranium mining and those who would like the ban to be lifted has focused on the environmental safety and citizens' health versus bringing jobs to Virginia.

CHARLOTTESVILLE DAILY PROGRESS

From Early Bird City Planning Commission offers input on land use Though the city of Charlottesville is surrounded entirely by Albemarle County, the communities often have different expectations about how land along shared borders should be developed in the future. The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission obtained a $1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in part to help both communities coordinate areas of common interest as each updates its Comprehensive Plan.The Charlottesville Planning Commission spent Tuesday giving TJPDC staff input on its vision for key areas such as the Woolen Mills and the Rivanna River. "We want to know how the city sees these areas and ideas you may have about working with the county to get goals for the comprehensive plans," said Summer Frederick, project manager for the One Community initiative. The Woolen Mills neighborhood is predominantly in the city, but there is a large industrial park on county land to the south across the railroad tracks.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Va.)

From Early Bird Rivers groups assess water-friendly practices Va. localities within Chesapeake Bay watershed RICHMOND, Va. — An analysis of non-tidal Virginia localities that are part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed found wide variations in the adoption of development codes intended to keep sediment and runoff from entering rivers and streams. The analysis was contained in a report by conservation groups concerned with the well-being of three Virginia rivers: the James, the Potomac and the Rappahannock. The groups examined local development codes and ordinances of 41 cities, towns and counties to assess how well they're embracing "low-impact development" practices. These are rules designed to filter and store rainfall runoff, for example, instead of letting them flow freely into rivers and streams. One approach involves creating more green spaces. Each locality was rated on 76 low-impact principles grouped into categories. They include minimized land disturbances, the preservation of vegetation and reduction of impervious surfaces, such as narrower streets. The scores ranged from 3 percent to 72 percent, with the average locality scoring 27 percent. Each locality scored well in at least one category. Bill Street, executive director of the James River Association, said the study "shows that there's a lot of opportunities" to improve on those practices.

CHESTERFIELD OBSERVER

River educates teachersDuring her tenure as principal at Elizabeth Davis Middle School, Sara Fraher explored various methods to unify the faculty while also encouraging appreciation for the environment among the student body. Fraher is no longer at Davis, having taken over as principal at Manchester Middle, but her legacy endures. That's one reason why, for the third consecutive year, a group of Davis teachers signed up for a highly interactive five-day environmental education course offered last week by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. "Chesterfield County Public Schools wants to create lifelong learners and I think teachers are the best example of that," said

Chesterfield teachers prepare to paddle down the James River as part of an environmental education course offered last week by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Jim McConnell/Chesterfield Observer

Betty Bauman, who teaches English at Davis. This year's course, titled "Chesapeake Bay: An Historical Perspective," started last Monday with a tour of Henricus Historical Park and discussion of "green" building techniques. But the real adventure began Tuesday, when the group of 16 teachers reported to the boat launch at Deep Bottom Park in Henrico County for a canoe trip on the James River. They worked together to help CBF leaders Eric Wiegandt and Ken Slazyk unload the canoes, listened to Wiegandt's brief tutorial on rowing techniques and donned life jackets before boarding the canoes. The teachers performed water quality tests during the trip, then returned to shore and watched an "electrofishing" demonstration by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

From Early Bird EPA, Advocates Agree to Push Back Final Cooling Water Rule to 2013 EPA will not issue a final rule to regulate cooling water intake towers at power plants and other industrial facilities until June 2013, almost a full year after the deadline set out in a settlement reached with environmental groups in 2010. The postponement of the final rule to June 27, 2013, is designed to give the agency more time to analyze the comments that it received in response to the recent release of additional data related to the rule. The new deadline is contained in a modified settlement agreed to by the environmental plaintiffs who sought to force action on the rule.

From Early Bird Agency Says It Seeks Greater Regulatory Authority Over Chemicals EPA supports strengthening federal law in a way that would give it greater authority to regulate chemicals, an EPA official tells a Senate committee and subcommittee. The Toxic Substances Control Act does not provide EPA sufficient authority to protect public health against risks from chemicals, Jim Jones, acting EPA assistant administrator for chemical safety and pollution prevention, says at a joint hearing of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and the Subcommittee on Superfund, Toxics, and Environmental Health. The hearing was held to examine EPA's authority to control exposures to toxic chemicals

From Early Bird EPA to Report on Technical Assistance for Brownfields Projects EPA intends to issue within weeks a report on providing technical assistance to communities to help clean up brownfields, Mathy Stanislaus, assistant administrator for solid waste and emergency response, tells the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council. In addition, EPA is developing a framework to conduct a technical needs assessment before a cleanup project is started, he tells the advisory panel

