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Office of Public Affairs

PM Headlines

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*** PM HOT LIST ***

Study targets algae in James River

VIRGINIAN-PILOT HOPEWELL As researcher Paul Bukaveckas worked from a boat, the James River teemed with life. Unseen, unwanted life. The river abounded with microscopic cells of algae, which can foul the water and, in some cases, sicken people and animals with toxins. The algae outbreak, or bloom, was hard to see. In fact, the James looked lovely on this late August morning, its waters glassy under an overcast sky. "Up here, you are having algal blooms all the time, whether you see them or not," said Bukaveckas, 52, a Virginia Commonwealth University river ecologist. As researcher Paul Bukaveckas worked from a boat, the James River teemed with life. Unseen, unwanted life. The river abounded with microscopic cells of algae, which can foul the water and, in some cases, sicken people and animals with toxins.The algae outbreak, or bloom, was hard to see. In fact, the James looked lovely on this late August morning, its waters glassy under an overcast sky."Up here, you are having algal blooms all the time, whether you see them or not," said Bukaveckas, 52, a Virginia Commonwealth University river ecologist.

Annual report reveals list of contaminants in Cumberland County water

THE CARLISLE SENTINEL (Saturday) There is something in the water. Local drinking water quality reports, which are provided to residents and businesses with an update on the safety of tap water, has revealed a list of contaminants that may give pause to some who get their H2O from faucets. Lead, copper, chlorine, asbestos and other contaminants have all been found in the water, according to an annual report issued by the Middlesex Municipal Authority. Also, according to a July 31 report issued by the Environmental Protection Agency on Carlisle Borough, an elevated amount of radon was noted in the borough's drinking water. EPA records did, however, show that the borough later met its requirements and the problem was fixed. However, the borough was previously cited for having the contaminants fecal coliform and E-coli in its water five years ago. EPA officials said it considers any trace of those contaminants in drinking water to be over legal and health guidelines with potential effects from exposure including diarrhea, cramps, nausea and headaches. The contaminants also may pose a special health risk for infants, young children and people with severely compromised immune systems, EPA officials said. Additionally, in 2010, haloacetic acids were found in the borough's water. Repeated telephone and email messages left for Carlisle Borough Water Plant Supervisor, Michael McFadden, were not returned. The EPA also noted that it was aware of inaccuracies and under reporting of some of the drinking water data.

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Impasse in negotiations in W.Va. selenium case

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.) CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Federal court records show a coal mine company's settlement in a West Virginia water pollution case has fallen through. Lawyers for Patriot Coal Corp. and the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition indicated a breakdown in negotiations this week.The Charleston Gazette (http://bit.ly/O3PcOO) reports U.S. District Judge Robert Chambers in Huntington has given the parties until **Monday** to file legal papers outlining how they want to proceed. The negotiations involved the company's liability for treating of selenium runoff from mining complexes in southern West Virginia. Patriot Coal filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in July. Selenium is a naturally occurring element that surface mining can release into waterways. Studies have found it's toxic to aquatic life. In humans, high-level exposure can damage the kidneys, liver, and central nervous and circulatory systems.

Sparrows Point sold, leaving mill's future in doubt

BALTIMORE-SUN 'Market will dictate' whether Baltimore County steel mill reopens. The massive Sparrows Point steel mill changed hands this afternoon, a $72.5 million deal that leaves the future of the complex in doubt.The massive Sparrows Point complex changed ownership Friday for the fifth time in less than a decade, potentially its last sale as a steel mill. .. "Both ELT and Hilco would love to see a continued steel facility at Sparrows Point," said Randall Jostes, Environmental Liability Transfer's president and CEO. "The market will dictate whether that's possible." .... The company has plenty to keep it busy at Sparrows Point. The site's size and location — south of Interstate 695, nearly surrounded by water — are enough to make any developer's mouth water, but it comes with toxins. "More than a century of steel making and finishing operations have resulted in perhaps the most complex environmental cleanup site in the Chesapeake Bay watershed," Baltimore County's attorneys wrote in court documents. Jostes, with ELT, said the cleanup will take "many, many, many years," but the site can be used while that work is under way.

Activists Want New Gas Pipeline Regulators

TREDYFFRIN-EASTTOWNPATCH (Saturday) Environmental activists want The Delaware River Basin Commission to regulate gas pipeline construction that could affect the watershed. The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) remains silent on new Marcellus Shale drilling regulations for the Delaware River watershed as commission members from New York work on completing their regulatory update, according to a State Impact report. In the meantime, pipeline construction in Pennsylvania is booming. Smaller lines from wellheads, as well as large interstate lines, will go below rivers and streams. Activists who want the DRBC to ban gas drilling also want the commission to start weighing in on pipelines near waterways which feed the Delaware.

Delaware interfaith group participates in White House conference on energy efficiency

CAPE GAZETTE Delaware Interfaith Power and Light joined other leaders from the nation's faith community and the White House Office for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Sept. 13 in a conversation about boosting the energy efficiency of the nation's houses of worship. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, if America's more than 370,000 houses of worship cut energy use by 20 percent, collectively they would save nearly $630 million, cut electricity use by more than 3.6 billion kilowatt hours, and prevent more than 2.6 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to the emissions from about 480,000 cars. The White House will call congregations to action, encouraging houses of worship to measure and track their energy use with EPA's Portfolio Manager tool. After establishing an initial baseline in the tool, houses of worship which improve their energy efficiency by 20 percent or more will be specially recognized by the White House. Any house of worship which then earns a 75 or higher on EPA's 1-100 energy performance scale, indicating that the building performs better than at least 75 percent of similar buildings nationwide, will be eligible to earn EPA's ENERGY STAR.

Editorial: Bad seed didn't pay off

POCONO RECORD Corporate incompetence, even willful carelessness, are bad enough. But it's inaction that really rankles when a company goes wrong. Ohio-based lawn care giant Scotts Miracle-Gro Company sold millions of bags of wild bird feed illegally treated with an insecticide toxic to birds, fish and other wildlife before a voluntary recall in 2008. No one knows for sure how many creatures may have died as a result. The company has agreed to pay a total of $12.5 million in criminal and civil penalties and donations to environmental projects. For some time, Scotts added the pesticides Storcide II and Actellic 5E to the wild bird feed to keep insect infestations at bay even though the Storcide II's label warned specifically that it was toxic to birds, fish and other widlife. The company sold the treated bird feed for two years, including for six months after its own employees warned managers about the pesticides.

Asian carp policy: Is it keeping Obama and Romney up at night?

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR Nah. But the issue resonates in (battleground) states around the Great Lakes, so the Romney and Obama camps outlined their approaches to dealing with a prospective Asian carp invasion. President Obama has promised billions more dollars in aid and has cracked the whip on the US Army Corps of Engineers to finish a study on the great Great Lakes Asian carp.

"Mini Grants" a Big Win for Chesapeake Bay Environmental Education

PUBLIC NEWS SERVICE ANNAPOLIS, Md. - Seeing, hearing and touching is believing. Nearly $500,000 has been added to the Environmental Education Mini Grant Program in an effort to interest K-12 students in caring about the Chesapeake Bay and its connected streams and rivers. The money comes from the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office.

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Federal grant may assist cleanup at Steel General Office, Dixie Cup plant

EASTON EXPRESS-TIMES (Saturday) A $650,000 federal grant awarded to Northampton County today may help fund environmental cleanup at sites such as the Steel General Office building in Bethlehem and the Dixie Cup plant in Wilson Borough. The county has used prior Environmental Protection Agency grants for work at the Simon Silk Mill in Easton and the ArtsQuest Center at SteelStacks, where today's grant announcement took place. The new grant is intended for the redevelopment of brownfields, or former industrial sites, of which the county has many, said Alicia Karner, Northampton County's economic development administrator. The challenge will be finding projects that are ready to be redeveloped, she said. "We want to see a project that's going to take off," she said. Easton may apply for some of the money for cleanup work at 118-120 Northampton Street, said Gretchen Longenbach, the city's community and economic development director. If the city is able to remediate the building's lead paint, it'll make it more enticing for redevelopment, she said. Bethlehem will likely seek funding to assist in the cleanup of the former Steel General Office building, but another former Steel building may get pushed to the forefront if a developer shows interest in it, Mayor John Callahan said. "There's a lot of buildings here that could use that help," he said.Parts of the former Dixie Cup plant in Wilson Borough are currently being used, but an idea to develop the site into condominiums never came to fruition. EPA Regional Administrator Shawn Garvin pointed to the ArtsQuest Center at SteelStacks as a prime example of how brownfields grants should be used. The county used part of a previous brownfields grant to remediate asbestos from the former Steel building that was torn down to make way for the center, Karner said. "This is what brownfields were made for," Garvin said. "Every time

I come up here, it amazes me." Within the mid-Atlantic region, $70 million in brownfields grants have been awarded since 1992, leading to the investment of $673 million in private money and creating 8,200 jobs, Garvin said. Within Northampton County, three EPA brownfields grants totaling more than $1 million have allowed for $19 million in private investment and the creation of 150 jobs, officials said. Callahan said redevelopment of the Steel site — which is the nation's largest privately owned brownfield at 1,800 acres — wouldn't be possible without government investment. Brownfields are more costly to redevelop than open space and often require a public-private partnership, he said. About $63 million of state investment alone on the Steel site has led to $816 million in private investment, Callahan said. "Most of it wouldn't be possible without public investment," he said.

EPA awards $650,000 for brownfield sites in Northampton County

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL The Lehigh Valley is getting some cash to help clean up contaminated, old industrial properties across Northampton County and get them ready for developers. The Environmental Protection Agency dropped off a $650,000 check Friday for the low-interest, revolving loan fund for four projects that will be picked by the county and administered by the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corp. "This new funding will plant the seeds for the next round of cleanup and eventual reuse of more brownfields sites in the Lehigh Valley, leveraging private investment and creating new jobs," said Shawn Garvin, EPA regional administrator, Friday at a news conference at SteelsStacks' ArtsQuest Center in Bethlehem. No projects have been selected yet, but some local officials have a few in mind. Bethlehem Mayor John Callahan, whose city has been redeveloping the former Bethlehem Steel plant, said there are plenty more Steel buildings to redevelop, including the Steel General Offices building on E. Third Street. Known as the SGO building, it once was Steel's headquarters and now is owned by the Sands casino. City officials are trying to pinpoint the amount of remediation needed and identify grants to accomplish it; master plans have designated the SGO building for residential use. Among buildings Easton is considering is the four-story, vacant buildings at 118-20 Northampton St., said Gretchen Longenbach, the city's director of community and economic development. She said the buildings have been vacant for about 20 years. About 100 recipients have shared more than $70 million in brownfields grants since 1994 in the mid-Atlantic region. That has led to more than 1,100 assessments or cleanups of contaminated property.

Sediment behind a dam threatens to undermine Chesapeake Bay cleanup

WASHINGTON POST (Sunday) The giant sediment reservoirs at Conowingo Hydroelectric Dam — glorified sand buckets that collect millions of tons of grainy pollution near where the Susquehanna River enters the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland — are nearly full, and research shows that too much of the sediment is splashing over the dam's wall. This is bad news for wildlife and a multibillion-dollar federal and state plan to clean the troubled waters of the nation's largest estuary. Sediment smothers the bay's life-sustaining grasses. Worse, it carries nutrient pollution that depletes oxygen, leading to dead zones where oysters and fish die. Reservoirs at the Conowingo have captured sediment for more than 60 years, amassing 160 million tons, along with household garbage, street junk, an occasional carcass and rotting wood. As they fill, the reservoirs designed to protect the bay are "becoming a source of pollution," said Robert Hirsch, a hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey and lead author of a recent study that found more sediment than ever splashing from behind the dam into the Chesapeake. "The way to look at it is that in the past these reservoirs were a very helpful trap for so much of this material coming out of the Susquehanna basin. They are now no longer a very effective trap," Hirsch said... Vast amounts of new sediment and nutrient pollution would all but cancel out the benefits of the pollution diet plan engineered by the Environmental Protection Agency, the District and six bay watershed states — Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York. Taxpayers in Virginia and Maryland will pay as much as $20 billion to upgrade sewer facilities, to build conservation buffers for farmers and for landscaping to reduce runoff. Protecting the waters from dam sediment is not a major undertaking in the plan. "Even though they are doing a lot of good things to limit the amounts," Hirsch said, referring to states and the EPA, "it's not going to have a good effect on the bay because a lot of material is coming in from the dam."

Local industries resist Allegheny County's revised air toxics emission rules

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE The already lengthy wait for new guidelines to control and reduce unhealthy toxic emissions from Allegheny County industrial sources could get longer. A proposed update of the county's antiquated air toxics guidelines is on the board of health's Wednesday meeting agenda, appropriately listed under "old business." But local industries and business groups have filed comments critical of the proposal and have lobbied county officials to delay or stop its passage by the board. Donald Burke, dean of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health, a health board member and chairman of the ad hoc county task force formed to update the guidelines, confirmed Friday that there have been "discussions" about postponing the vote.If it were postponed, the next board meeting where it could be voted on is Nov. 7. "I would go ahead now and vote on the new guidelines," Dr. Burke said. "They're scientifically sound and were achieved after reaching a consensus." The proposal was produced after two years of meetings by the 22-member ad hoc county committee whose industry, health and environmental representatives unanimously approved the proposal. They would replace the county's unworkable and outdated 24-year-old toxics guidelines and be used to inform county decisions on permits for new or expanding industrial sources of air toxics, pollutants that can cause cancer or other serious health problems. Dr. Burke said the proposed guidelines would employ up-to-date information in assessing the risks posed by air toxics, take into consideration the cumulative impact of toxics emissions from nearby industrial sources, and allow industries to offset any new or increased emissions by reducing pollution from mobile sources like diesel trucks. "I think it takes some novel approaches, but it's a more scientific way to protect people's health," he said. "It provides a good way to look at air toxics, and that's something that hasn't been done in 25 years."

Blog: Is Dimock's Water Really Safe? One Federal Health Agency Is Not So Sure

NRDC It looks like the federal government is still concerned about the water in Dimock, PA. Although it's been a few months since the EPA declared Dimock drinking water "safe" despite potentially explosive levels of methane it found in the water of several Dimock homes, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) recently confirmed that it is continuing to investigate the potential long term exposure risks of showering, drinking, bathing, and washing with Dimock water. The ATSDR—an independent agency under the Department of Health and Human Services and the principal federal public health agency involved with hazardous waste issues—began investigating water quality late last year, shortly after the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) allowed the Cabot Oil and Gas Corporation to stop daily deliveries of fresh water to local residents. DEP had previously determined that Cabot was responsible for contaminating Dimock water with methane from its fracking operations, and tests conducted by both DEP and Cabot had shown that the water also contained pollutants like arsenic; barium; bis(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate, a plasticizer commonly called DEHP; glycol compounds, manganese, phenol, and sodium. ATSDR's initial report from December 2011 expressed concerns about the reliability of methane removal systems offered by Cabot to Dimock residents as part of a settlement agreement with DEP, and "the presence of other contaminants besides methane (metals, volatile organics and non-naturally occurring organics) for which the well treatment systems are not designed or in place to address."

Hudson Farm lawsuit parties do battle over site visit

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES BERLIN — As the October court date for the Hudson Farm lawsuit nears, parties are now debating whether the court should visit the Berlin farm. Lawyers representing Alan and Kristin Hudson and Perdue Farms Inc. recently submitted a motion to have the federal court visit the couple's farm in person. The Waterkeeper Alliance, the environmental advocacy group that is suing the Hudsons and Perdue, their overseer, quickly entered its opposition to the motion. "The Court can weigh the evidence presented at trial and make the necessary credibility determinations without observing the site firsthand," the motion states. "The same

important information will be provided by the plethora of photographs, diagrams, witness testimony and other evidence that will be presented at trial, thus rendering a site view unnecessary."The Waterkeeper Alliance filed a lawsuit against the Hudsons and Perdue in March 2010, alleging that chicken manure was allowed to seep from the farmland into local waterways — a violation of the Clean Water Act.The lawsuit is set to be heard in U.S. District Court Oct. 9 in what is expected to be a multi–week trial. Lawyers for the defendants argue viewing the farm in person would help the court weigh the evidence. A site visit would provide a firsthand glimpse of the farm's chicken houses, manure shed, cow pastures and the like. "These features can only be fully perceived firsthand," the memorandum in support of the motion reads. "The information that a photograph, map, drawing or any other two–dimensional depiction of a place can convey is necessarily limited." The opposition filed by the Waterkeeper Alliance's attorneys states that conditions at the farm may have changed since the lawsuit was filed. It also states that the 129 miles from the Edward A. Garmatz Courthouse to the farm would be a five–hour drive and would make the visit at least an eight- to nine-hour ordeal. The response filed by the defendants Sept. 14, points out that the case has already consumed years of time for those involved."A mere five hours is a worthwhile investment for a site view that will give the court a framework in which to hear and see evidence and will allow it to visualize the various land features that are the focus of the upcoming trial," it states.

Editorial: Critical coastline: The Great Lakes region deserves political attention

PITTSBURGH POST GAZETTE The Great Lakes offer numerous challenges to the next president, and both President Barack Obama and Republican nominee Mitt Romney would endear themselves to voters in the crucial states of Pennsylvania and its lakeside neighbors by committing to more funding for Great Lakes restoration, and to a plan to keep out Asian carp. The Great Lakes are a treasure because of their multiple uses and proximity to the heart of North America. Forty million people live in the Great Lakes basin, 30 million of them in the United States. In a world that faces acute water shortages as its population expands, the lakes hold 20 percent of the world's fresh surface water. At a conference last week in Cleveland of Great Lakes policy experts, delegates called on the major-party nominees to talk more about the lakes during the campaign. U.S. State Department officials recently completed the first major update in 25 years of the landmark Great Lakes Quality Agreement with Canada; the pact works in tandem with America's Clean Water Act to promote better water quality. Over the past quarter-century, the lakes -- especially parts of Lake Erie -- recovered rapidly before regressing. During his 2008 campaign, Mr. Obama pledged $5 billion in new money for Great Lakes restoration. His administration began to keep that promise, but the commitment has declined with the bad economy in the past two years. The Obama administration also has fought efforts to close temporarily Chicago-area locks that connect the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds, in an attempt to slow the advance of invasive Asian carp. Mr. Romney has hardly weighed in on any Great Lakes issue. Climate change, beach bacteria, wetlands restoration, flood control, shipping, near-shore development, oil and gas drilling, pipeline safety, and emissions of mercury and other air toxics also belong on the list of urgent Great Lakes issues. Even though Pennsylvania has a short Lake Erie coastline, the region along the water supports 1.2 million jobs in this state.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

From Early Bird Larry Gibson | W.Va. mining activist, 66 (Sunday) Larry Gibson, an unlikely activist who fought West Virginia's powerful coal interests to preserve a mountain that had been his family's home for generations, died Sunday of a heart attack while working at his family's property on Kayford Mountain in Raleigh County, W.Va. He was 66. Mr. Gibson was best known for his tireless and often courageous opposition to a mining practice called mountaintop removal. His father and grandfather had been coal miners, and he often said he had no

objections to mining that left the mountains intact. What made him angry was to see the wholesale defacement of the landscape, wildlife, and the mountain culture.