GREENWIRE

From Early Bird Stakeholders optimistic as EPA takes another look at mercury rule Stakeholders have begun weighing in on U.S. EPA's temporary suspension of parts of its mercury rule for new power plants while it considers technical changes. Few have expressed opposition to the agency's decision announced late last week that it would consider input on the so-called Utility MACT rule that was finalized in December. But how the EPA decision is seen depends on the perspective of the stakeholder. Environmentalists and the emissions-control industry say they expect EPA to finalize a workable but strict standard for new power plants, while the utility sector is expressing hope that there might be a broad rule revision for air toxics. EPA has said it will use its authority under the Clean Air Act to place a 90-day stay on the rule and has asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District

of Columbia Circuit for an equally long pause in litigation while it conducts its review. EPA's motion to the court is still pending. EPA air chief Gina McCarthy cast her agency's reconsideration as very narrow, and she pledged Friday in a statement that it "will not change the types of state-of-the-art pollution controls new power plants are expected to use to reduce this harmful pollution"

From Early Bird EPA delays finalizing new rules for cooling-water intakes until 2013 U.S. EPA announced today that it will put off until June 2013 finalizing new rules designed to reduce the environmental impacts caused by power plant cooling-water intakes. EPA now has until June 27, 2013, to finalize the new regulations under a modified settlement agreement reached with the environmental group Riverkeeper. Riverkeeper had sued EPA to compel the agency to implement tougher standards to protect fish, shellfish, larvae, eggs and other aquatic life that intakes can vacuum up from waterways. Under the original November 2010 settlement, EPA had agreed to finalize a new rule by this Friday. The agency said in an email: "The extension provides the agency ample time to complete its analysis of public comments, data and options prior to finalizing the rule, which EPA hopes to do as expeditiously as possible." Riverkeeper first sued EPA to enforce tougher cooling-water intake standards in 1993. Reed Super, the group's lead attorney in the case, said he was "disappointed" by the latest, 11-month delay but that the need for more time was evident.

From Early Bird GAO faults EPA oversight of New Source Review permits U.S. EPA fails to keep complete, updated information on New Source Review permits for power plants that burn fossil fuels, raising questions about the effectiveness of the Clean Air Act program, a federal watchdog said yesterday. NSR permits are required for developing new power plants or modifying existing units. The permits can set emissions limits for the new or modified units, or require specific emission control technologies. As state and local authorities issue the permits, EPA is failing to maintain a complete database of the permits -- despite the urging in 2006 of the National Research Council, the Government Accountability Office said. Even though EPA maintains some permit information, GAO said, "the absence of more complete information on NSR permitting makes it difficult to know which units have obtained NSR permits or to assess how state and local permitting agencies vary from EPA in their interpretations of NSR requirements." GAO identified two "overarching" reasons for the problem. First, it is difficult to determine whether an NSR permit is required because it can be unclear what modifications qualify as significant enough for a permit.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Early Bird Christie signs bill to encourage solar-energy growth TRENTON - Gov. Christie signed legislation Monday aimed at encouraging the continued growth of New Jersey's solar industry while protecting ratepayers from increased costs. The measure, which had strong bipartisan support in the Legislature, increases the percentage of the total that power utilities must derive from solar energy from about 2 percent a year to more than 4 percent by 2028. The state goal overall is to generate 23.5 percent of New Jersey's energy from solar.

Environmental groups write Obama administration supporting offshore wind power BALTIMORE — Environment Maryland says more than 215 groups have written to the Obama administration supporting development of offshore wind power.Environment Maryland says the groups represent environmental, conservation, clean energy and business interests. The letter says the groups are encouraged by actions taken so far by the administration and federal leadership is needed to move away from fossil fuels that threaten the environment, public health and national security. The letter asks the administration to support federal investment in offshore wind until the industry is established. The Department of the Interior launched a wind energy initiative for the Atlantic Coast in 2010 to aid siting, leasing and construction. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced in February that an environmental impact review found no significant problems along the mid-Atlantic coast.

Department of the Interior plan pre-approves sites for solar development in 6 states in West FRESNO, Calif. — The Obama administration moved Tuesday to streamline the development of large-scale solar projects on public lands by approving 17 vast tracts across the West it says has the highest power-generating potential and the fewest

environmental impacts. As developers scramble to secure utility-scale solar sites, the plan will move the Department of the Interior away from having to consider individual projects on a case-by-case basis and instead direct development to land already identified as having fewer wildlife and natural resource obstacles.

NATRURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

From Early Bird Blog: Concerned Californians Rally As *Fracking* Workshops Draw To A Close Tomorrow afternoon, more than 100 concerned Californians are expected to turn out for a rally in Sacramento to bring attention to the issue of fracking. The rally is timed to coincide with the last of seven public workshops the Department of Conservation has been hosting over the past several weeks to solicit the public's input on new fracking regulations. Throughout the summer, people from all over the state turned out at these meetings to voice their concerns about fracking. At the Culver City workshop, which I mentioned in a June blog post, more than 400 people filled the City Council chambers and two overflow rooms. The overwhelming majority of comments expressed serious concern about fracking's potential as a threat to drinking water, air quality, community health, and California's constrained water supply. At tomorrow's workshop in Sacramento, we will likely hear many of the same concerns. And after tomorrow's workshop...then what? It was explained to me at both the Culver City and Long Beach workshops that providing comments at these workshops is not actually part of the formal regulation making process. That process will actually begin if and when the Department issues draft regulations and invites public comment. I heard from one official that this might happen as early as sometime in the next couple of months, while another is guessing sometime toward the beginning of 2013. I would urge the Department not to rush the regulatory process and risk the omission of key health and safety provisions.

Something's Coming, Something Good: Despite Chemical Industry OppositionToday, something good will happen here in Washington. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will vote on the Safe Chemicals Act, legislation introduced by Senator Frank Lautenberg to reform the badly broken current law that is supposed to protect us from chemicals. The Safe Chemicals Act (S.847) would:

- Direct chemical companies to produce health and environmental data for chemicals;
- Require chemicals to meet a safety standard to remain on the market;
- Give EPA greater authority to require testing of chemicals and to take action to protect the public from those that are unsafe;
- Expand public access to information about chemicals, including their potential effects as well as uses and likely sources of exposure;
- Ensure EPA decisions are made based upon the most up to date science and methods of assessing the risks of chemicals;
- Promote action to clean up those communities that have been hardest hit by significant and disproportionate exposure to toxic chemicals.

The bill is the latest version of his efforts to reform the failed Toxic Substances Control Act which he has been working to reform since July 2005. ... On all of these issues, Senator Lautenberg has been criticized and opposed by the chemical industry.

So, what's a *green* roof got to do with it?
Well, lots, if you care about the environment. A green roof is one that is partially or completely covered with vegetation. It is one small part of what we call "green infrastructure." A green roof has plenty of environmental benefits. To name a few: it absorbs rainwater, thereby keeping stormwater runoff from flowing into nearby waterbodies; it improves air quality by reducing greenhouse gas emissions; it serves to insulate the building beneath and helps decrease heating and cooling costs; … The list goes on.

NEW YORK TIMES

From Early Bird Blog: University of Texas Will Review Gas Study After Conflict Questions Raised There have

been several developments following the disclosure of a substantial unstated financial relationship between Charles Groat, who supervised a University of Texas Energy Institute study of environmental impacts of gas drilling, and a drilling company. In an e-mail exchange with a reporter for StateImpact Texas, Groat said his industry relationships had no bearing on the analysis, which he did not directly work on. But he did not address questions raised about his failure to provide full disclosure of potential conflicts of interest.In a statement distributed to journalists tonight, Steven Leslie, provost and executive vice president of the University of Texas at Austin, said the study of gas drilling impacts would be reviewed by independent experts in the next few weeks and criticized Groat's failure to report income from his relationship with a drilling company. Here's the statement:

AMERICAN RIVERS

Keeping Cool With *Green Infrastructure* We're officially into summer here in Washington, DC with temperatures consistently hitting the 90s (and even the 100s!). Particularly in urban areas, the large number of hard surfaces like parking lots and rooftops can be 50-90°F hotter than the surrounding air, causing higher temperatures compared to more rural areas. This is often referred to as the urban heat island effect which can considerably amplify the impact of heat waves.

CBS42

Strong teeth or strong grades?