From Early Bird Little Newton Creek: not pristine, but rebounding (NJ) (Sunday) The little waterway known as Newton Creek is more than a little . . . complicated. Like Camden County, where it's located. Connecting some of South Jersey's richest and poorest communities as it meanders toward the Delaware River, the six-mile waterway has three main tributaries, feeds four lakes, and serves very different constituencies. It has a Superfund site at one end, a rain garden at the other, and beleaguered, though beloved, parks in between. The lakes are man-made (for which we can thank Franklin Roosevelt), while other parts of the watershed are as natural as a metropolitan area can be. And while its water is cleaner than it was 30 years ago, largely due to completion of the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority's sewage treatment system, the Newton still is considered "impaired" under standards set by the federal Clean Water Act. "People drive across the creek all the time," Fred Stine said, as he did so on Nicholson Road in Gloucester City. "They never realize what's going on with it." To increase public awareness of issues facing the creek, Stine - of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, a watershed advocacy group - took a dozen visitors on a tour last week. "We don't want people to think the Newton Creek is a polluted mess," he added. "Parts of it are beautiful." After a two-hour excursion through the heart of the 13.6-square-mile watershed, I brought home fresh appreciation for a place I thought I knew. The creek's Collingswood portion, which I walked regularly for 25 years, is highly visible. But elsewhere, most of the creek is obscured by highways, bridges, and brush. In spots, the aquatic plant many people call duckweed - official name, Arrow Arum (*Peltandra virginica*) - grows so abundantly that the water is barely visible.

From Early Bird GreenSpacecolumn: Gutting a house to show their true color: Green We've all been there - wondering how to eke more efficiency out of our homes. We've switched the bulbs and tinkered with the setting on the hot water heater. We've beefed up the insulation and tangled with spouses over the thermostat. Janet Milkman and Bob Hankin did more than that. As they contemplated improvements to her brick rowhouse on Center City's Pine Street, where she's lived since 1997, they took drastic action. They decided to gut the entire thing. Out went much of the old building's innards - into a recycling bin from Revolution Recovery, which would recycle more than 90 percent of it, tracking and documenting how the material was reused. In came energy-efficient windows, water-saving plumbing, dimmable lighting. The result of this and more is enough to warrant the highest sustainability rating - platinum - from a national building certification program known as LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. In truth, many of the changes were made in part because Milkman and Hankin also wanted to renovate and enlarge the 180-year-old home. But as two of the region's greenest green building advocates - she's head of the Delaware Valley Green Building Council, and he's CEO of the Hankin Group, which has been building LEED projects for half a decade - they couldn't do it any other way. The ensuing "full gut rehab" is a study in the ultimate greening of a home, albeit not the first LEED platinum home in the region. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, Philadelphia has 36 platinum single-family homes - 28 of them gut rehabs.

From Early Bird Controlling all those cats Out behind her house, Renee Cureton calls in a high-pitched voice. "Come on, babies!" One by one, wary cats emerge - Precious, Tabby, Junior, Sneezy - lured by the smell of the food she puts out. They are but a few of Philadelphia's burgeoning population of "free-roaming" cats - a catch-all term that includes everything from friendly cats that are lost or abandoned to prickly feral cats that for years have survived the tough life on the streets. Their population is increasing so much that many deem the cats a public health nuisance, for both humans and other pets. They can carry fleas, parasites, and deadly diseases, such as rabies. And they're at the mercy of weather, animal attacks, vehicles, cruel people.

From Early Bird A haven for critters in the city's embrace Tony Croasdale has been coming to this particular splotch of wetlands, woods, and water since he was 9 years old. Back then, he was told stories about how his grandfather had come here during the hungry years of the Depression to trap muskrats. Now, it's the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum - both the most urbanized refuge in the nation and the largest wetland of its kind in Pennsylvania - and Croasdale comes to this South Philadelphia spot several times a month to check out the

wildlife. Saturday, Croasdale was back to help the refuge celebrate its existence, its mission, and its place in the hearts of birders, anglers, hikers, and more. The annual Cradle of Birding festival started with a birdwatching outing, of course. The birders headed out at 7 a.m. and were rewarded almost instantly with a pine warbler - likely resting from its migration - in some shrubby woods not far from the parking lot. Not long after that, they spotted one of the resident bald eagles that began nesting here a few years ago; the pair have produced four young so far. Croasdale, an environmental consultant who lives in South Philadelphia and travels a lot, considers the refuge "probably the most spectacular urban oasis in any city in the country." "It brings you a wildlife spectacle," he said. "Where else can you see in a city 30,000 ducks in a day and peregrine falcons overhead and osprey fishing?" It's a landscape that you'd think you'd have to make a trek to, he said, yet it's accessible by bike and public transportation. The refuge, created by an act of Congress in 1972, is one of 550 in the nation. Its 1,200 acres include the last portions of the once vast and teeming Tinicum Marsh, which stretched from the Schuylkill to what is now Chester.

From Early Bird Commentary: A refinery rescue reconsidered (Friday) The deal that saved a Philadelphia oil refinery was recently touted as an example of the Obama administration's success at saving jobs. But rather than bolstering the president's credentials as a steward of the economy, the story of the Sunoco refinery exemplifies the overregulation and politicization that are crippling U.S. businesses. Last year, Sunoco, having ceased production at its refinery in nearby Marcus Hook, warned that it would have to close the Philadelphia plant due to decreased demand and increased operating costs. Analysts warned that the closure could spur a politically damaging spike in summer gas prices, as well as a loss of thousands of union jobs. So the White House swung into action. Some campaign watchers have noted the irony that the White House had to turn to a private-equity firm, the Carlyle Group, to prop up the doomed Philadelphia refinery. After all, the Obama campaign has worked overtime to demonize Mitt Romney's record at another private-equity firm, Bain Capital. Beyond the hypocrisy of the deal, though, Americans should recoil from its casual politicization of the economy, bringing the government into what used to be considered the private sector.

From Early Bird Two more West Nile cases confirmed in SJ A 64-year-old Camden man and a 50-year-old Collingswood woman have been confirmed as the second and third cases of the mosquito-borne West Nile virus in Camden County this year, health officials reported Friday. The county's first case - involving a 42-year-old Voorhees man - was confirmed Sept. 7 to the Camden County Department of Health and Human Services. The three are among at least 22 with West Nile virus in New Jersey; one of the victims, a Burlington County man, died last week. In Pennsylvania, 20 residents have tested positive for the virus. One, an elderly Luzerne County man, died, officials said. The deaths and rising number of cases have prompted state and local agencies to increase efforts to monitor and combat the virus, through surveillance, testing, and spraying of pesticide. Across the nation, 2,636 cases of the virus - the highest number ever recorded by the second week of September - have been reported this year to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. One hundred and eighteen people have died. The Camden resident affected by the virus was treated at a hospital and released, The Collingswood resident was not hospitalized. Both believe they were exposed to mosquitoes were in their own yards, officials said. The Voorhees resident, who also was not hospitalized, has recovered from the mosquito bite that he believes he received in Cape May County, according to officials.

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

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sound and were achieved after reaching a consensus." The proposal was produced after two years of meetings by the 22-member ad hoc county committee whose industry, health and environmental representatives unanimously approved the proposal. They would replace the county's unworkable and outdated 24-year-old toxics guidelines and be used to inform county decisions on permits for new or expanding industrial sources of air toxics, pollutants that can cause cancer or other serious health problems. Dr. Burke said the proposed guidelines would employ up-to-date information in assessing the risks posed by air toxics, take into consideration the cumulative impact of toxics emissions from nearby industrial sources, and allow industries to offset any new or increased emissions by reducing pollution from mobile sources like diesel trucks. "I think it takes some novel approaches, but it's a more scientific way to protect people's health," he said. "It provides a good way to look at air toxics, and that's something that hasn't been done in 25 years."

From Early Bird Editorial: Critical coastline: The Great Lakes region deserves political attention The Great Lakes offer numerous challenges to the next president, and both President Barack Obama and Republican nominee Mitt Romney would endear themselves to voters in the crucial states of Pennsylvania and its lakeside neighbors by committing to more funding for Great Lakes restoration, and to a plan to keep out Asian carp. The Great Lakes are a treasure because of their multiple uses and proximity to the heart of North America. Forty million people live in the Great Lakes basin, 30 million of them in the United States. In a world that faces acute water shortages as its population expands, the lakes hold 20 percent of the world's fresh surface water. At a conference last week in Cleveland of Great Lakes policy experts, delegates called on the major-party nominees to talk more about the lakes during the campaign. U.S. State Department officials recently completed the first major update in 25 years of the landmark Great Lakes Quality Agreement with Canada; the pact works in tandem with America's Clean Water Act to promote better water quality. Over the past quarter-century, the lakes -- especially parts of Lake Erie -- recovered rapidly before regressing. During his 2008 campaign, Mr. Obama pledged $5 billion in new money for Great Lakes restoration. His administration began to keep that promise, but the commitment has declined with the bad economy in the past two years. The Obama administration also has fought efforts to close temporarily Chicago-area locks that connect the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds, in an attempt to slow the advance of invasive Asian carp. Mr. Romney has hardly weighed in on any Great Lakes issue. Climate change, beach bacteria, wetlands restoration, flood control, shipping, near-shore development, oil and gas drilling, pipeline safety, and emissions of mercury and other air toxics also belong on the list of urgent Great Lakes issues. Even though Pennsylvania has a short Lake Erie coastline, the region along the water supports 1.2 million jobs in this state.

From Early Bird City backs local control of shale drilling regulations (Saturday) Pittsburgh City Council will file a legal brief next week supporting the Commonwealth Court decision throwing out statewide zoning for Marcellus Shale drilling, which will be weighed by the state Supreme Court next month. Pittsburgh was not one of the seven municipalities that originally challenged the zoning language in state Act 13, but the nine-member council agreed unanimously to support the challenge before the court, joining some 4,000 other municipalities represented by the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors. "We at the local level, suburban, urban or rural, fully appreciate what is at stake here," council President Darlene Harris said in a statement. "For Pittsburgh to have no voice at all on this issue would be a dereliction of our duty as councilpersons to look out for the property rights of all people who live or own property in the city through our zoning code." Commonwealth Court ruled in July that the state cannot require municipalities to allow natural gas drilling in areas that would conflict with their zoning rules, as several townships had argued, leading to a suit filed against the law in March. The Corbett administration and drilling supporters said the zoning restrictions were necessary to allow the new industry to grow statewide without tripping over duplicative or contradictory local laws. Attorneys for the state Department of Environmental Protection and Public Utility Commission filed a 45-page brief Sept. 4 saying the appellate court "failed to acknowledge and uphold the supreme authority of the Legislature" in making the decision.

From Early Bird Pennsylvania court hears arguments in newspapers' request to intervene in Marcellus Shale case HARRISBURG -- A state appellate court heard arguments Wednesday over whether a Washington County judge erred in denying the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and Washington Observer-Reporter newspapers' request to

intervene in a Marcellus Shale case settled last year. That settled case involved a dispute between Stephanie and Chris Hallowich of Mount Pleasant and Range Resources, MarkWest Energy Partners and Williams Gas/Laurel Mountain Midstream Partners. The couple claims nearby gas drilling operations harmed their family's health and ruined their property value. The legal action was formally settled in August 2011 during a closed-door meeting in Judge Paul Pozonsky's chambers, after which the case file was sealed. A reporter from the Post-Gazette objected to the private proceeding and the verbal objection was noted in the court record. A petition to intervene and to unseal the record was filed by the Post-Gazette a week later. Judge Pozonsky denied those requests in February, after questioning during an October hearing whether the newspapers had a right to intervene once the matter was closed. Post-Gazette attorney Frederick N. Frank told a panel of state Superior Court judges during Wednesday's hearing that the lower court decided that their request was not made in a timely manner -- an argument that wasn't made by the defendants -- and should have listened to arguments on the merits of the newspapers' case. An attorney for the Observer-Reporter, Colin Fitch, said unsealing the records would provide information to the public about how the Hallowichs were impacted by the nearby activity and the state's response.

From Early Bird Breeding program may save pine snake While visitors watch the animals at Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium, a world of research is taking place behind the exhibits. This week, in a narrow lab behind the snake and reptile enclosures, a veterinarian examined three baby snakes that researchers hope will help the species to slither back from the brink of extinction. The non-venomous Louisiana pine snakes were hatched at the zoo Sept. 4 as part of a nationwide U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service program to breed the snakes in zoo captivity and introduce them to parts of Texas and Louisiana, where they once thrived.

Fourth western Pennsylvania town's drilling rules under PUC review HARRISBURG -- All but one of the western Pennsylvania towns challenging the commonwealth's new gas drilling law now are pending state review of their local ordinances, after a request from a Mt. Pleasant couple was made public this week. The request to the state Public Utility Commission, which is authorized to determine whether local drilling rules conflict with state law, is the fifth filed with the agency. The prior requests involve ordinances in South Fayette, Cecil, and Robinson, Washington County -- all parties to the lawsuit over the Act 13 drilling law. A fifth western Pennsylvania township -- Peters, Washington County -- also is involved in the court challenge, along with two Bucks County towns and an environmental activist. If an ordinance is deemed unacceptable by the PUC, the municipality becomes ineligible for receiving its share of the new impact fee dollars. The latest request is from Tony Pawlosky and Sally Brown Pawlosky of Mt. Pleasant, who point to provisions in the ordinance addressing setbacks and water impoundments as potentially unacceptable.

ALLENTOWN MORNING CALL

From Early Bird EPA awards $650,000 for brownfield sites in Northampton County The Lehigh Valley is getting some cash to help clean up contaminated, old industrial properties across Northampton County and get them ready for developers. The Environmental Protection Agency dropped off a $650,000 check Friday for the low-interest, revolving loan fund for four projects that will be picked by the county and administered by the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corp. "This new funding will plant the seeds for the next round of cleanup and eventual reuse of more brownfields sites in the Lehigh Valley, leveraging private investment and creating new jobs," said Shawn Garvin, EPA regional administrator, Friday at a news conference at SteelsStacks' ArtsQuest Center in Bethlehem. No projects have been selected yet, but some local officials have a few in mind. Bethlehem Mayor John Callahan, whose city has been redeveloping the former Bethlehem Steel plant, said there are plenty more Steel buildings to redevelop, including the Steel General Offices building on E. Third Street. Known as the SGO building, it once was Steel's headquarters and now is owned by the Sands casino. City officials are trying to pinpoint the amount of remediation needed and identify grants to accomplish it; master plans have designated the SGO building for residential use. Among buildings Easton is considering is the four-story, vacant buildings at 118-20 Northampton St., said Gretchen Longenbach, the city's director of community and economic development. She said the buildings have been vacant for about 20 years. About 100 recipients have shared more than $70 million in brownfields grants since 1994 in the mid-Atlantic region. That has led to more than 1,100 assessments or cleanups

of contaminated property..

EASTON EXPRESS TIMES

From Early Bird Federal grant may assist cleanup at Steel General Office, Dixie Cup plant A $650,000 federal grant awarded to Northampton County today may help fund environmental cleanup at sites such as the Steel General Office building in Bethlehem and the Dixie Cup plant in Wilson Borough. The county has used prior Environmental Protection Agency grants for work at the Simon Silk Mill in Easton and the ArtsQuest Center at SteelStacks, where today's grant announcement took place. The new grant is intended for the redevelopment of brownfields, or former industrial sites, of which the county has many, said Alicia Karner, Northampton County's economic development administrator. The challenge will be finding projects that are ready to be redeveloped, she said. "We want to see a project that's going to take off," she said. Easton may apply for some of the money for cleanup work at 118-120 Northampton Street, said Gretchen Longenbach, the city's community and economic development director. If the city is able to remediate the building's lead paint, it'll make it more enticing for redevelopment, she said. Bethlehem will likely seek funding to assist in the cleanup of the former Steel General Office building, but another former Steel building may get pushed to the forefront if a developer shows interest in it, Mayor John Callahan said. "There's a lot of buildings here that could use that help," he said.Parts of the former Dixie Cup plant in Wilson Borough are currently being used, but an idea to develop the site into condominiums never came to fruition. EPA Regional Administrator Shawn Garvin pointed to the ArtsQuest Center at SteelStacks as a prime example of how brownfields grants should be used. The county used part of a previous brownfields grant to remediate asbestos from the former Steel building that was torn down to make way for the center, Karner said. "This is what brownfields were made for," Garvin said. "Every time I come up here, it amazes me." Within the mid-Atlantic region, $70 million in brownfields grants have been awarded since 1992, leading to the investment of $673 million in private money and creating 8,200 jobs, Garvin said. Within Northampton County, three EPA brownfields grants totaling more than $1 million have allowed for $19 million in private investment and the creation of 150 jobs, officials said. Callahan said redevelopment of the Steel site — which is the nation's largest privately owned brownfield at 1,800 acres — wouldn't be possible without government investment. Brownfields are more costly to redevelop than open space and often require a public-private partnership, he said. About $63 million of state investment alone on the Steel site has led to $816 million in private investment, Callahan said. "Most of it wouldn't be possible without public investment," he said.

ERIE TIMES NEWS

From Early Bird West Nile spraying set for 3 Erie County townships The Erie County Department of Health will conduct spraying in the region Monday through Wednesday to control the adult mosquito population where sampling indicates the presence of mosquitoes that can potentially carry West Nile virus.

From Early Bird Harborcreek plans Six Mile Creek Park improvements Harborcreek Township officials are putting plans in motion to improve public access at the 450-acre, heavily wooded Six Mile Creek Park, which was transferred to the township by Erie County government more than a year ago.

LEHIGH VALLEY BUSINESS

EPA presents $650000 grant for *NorCo* clean up projects September 14. 2012 12:03PM The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was in Bethlehem today to present a check for $650,000 to help clean up several contaminated properties in Northampton County. Shawn M. Garvin, regional EPA administrator, was at the SteelStacks ArtsQuest Center to make the presentation. Officials in the county have not yet identified what properties the funds will be used for, but SteelStacks was cited as an example of the kind of brownfields project such funding has helped in the past.ArtsQuest is located on former Bethlehem Steel property, and much cleanup work needed to be done before the property could be rebuilt as an arts and entertainment center.