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (WIAT)- Harvard University researchers conducted a review of fluoride/brain studies and concluded that there is a possibility of adverse effects of fluoride exposure on children's neurodevelopment. Children in high fluoride areas had significantly lower IQs than those who lived in low fluoride areas, and the EPA says that there is substantial evidence of developmental neurotoxicity. Fluoride, or fluosilicic acid, is added to US water supplies at approximately 1 part per million in attempts to reduce tooth decay. The studies only reviewed water as the primary fluoride source based on high water fluoride levels, though they point out research by Ding (2011) that suggests low water fluoride levels has significant negative associations with children's intelligence. Researchers recommend more brain and fluoride research on children at individual-level doses because little is known about its effects on children's neurodevelopment. However, not everyone agrees.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADER

Procter & Gamble, EPA to Develop Sustainable Manufacturing Tool Procter & Gamble and the EPA are embarking on a five-year research collaboration to develop a sustainability tool for modeling and assessing product design, material sourcing, and manufacturing options.The global personal care product company and the EPA's National Risk Management Research Laboratory have signed a cooperative research and development agreement aimed at improving sustainability at manufacturing facilities and at their associated supply chains. The research and development under the agreement will be aimed at helping P&G meet its long-term environmental sustainability vision, announced in September of 2010. This vision includes: 1) powering its plants with 100 percent renewable energy; 2) using 100 percent renewable materials or recyclate for all its products and packaging; 3) having zero consumer or manufacturing waste going to landfills; and 4) designing products that delight consumers while maximizing the conservation of resources. P&G hopes to meet all of these goals by 2020.

POLITICO

Inhofe: Overhaul of Toxic Substances Control Act dead for year

Any chance of making headway in the long effort to update the Environmental Protection Agency's oversight of chemicals is effectively dead this year, Senate Environment and Public Works Committee ranking member Jim Inhofe said Tuesday. Republicans are upset that the environmental panel is moving ahead with a markup Wednesday of Sen. Frank Lautenberg's bill to enact the biggest update in the Toxic Substances Control Act since it began in 1976....The markup will be a "partisan political exercise tomorrow, effectively ending hopes for TSCA modernization this year," Inhofe (R-Okla.) said at a panel hearing Tuesday on the TSCA.Lautenberg held a series of meetings with Inhofe last year with a broad range of groups on the subject, and in recent weeks held talks with Sen. David Vitter (R-La.). The New Jersey Democrat first introduced a TSCA bill in 2005 and held the first hearing

on the subject in 2008. Vitter said staff met at least weekly to try to strike a deal.

INDEPENDENT ONLINE

Buy time to slow warming, US urges ... Seven countries - Britain, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy and Jordan - formally joined the US-led Climate and Clean Air Initiative, bringing the total of members to about 20 since the plan was launched in February. "If we are able to do this we could really buy time in the context of the global problem to combat climate change," Jonathan Pershing, US deputy special envoy for climate change, told a telephone news briefing from Paris. Pershing said that time was "desperately" needed to slow global warming. Unlike other developed nations, the United States has not passed laws to cut greenhouse gas emissions despite proposed cuts by President Barack Obama. Pershing said that Washington was in talks trying to attract more nations to the air pollution plan, including China and India which are the number one and three emitters of greenhouse gases respectively, with the United States in second. The US-led plan in Paris focuses on limiting soot, heat-trapping methane, ground level ozone and HFC gases. Soot, for instance, can speed the melt of Arctic ice when it lands as a dark dusting that soaks up more heat and thaws ice.

REAL ESTATE RAMA

EPA Kicks Off Third Annual Energy Star National Building CompetitionWASHINGTON, DC – July 25, 2012 – (RealEstateRama) — Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Energy Star program launched the 2012 National Building Competition: Battle of the Buildings with a record 3,200 buildings across the country going head to head to improve energy efficiency, lower utility costs and protect health and the environment.Commercial buildings in the U.S. are responsible for about 20 percent of the nation's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions at a cost of more than $100 billion annually in energy bills. In 2011, the 245 participants saved $5.2 million on their utility bills and prevented nearly 30,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually, equal to the emissions from the electricity used by more than 3,600 homes a year. By improving the energy efficiency of commercial buildings, such as schools, offices, hospitals and retail stores, competitors will reduce energy waste and save on utility bills while protecting the environment and people's health. "This year the number of teams committing to increase energy efficiency through the Energy Star Battle of the Buildings is larger than ever before — more than ten times as many as last year. We're expecting record energy savings as more and more buildings cut back on their energy use," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "We wish the best to the thousands of teams competing, but we know the big winners will be the American people, who will benefit from the innovative ideas that emerge from the competition. As in years past, these ideas will translate into new ways we can all cut energy use, save money on our power bills, and reduce the carbon pollution that is changing our climate." M

SAN FRANCISCO BAY GUARDIAN

Environmental groups call for fracking moratorium in California

California's biggest environmental organizations are gathering in Sacramento tomorrow (Wed/25) to call for a moratorium on the controversial practice of hydraulic fracturing – also known as fracking, in which a mixture of water and chemicals is injected at high pressure deep underground to increase production in oil and natural gas wells – until its impacts are better understood.