LOWERMACUNGIEPATCH

Is Your Well Water Safe to Drink? DEP webinar will teach residents about keeping their well water and on-lot septic systems safe. HARRISBURG -- The Department of Environmental Protection's next "DEP@Home" webinar will be on Wednesday, Sept. 19, at 7 p.m., to educate participants about maintaining on-lot sewage and private water systems. "Statewide, roughly two million Pennsylvanians rely on private water wells," DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. "And according to the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, about 40 percent of private water wells have failed at least one Safe Drinking Water Act water quality standard, and about 20 percent of private water wells show some levels of methane.

YORK DAILY RECORD

York County organization spotlights watersheds When the Watershed Alliance of York was formed eleven years ago, most York County residents did not know what a watershed was. "The watershed concept was relatively new to Penn´ sylvania," said Gary Peacock, watershed specialist and exe´ cutive director of the Watershed Alliance of York. Peacock found that lack of awareness troubling, especially because York County has what Peacock termed a high stream density with over 2,000 miles of streams in 9,111 total square miles. A watershed is an area or region drained by a river or river system. A number of non-profit and for-profit groups were focusing on water issues in York County, but they "weren't necessarily coordinating with each other," Peacock said.

POCONO RECORD

Editorial: Bad seed didn't pay off Corporate incompetence, even willful carelessness, are bad enough. But it's inaction that really rankles when a company goes wrong. Ohio-based lawn care giant Scotts Miracle-Gro Company sold millions of bags of wild bird feed illegally treated with an insecticide toxic to birds, fish and other wildlife before a voluntary recall in 2008. No one knows for sure how many creatures may have died as a result. The company has agreed to pay a total of $12.5 million in criminal and civil penalties and donations to environmental projects. For some time, Scotts added the pesticides Storcide II and Actellic 5E to the wild bird feed to keep insect infestations at bay even though the Storcide II's label warned specifically that it was toxic to birds, fish and other widlife. The company sold the treated bird feed for two years, including for six months after its own employees warned managers about the pesticides.

THE CARLISLE SENTINEL

Annual report reveals list of contaminants in Cumberland County water
(Saturday) There is something in the water. Local drinking water quality reports, which are provided to residents and businesses with an update on the safety of tap water, has revealed a list of contaminants that may give pause to some who get their H2O from faucets. Lead, copper, chlorine, asbestos and other contaminants have all been found in the water, according to an annual report issued by the Middlesex Municipal Authority. Also, according to a July 31 report issued by the Environmental Protection Agency on Carlisle Borough, an elevated amount of radon was noted in the borough's drinking water. EPA records did, however, show that the borough later met its requirements and the problem was fixed. However, the borough was previously cited for having the contaminants fecal coliform and E-coli in its water five years ago. EPA officials said it considers any trace of those contaminants in drinking water to be over legal and health guidelines with potential effects from exposure including diarrhea, cramps, nausea and headaches. The contaminants also may pose a special health risk for infants, young children and people with severely compromised immune systems, EPA officials said. Additionally, in 2010, haloacetic acids were found in the borough's water. Repeated telephone and email messages left for Carlisle Borough Water Plant Supervisor, Michael McFadden, were not returned. The EPA also noted that it was aware of inaccuracies and under reporting of some of the drinking water data. **Middlesex Township**...

TREDYFFRIN-EASTTOWNPATCH

Activists Want New Gas Pipeline Regulators (Saturday) Environmental activists want The Delaware River Basin Commission to regulate gas pipeline construction that could affect the watershed. The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) remains silent on new Marcellus Shale drilling regulations for the Delaware River watershed as commission members from New York work on completing their regulatory update, according to a State Impact

report. In the meantime, pipeline construction in Pennsylvania is booming. Smaller lines from wellheads, as well as large interstate lines, will go below rivers and streams. Activists who want the DRBC to ban gas drilling also want the commission to start weighing in on pipelines near waterways which feed the Delaware.

ASSOCIATED PRESS Pa.)

Drilling impact fee exceeds projections (Saturday) PITTSBURGH — A new fee on gas drilling has generated millions of dollars more in revenue than first projected, but other major gas-producing states tax the industry at higher rates, according to an Associated Press analysis. And the state still won't be setting aside a share to track possible health impacts of drilling. The state said this week that it has collected nearly $202 million of the roughly $206 million in impact fees that's due from gas drilling companies. Projections this spring had been for about $180 million. A few drillers are disputing their bills. Other states considered to be friendly to the oil and gas industry levy higher taxes on natural gas. Texas imposes a 7.5 percent tax on the market value of gas produced, and West Virginia and Wyoming are at about 6 percent.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

From Early Bird Sediment behind a dam threatens to undermine Chesapeake Bay cleanup The giant sediment reservoirs at Conowingo Hydroelectric Dam — glorified sand buckets that collect millions of tons of grainy pollution near where the Susquehanna River enters the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland — are nearly full, and research shows that too much of the sediment is splashing over the dam's wall. This is bad news for wildlife and a multibillion-dollar federal and state plan to clean the troubled waters of the nation's largest estuary. Sediment smothers the bay's life-sustaining grasses. Worse, it carries nutrient pollution that depletes oxygen, leading to dead zones where oysters and fish die. Reservoirs at the Conowingo have captured sediment for more than 60 years, amassing 160 million tons, along with household garbage, street junk, an occasional carcass and rotting wood. As they fill, the reservoirs designed to protect the bay are "becoming a source of pollution," said Robert Hirsch, a hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey and lead author of a recent study that found more sediment than ever splashing from behind the dam into the Chesapeake. "The way to look at it is that in the past these reservoirs were a very helpful trap for so much of this material coming out of the Susquehanna basin. They are now no longer a very effective trap," Hirsch said... Vast amounts of new sediment and nutrient pollution would all but cancel out the benefits of the pollution diet plan engineered by the Environmental Protection Agency, the District and six bay watershed states — Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New York. Taxpayers in Virginia and Maryland will pay as much as $20 billion to upgrade sewer facilities, to build conservation buffers for farmers and for landscaping to reduce runoff. Protecting the waters from dam sediment is not a major undertaking in the plan. "Even though they are doing a lot of good things to limit the amounts," Hirsch said, referring to states and the EPA, "it's not going to have a good effect on the bay because a lot of material is coming in from the dam."

THE HILL (DC)

Blog: The week ahead: Coal, climate at center of House battle The House is slated to vote this week on the latest GOP bill to thwart White House environmental policies that Republicans call economically burdensome. The "stop the war on coal" **package** provides Republicans a final chance before November's election to use the House floor as a platform to slam President Obama's green agenda. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.) said Friday that this week **will be the last** Capitol Hill work session before the voters go to the polls. The GOP bill combines a number of measures that have already passed the House to curtail policies that Republicans contend will thwart coal-mining and coal-fired power generation. It would nix the Environmental Protection Agency's power to regulate greenhouse gas emissions and take aim at other air pollution rules; restrict planned EPA rules governing management and disposal of coal ash, a waste product from coal plants; and restrict potential Interior Department rules on coal-mining wastes; among other provisions.

Obama surrogate applauds states on fracking A surrogate for the Obama campaign praised states' abilities to regulate hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, even as the administration prepares to roll out federal rules on the practice. Elgie Holstein, an energy adviser for the Obama campaign, said Sunday on ***Platts* Energy Week TV** that "the states are doing a good job" with overseeing natural gas drilling. Fracking injects a high pressure mixture of chemicals, sand and water into tight rock formations to unlock natural gas. It has drawn criticism from environmentalists who believe the practice contaminates groundwater and leads to seismic activity. The Obama administration is crafting regulations that will impose new controls on fracking on federal lands. The public comment period on the Bureau of Land Management's proposal ended last week.

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL

From Early Bird Leaders laud future home of National Guard Sparks fly. Forklifts groan. A load of metal scraps crashes into a recycling bin. The new state National Guard headquarters is taking shape along Airport Road near New Castle.

From Early Bird Editorial: Can this way of government be saved?

DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE

From Early Bird Lake Comegys homeowners honored for improving shoreline Rehoboth Beach — Homeowners who live around Rehoboth Beach's most often forgotten Lake Comegys were honored recently for their efforts to improve the lake. Save Our Lakes Alliance3 presented its annual Conservation Award to the Lake Comegys Home Owners' Association. In 2009, the association, working with environmental consulting firm Envirotech, embarked on a project that installed a natural riparian buffer around one-third of the lake shoreline. Tony Burns, president of the association, said, "It really was an honor. The association has worked so hard to preserve our lake. We hope it inspires others around the lake to preserve the natural vegetation." The association is made up of 28 townhouse owners tucked in an enclave around Lake Comegys, located between Rehoboth Beach and Dewey Beach. Sallie Forman, president of SOLA3, said, "The Lake Comegys association is so deserving of this award. Given the length and condition of its shoreline, installing a natural riparian buffer was a big undertaking. The buffer will prevent erosion and runoff into the lake. The beauty of the native plants will be enjoyed by all residents and already the wildlife has benefited by the creation of new habitat." A Lake Comegys resident herself, Forman said she has seen new egret nests and more herons since the buffer was installed. In 2007, the association, along with SOLA3, successfully lobbied Delaware Department of Transportation to convert a right-of-way around Lake Comegys to a conservation easement, in an effort to curb development and preserve the lake's natural features. Burns said he hopes the homeowners can continue their efforts, working with organizations Envirotech and SOLA3 to preserve the shoreline. He said the buffer project, and its maintenance, has truly been a group effort by a tight-knit community. "It really is a joint-member effort in establishing this shoreline," Burns said. Burns said the association's plantings have even inspired other homeowners around the lake to buffer the shoreline with natural plantings. The Conservation Award was created to recognize property owners who have demonstrated "exemplary achievement in voluntary conservation of their lakefront property."

Delaware interfaith group participates in White House conference on energy efficiency
Delaware Interfaith Power and Light joined other leaders from the nation's faith community and the White House Office for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Sept. 13 in a conversation about boosting the energy efficiency of the nation's houses of worship. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, if America's more than 370,000 houses of worship cut energy use by 20 percent, collectively they would save nearly $630

million, cut electricity use by more than 3.6 billion kilowatt hours, and prevent more than 2.6 million tons of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to the emissions from about 480,000 cars. The White House will call congregations to action, encouraging houses of worship to measure and track their energy use with EPA's Portfolio Manager tool. After establishing an initial baseline in the tool, houses of worship which improve their energy efficiency by 20 percent or more will be specially recognized by the White House. Any house of worship which then earns a 75 or higher on EPA's 1-100 energy performance scale, indicating that the building performs better than at least 75 percent of similar buildings nationwide, will be eligible to earn EPA's ENERGY STAR.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Del.)

From Early Bird Stage set for Sussex coastal cleanup DOVER — State environmental officials are expecting more than 2,000 volunteers to join in Delaware's annual Coastal Cleanup. The 26th annual cleanup takes place Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon along 97 miles of Delaware river and ocean shorelines, as well as wetland and watershed areas. More than 40 sites in New Castle, Kent, and Sussex counties are targeted this year.Last year's cleanup volunteers collected more than 10 tons of trash from along Delaware's shorelines and tributaries.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

From Early Bird Blog: WVU paper provides more on MTR, health links We've talked before on this blog about West Virginia University research that found rats exposed to dust from mountaintop removal communities showed changes in the diameter of blood vessels, which could in turn reduce blood flow. The research is among the work going on now that aims to explain the findings of WVU's Michael Hendryx that residents living near mountaintop removal sites face greater risks of serious disease, including cancer and birth defects. Well, the full scientific paper on this issue is out now. You can read the abstract here, but the full paper is available by subscription only I'm afraid. Here's the abstract:

From Early Bird Into the Garden: Work on lawn in fall for greener yard in springCHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Heres what you can do now to make sure you have a lush, green lawn in the spring. **Aerate** With the clay soil thats prevalent in our neck of the woods, you might need to aerate. To see if you need to do this to y...

From Early Bird Hanging Rock, a hangout for hawk watchers WAITEVILLE, W.Va. -- For the past 60 years, hawk watchers have gathered on a cluster of slanted boulders atop a promontory on Peters Mountain to watch birds of prey migrating southward. The 52-mile long mountain, among the longest in the Appalachians, helps produce thermal air currents that give migrating birds the lift needed to glide across vast segments of land while expending small amounts of energy. Mid-September is generally the peak migration period for the broadwing hawk, the most frequently seen southbound raptor riding the thermals over Peters Mountain. On sunny September days when steady winds are blowing from the north, the numbers of birds of prey spotted here can reach into the hundreds -- even the thousands. The single-day record for broadwing sightings here was 2,684, set in 1974. The group of overhanging sandstone summit slabs known as Hanging Rock gives hawk watchers sweeping views of the adjacent Sweet Springs and Potts Creek valleys and points beyond. The Peaks of Otter along the Blue Ridge Parkway 50 miles to the northeast can be seen from here, along with Cold Knob and the Beech Ridge wind farm near the Greenbrier-Nicholas County border, a near equal distance to the northwest. Among the first hawk watchers to scan the skies from this 3,812-foot-high Monroe County vista were Charleston area members of the Handlan Chapter of the Brooks Bird Club and biology students led by Dr. Ralph Edeburn of Marshall University and Dr. Paul Cecil Bibbee of Concord College. Since 1952, hawk watchers at Hanging Rock have also kept track of the numbers and types of hawks, eagles, ospreys and falcons seen migrating through. "Back then, the count year may have involved

only one or two days of observations," said Rodney Davis, who was scanning the skies for migrant raptors at the site on Tuesday. These days, volunteers tally southbound birds of prey from mid-August to early December. Detailed records, including breakdowns of the species counted and weather data, are logged daily and posted by Davis on the website (www.hangingrocktower.org) of the volunteer group.

MARTINSBURG JOURNAL

From Early Bird Anti-fracking group delivers report to Morgan County commissioners BERKELEY SPRINGS - Laura Steepleton and Patty Heaphy of Morgan County Frack Ban gave a report to the Morgan County Commission at its most recent meeting. They're concerned about the welfare of people in areas with hydraulic fracturing to get at natural gas deposits. Steepleton said, in a nutshell, "the process uses several million gallons of water pumped from streams and 500 chemicals are added. There is 20 percent of (contaminated) water left underground that traces into our aquifers." She said she'd once lived in other parts of West Virginia where coal mining was prevalent. While that is another entity, she said it's the same coin but a flip side. Where she'd lived, there were 42 percent more birth defects than in other areas, water was contaminated, and residents could not bathe in or drink their own water. Since Morgan County is known for its healing spring waters, she doesn't want to see the same contamination there. She also said, beyond the health impacts, "I don't want to see the impact on our tourism. This county is rich in the arts. We need a healthy economy." Steepleton urged the County Commission to consider resolutions or ordinances to ban fracking in Morgan County. Heaphy said even though there isn't much Marcellus shale in the county - and some folks think it's not enough to attract the gas companies - other forms of shale exist that can be fracked. "There were 50 mineral rights leases (issued) in Morgan County a few months ago," she said. "Now, there are 75. The gas industry must think they will hit paydirt, or they wouldn't obtain those leases."

ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.)

From Early Bird DEP workshop to focus on environmental messaging HUNTINGTON -- The state Department of Environmental Protection will hold a free two-day workshop this fall to help West Virginia communities better educate people about the effects of storm water on rivers and streams. The workshop called "Water Words That Work" is set for Oct. 16-17 at the Big Sandy Superstore Arena Conference Center in Huntington. The featured speaker is Eric Eckl, a nationally known expert on communicating environmental messages. The training is geared toward officials who run storm sewer systems but is open to any environmental group that wants help with its messaging.

Impasse in negotiations in W.Va. *selenium* case CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — Federal court records show a coal mine company's settlement in a West Virginia water pollution case has fallen through. Lawyers for Patriot Coal Corp. and the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition indicated a breakdown in negotiations this week.The Charleston Gazette (http://bit.ly/O3PcOO) reports U.S. District Judge Robert Chambers in Huntington has given the parties until Monday to file legal papers outlining how they want to proceed. The negotiations involved the company's liability for treating of selenium runoff from mining complexes in southern West Virginia. Patriot Coal filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in July. Selenium is a naturally occurring element that surface mining can release into waterways. Studies have found it's toxic to aquatic life. In humans, high-level exposure can damage the kidneys, liver, and central nervous and circulatory systems.

THE REVIEW (Ohio)

Meeting used to air drilling health claims TRIADELPHIA - Dr. Michael Blatt, Blanche Rybeck, Bill Hughes and others say air pollution from Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling is an issue environmental regulators need to take seriously. "Because we cannot absolutely prove that this is going to kill us does not mean we should allow it to go on," said Blatt, a physician specializing in lung and breathing problems who has practiced in the Wheeling area for 30 years, while speaking during the Tuesday West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Air Quality public hearing at West Liberty University's Highlands Center. Although the hearing officially only addressed Chesapeake Energy's air quality permit application to emit certain pollutants - methane, carbon monoxide and formaldehyde - from the Dytko well pad along Stone Church Road, those in attendance took the opportunity to

let the Division of Air Quality workers know they feel there are problems throughout West Virginia's Northern Panhandle.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

From Early Bird Fall is near, coastal cleanup is here! Volunteers sought for annual shoreline tidying. With fall just around the corner, it's time for the whirlwind of shoreline tidying known as the International Coastal Cleanup . Now in its 27th year, the volunteer effort sponsored by the Ocean Conservancy involves nearly 5,400 different cleanups around the world, including 10 right here in the Baltimore area.

Sparrows Point sold, leaving mill's future in doubt 'Market will dictate' whether Baltimore County steel mill reopens. The massive Sparrows Point steel mill changed hands this afternoon, a $72.5 million deal that leaves the future of the complex in doubt.The massive Sparrows Point complex changed ownership Friday for the fifth time in less than a decade, potentially its last sale as a steel mill. .. "Both ELT and Hilco would love to see a continued steel facility at Sparrows Point," said Randall Jostes, Environmental Liability Transfer's president and CEO. "The market will dictate whether that's possible." .... The company has plenty to keep it busy at Sparrows Point. The site's size and location — south of Interstate 695, nearly surrounded by water — are enough to make any developer's mouth water, but it comes with toxins. "More than a century of steel making and finishing operations have resulted in perhaps the most complex environmental cleanup site in the Chesapeake Bay watershed," Baltimore County's attorneys wrote in court documents. Jostes, with ELT, said the cleanup will take "many, many, many years," but the site can be used while that work is under way.

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Hudson Farm lawsuit parties do battle over site visit BERLIN — As the October court date for the Hudson Farm lawsuit nears, parties are now debating whether the court should visit the Berlin farm. Lawyers representing Alan and Kristin Hudson and Perdue Farms Inc. recently submitted a motion to have the federal court visit the couple's farm in person. The Waterkeeper Alliance, the environmental advocacy group that is suing the Hudsons and Perdue, their overseer, quickly entered its opposition to the motion. "The Court can weigh the evidence presented at trial and make the necessary credibility determinations without observing the site firsthand," the motion states. "The same important information will be provided by the plethora of photographs, diagrams, witness testimony and other evidence that will be presented at trial, thus rendering a site view unnecessary."The Waterkeeper Alliance filed a lawsuit against the Hudsons and Perdue in March 2010, alleging that chicken manure was allowed to seep from the farmland into local waterways — a violation of the Clean Water Act.The lawsuit is set to be heard in U.S. District Court Oct. 9 in what is expected to be a multi–week trial. Lawyers for the defendants argue viewing the farm in person would help the court weigh the evidence. A site visit would provide a firsthand glimpse of the farm's chicken houses, manure shed, cow pastures and the like. "These features can only be fully perceived firsthand," the memorandum in support of the motion reads. "The information that a photograph, map, drawing or any other two–dimensional depiction of a place can convey is necessarily limited." The opposition filed by the Waterkeeper Alliance's attorneys states that conditions at the farm may have changed since the lawsuit was filed. It also states that the 129 miles from the Edward A. Garmatz Courthouse to the farm would be a five–hour drive and would make the visit at least an eight- to nine-hour ordeal. The response filed by the defendants Sept. 14, points out that the case has already consumed years of time for those involved."A mere five hours is a worthwhile investment for a site view that will give the court a framework in which to hear and see evidence and will allow it to visualize the various land features that are the focus of the upcoming trial," it states.

From Early Bird Turtle rescued at Onancock Creek rehabbed, released CAPE CHARLES --After a typical day

of fishing outside Onancock Creek this July, Sarah Griffith and husband, Gil, spotted a crab pot with an unusual and troublesome catch. What they found was a 123-pound, loggerhead sea turtle entangled in the pot, its right rear flipper seized by wire mesh and rings. "I hated to see her in distress," said Griffith of Parksley, who called Shorekeeper David Burden after finding the turtle on July 5. "We waited with her as long as we could." Burden, advocate of the water quality group Virginia Eastern Shorekeeper, contacted Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center's Stranding Response Team, comprised of trained volunteers and staff who travel along Virginia's coast to respond to stranded marine mammals and sea turtles. The following morning, members of the Stranding Team had a difficult time rescuing the turtle from its tricky entrapment, an ordeal that inspired the name, "Trouble." On Friday, Trouble was released at Cape Charles beach after nine weeks of rehabilitation at the Aquarium's Marine Animal Care Center in Virginia Beach.

WJZ-TV BALTIMORE

From Early Bird Baltimore Co. Allots $3.3M For Restoration Of Stream That Runs Into the Chesapeake Bay BALTIMORE (WJZ)– Protecting the Chesapeake Bay and private property. A troubled stream in Baltimore County will undergo a massive restoration. Some residents say it's long overdue. Erosion along Jennifer Run Stream in Baltimore County is so bad, trees and property are being wiped out. "I just don't want to lose my house at some point," Parkville resident Sharon Murphy said. Murphy has lost 50 feet of land in her Parkville backyard. "The kids come back here and play and I'm always telling, 'Don't stand on the edge' because underneath, it's like a plateau," she said.This week, county and state officials announce plans for a $3.3 million restoration. The issues with Jennifer Run is blamed on a lack of environmental regulations on development decades ago. "I think we're a lot better 50 years later, but now we're stuck resolving the problems when we made bad decisions," Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz said. Water from Jennifer Run eventually feeds into the Cheasapeake Bay. During heavy rains, flooding carries harmful sediments. "The main goal here is to not only control flooding but improve water quality as it flows into the Gunpowder Falls and the Cheasapeake Bay," Vince Gardina, director for Baltimore County's Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability, said

ANNAPOLIS CAPITAL

Pat Furgurson: The Clean Water Act and fracking The Clean Water Act is 40 years old. On Saturday the Waterkeeper Alliance, including our local Riverkeepers, led a rally in Washington, D.C., to celebrate what has been accomplished and to warn against attempts to weaken the law. West Rhode Riverkeeper Chris Trumbauer was there."Nationally we have been successful regulating pollutants coming out the end of a pipe from point sources like factories and municipal waste. The act has also allowed us to begin making progress on nonpoint-source pollution like stormwater," Trumbauer said from his Shady Side headquarters Friday. The next challenge, he said, is to ensure that the next round of municipal permits — regulating the nutrient pollution carried down waterways into the Chesapeake Bay — gets the job done.

PUBLIC NEWS SERVICE

"Mini Grants" a Big Win for *Chesapeake Bay* Environmental Education ANNAPOLIS, Md. - Seeing, hearing and touching is believing. Nearly $500,000 has been added to the Environmental Education Mini Grant Program in an effort to interest K-12 students in caring about the Chesapeake Bay and its connected streams and rivers. The money comes from the Chesapeake Bay Trust and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Md.)

From Early Bird Minor quake hits Frederick County LINGANORE, Md. — The U.S. Geological Survey is reporting a 2.1 magnitude earthquake in eastern Frederick County near the Carroll County line, but area residents likely didn't even notice the minor quake. USGS reports the earthquake happened around 6 a.m. Saturday. USGS says the epicenter was about three miles from Linganore, in Frederick County, and about 11 miles from Westminster in Carroll County.Earthquakes with a magnitude of about 2.0 or less are usually called microearthquakes and are not commonly felt by people though they are recorded by instruments.

Festival celebrates Baltimore's urban farms BALTIMORE (AP) - A farm group says Baltimore is quickly becoming a hub for urban agriculture.The Farm Alliance of Baltimore City says the city's dozen farms will be celebrated Saturday at the 2nd Annual Urban Farm & Food Fair. The group says farms in the city are growing food on more than 10 acres of once-vacant land.The fair will be held Saturday afternoon at the Real Food Farm in Clifton Park.

VIRGINIA

NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS

From Early Bird Algae provide a blooming light show One recent evening, Kattie McMillan was walking her dogs on a beach along the lower York River when she was treated to a dazzling light show: bioluminescent algae glowing a bright neon blue as far as the eye could see. "You could see fish darting and crabs swimming — even where some of the vegetation washed up and got caught on the rocks," recalled McMillan, outreach educator at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Point. "It was almost like a shimmering of bioluminescence." One of her dogs ran through the surf then jumped up on her boyfriend, leaving glowing paw prints on his shirt, she said.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Va.)

From Early Bird Va. uranium mining focus of Monday meeting CHATHAM -- State public health and environmental officials have scheduled a public meeting in Southside Virginia on issues related to uranium mining and milling. The meeting is set for Monday afternoon in Chatham, which is near a 119-million-pound uranium deposit a mining company wants to tap. Virginia has had a 30-year ban on uranium mining. The Chatham meeting will summarize public comments and questions fielded by the state Department of Health on potential uranium mining and milling. The state Department of Environmental Quality will also make a presentation on ground and surface water, as well as air quality issues. A multi-agency state panel is examining various aspects of uranium mining. While it will not recommend a course of action, its findings will guide the General Assembly on whether to lift the ban.

VIRGINIAN-PILOT

Study targets algae in James River HOPEWELL As researcher Paul Bukaveckas worked from a boat, the James River teemed with life. Unseen, unwanted life.The river abounded with microscopic cells of algae, which can foul the water and, in some cases, sicken people and animals with toxins. The algae outbreak, or bloom, was hard to see. In fact, the James looked lovely on this late August morning, its waters glassy under an overcast sky. "Up here, you are having algal blooms all the time, whether you see them or not," said Bukaveckas, 52, a Virginia Commonwealth University river ecologist. As researcher Paul Bukaveckas worked from a boat, the James River teemed with life. Unseen, unwanted life. The river abounded with microscopic cells of algae, which can foul the water and, in some cases, sicken people and animals with toxins.The algae outbreak, or bloom, was hard to see. In fact, the James looked lovely on this late August morning, its waters glassy under an overcast sky."Up here, you are having algal blooms all the time, whether you see them or not," said Bukaveckas, 52, a Virginia Commonwealth University river ecologist.

Public meeting today on uranium mining in *Virginia* CHATHAM State public health and environmental officials have scheduled a public meeting in Southside Virginia on issues related to uranium mining and milling. The meeting is set for this afternoon in Chatham, which is near a 119-million-pound uranium deposit a mining company wants to tap. Virginia has had a 30-year ban on uranium mining. The Chatham meeting will summarize public

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MISCELLANEOUS

NBC NEWS

From Early Bird Richer communities get more US funds from EPA to clean up toxic brownfields In Oak Creek, Wis., a fence slashed with holes surrounds a barren 300-acre complex of buckling former factories where the soil and groundwater are polluted with arsenic and other chemicals.Asbestos sprayed for almost six miles from a shuttered textile mill in Sprague, Conn., when children trying to free a canoe set it on fire. A toxic cocktail of volatile organic compounds, petroleum, hydrocarbons and metals lies alongside the banks of Massachusetts's Malden River. Despite about $1.5 billion in federal grants and loans doled out by the Environmental Protection Agency over 19 years, hundreds of thousands of abandoned and polluted properties known as "brownfields" continue to mar communities across the country. Some sites are contaminating groundwater, while at others the toxins' impact on the communities is unknown.The shortcomings are due to limited funds, a lack of federal oversight, seemingly endless waits for approvals, and dense bureaucratic processes. These issues make it difficult for poor and sparsely populated neighborhoods to compete against larger and middle-class communities that have the means to figure them out, an investigation by six nonprofit newsrooms has found. In a written response, the EPA said its Brownfields Program "is not intended to address all of the brownfield sites in the U.S." The agency defines a brownfield as "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant." The stated goals of its Brownfields Program are to fund the cleanup of contamination, to improve the quality of life of blighted communities and to provide economic stimulus.

NATIONAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

From Early Bird Blog: Is Dimock's Water Really Safe? One Federal Health Agency Is Not So Sure It looks like the federal government is still concerned about the water in Dimock, PA. Although it's been a few months since the EPA declared Dimock drinking water "safe" despite potentially explosive levels of methane it found in the water of several Dimock homes, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) recently confirmed that it is continuing to investigate the potential long term exposure risks of showering, drinking, bathing, and washing with Dimock water. The ATSDR—an independent agency under the Department of Health and Human Services and the principal federal public health agency involved with hazardous waste issues—began investigating water quality late last year, shortly after the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) allowed the Cabot Oil and Gas Corporation to stop daily deliveries of fresh water to local residents. DEP had previously determined that Cabot was responsible for contaminating Dimock water with methane from its fracking operations, and tests conducted by both DEP and Cabot had shown that the water also contained pollutants like arsenic; barium; bis(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate, a plasticizer commonly called DEHP; glycol compounds, manganese, phenol, and sodium. ATSDR's initial report from December 2011 expressed concerns about the reliability of methane removal systems offered by Cabot to Dimock residents as part of a settlement agreement with DEP, and "the presence of other contaminants besides methane (metals, volatile organics and non-naturally occurring organics) for which the well treatment systems are not designed or in place to address." That report also recommended that: A full public health evaluation should be conducted on the data from the site area. Because many of these compounds (e.g., metals) affect the same organ systems, ATSDR recommends evaluating the

mixture for public health impacts using computational techniques or other suitable methods to evaluate the potential for synergistic actions: The cumulative concentration of all dissolved combustible gases should be considered to protect against the buildup of explosive atmospheres in all wells in the area. According to this recommendation, the agency is continuing to pursue "a fairly comprehensive review" of Dimock water quality, which will include review of earlier tests conducted by DEP and Cabot as well as EPA's recent test results. There is currently no timeframe for the completion of the report. Regardless of what the eventual outcome of the ATSDR investigation will be, one thing remains uncontested by anyone but the gas industry—Cabot's drilling activities contaminated Dimock drinking water. Thankfully, at least one government agency is devoting the time and resources to determine whether that water still poses an ongoing threat to the health of Dimock residents.

CHERRY HILL COURIER POST

From Early Bird Woolwich truck terminal proposed as Superfund site **WOOLWICH** — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Friday proposed adding a former truck terminal here to its list of Superfund cleanup sites. The Matlack Inc. site, on Route 322 in Woolwich, is contaminated with volatile organic compounds and PCBs due to former activities there, including trailer and tanker washing, the EPA said. Pollution at the 70-acre site is affecting surrounding wetlands and a nearby stream, Grand Sprute Run. The truck terminal operated from 1962 to 2001. "EPA will now begin work to sample and evaluate the site further to determine the best ways to clean up the contamination," said Judith Enck, a regional administrator. The agency is expected to designate the property as a final Superfund site after responding to public comments.The EPA said it is now looking for the parties responsible for polluting the Woolwich site, and it will seek to hold them accountable for clean-up costs.

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

From Early Bird Environmental Programs Would Take Hit Under Cuts Outlined in Budget Act Environmental programs would take a hit in fiscal year 2013 under the across-the-board cuts contained in the deficit reduction law passed in 2011, according to a report issued by the Obama administration. The report from the White House Office of Management and Budget says EPA state and tribal assistance grants to run environmental programs and fund water infrastructure programs would see budget cuts of at least 8 percent, and Interior Department environmental programs also would be affected. The cuts are set to go into effect Jan. 2, 2013, unless Congress and the White House agree to change the law to prevent them.

From Early Bird EPA Urged to Propose Options to Streamline Greenhouse Gas Permitting EPA should propose and take public comments on options for streamlining the greenhouse gas permitting process, an advisory group says in an interim report to be discussed at a meeting Sept. 20. The Clean Air Act Advisory Committee greenhouse gas permitting work group makes no recommendations on streamlining the process, citing a lack of time and resources to substantively evaluate streamlining methods. Instead, it suggests that EPA take the information it already has available, as well as the data collected by the work group, propose options, and seek comment

From Early Bird EPA to Require 1.28 Billion Gallons of Biomass-Based Diesel in 2013 EPA sets the requirement for biomass-based diesel fuel under the renewable fuel standard at 1.28 billion gallons in 2013. In a final rule, EPA says biodiesel producers, who provide most of the biomass-based diesel fuel, are already producing 1.3 billion gallons of fuel a year and have "significantly greater production capacity than will be required" to meet the standard. Biodiesel can be produced from recycled cooking oil, agricultural oils such as soybean and canola oil, and animal fats, according to EPA.

Congress Passes Bill Reauthorizing *EPA* Collection of Fees From Pesticide Registrants The House passed legislation Sept. 14 renewing the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to collect registration and annual maintenance fees from pesticide registrants, clearing the measure for the president's signature. The Pesticide Registration Improvement Extension Act of 2012 (S. 3552), which passed without objection, would allow the agency to collect fees through fiscal year 2017 and set deadlines for the Office of Pesticide Programs to make regulatory decisions on pesticide registrations. The Senate passed the bill, dubbed PRIA-3,on Sept. 13 by

unanimous consent. EPA uses registration and maintenance fees to fund OPP operations, including the agency's registration reviews of every pesticide active ingredient. Pesticide registrants support the PRIA framework because of the certainty offered by timeframes for regulatory decisions, while environmental groups are supportive of EPA receiving additional funding to review the safety of new and previously registered pesticides.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

From Early Bird EPA adds 12 hazardous waste sites to Superfund list, proposes 8 more WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency is adding 12 hazardous waste sites to the list of most-contaminated places in the United States. Another eight sites are being considered for the Superfund list. Investigators found toxins like arsenic, lead and mercury at some sites. The designation puts the sites in line for major cleanups, either by the government or by companies or people deemed responsible for the contamination. Waste sites are being added in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, North Carolina and New Jersey. Texas and Ohio both have two sites being added to the list. EPA says it could take years for cleanups to begin at sites where the government has to pay for cleanup efforts.

From Early Bird Superfund List Adds Glouco Site WASHINGTON - Four New Jersey sites are among 12 hazardous-waste sites the Environmental Protection Agency on Friday added to the list of the most-contaminated places in the United States, including Matlack Inc., a former chemical transportation business in Woolwich Township, Gloucester County. Arsenic, lead, and mercury were among a long list of toxins found at the sites - mostly former factories, chemical plants, and contaminated water plumes. Investigators also found elements like benzene, copper, and chromium, plus harmful chemicals associated with pesticides and industrial solvents. All 12 sites pose significant public-health risks, the EPA said, leading to their designation as national priorities under Superfund, a federal program to identify and secure uncontrolled environmental hazards.

From Early Bird Shell: Won't hit oil in Alaska this year AMSTERDAM - Royal Dutch Shell PLC said Monday it will no longer seek oil off the coast of Alaska this year after suffering several setbacks. The company, which has so far spent around $4.5 billion to obtain licenses and prepare for exploratory drilling in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas, said it is scaling back ambitions until next summer after one of its containment systems failed during a test. Earlier, the company delayed drilling due to ice floe movements. The company said that in the time remaining this season it plans to drill shallow "top holes" for wells that may be further pursued in coming years.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Asian carp policy: Is it keeping Obama and Romney up at night?
Nah. But the issue resonates in (battleground) states around the Great Lakes, so the Romney and Obama camps outlined their approaches to dealing with a prospective Asian carp invasion.

Gas taxes vs. fuel restrictions: Which is better for reducing emissions? New fuel efficiency rules throw all of the burden onto carmakers, some economists say. Would higher sales taxes on gas be more effective? With the announcement of final rules for corporate average fuel efficiency of 54.5 mpg by 2025, the NHTSA and EPA have done two things.

NEW YORK TIMES

EPA Plans Crackdown on Muddy Upstate Waterway The federal Environmental Protection Agency wants to list the Lower Esopus Creek in the Catskills region of New York as an "impaired" waterway. Such a step could force New York City to stop discharging muddy water into the creek from the Ashokan Reservoir, one of the sources of the city's drinking water. The muddying of the Lower Esopus has been an issue for environmental officials from both the city and the state because the tributary is vital to recreation and agriculture in Ulster County. The county executive, Michael P. Hein, has compared the city's actions on the Esopus to those of "an occupying nation" toward "indigenous people."

FEDERAL NEWS RADIO

Top 10 Agency Initiatives: *Environmental Protection Agency As part of the special Federal News Radio series, "The Obama Impact: Evaluating the Last Four Years," we asked more than two dozen federal agencies — including all of the Cabinet-level agencies — for a list of the three most effective, nonpolitical management initiatives or policies they've embarked on over the past four years. From the responses collected from nine agencies, Federal News Radio narrowed the list down of the top 10 agency initiatives — in the agencies' own words. Below, read more about the top Environmental Protection Agency initiative, as selected by Federal News Radio, as well as other initiatives EPA singled out for recognition.*

DETROIT FREE PRESS

Mark Phelan: Natural gas gets nod from auto analysts as vehicle fuel of the future Natural gas got a strong vote of confidence as a future vehicle fuel at the Society of Automotive Analysts Strategic Planning Summit in Southfield on Friday. New methods of extracting the gas are one of the biggest changes affecting the auto industry in years, General Motors chief economist Mustafa Mohatarem said. "The U. S. now has a 100-year supply of natural gas," he said. "I'd make a bet it's the next big transportation fuel. The price is so much lower than gasoline -- people will find a way to use it." The idea got a second from John Casesa, senior managing director of investment banking at Guggenheim Partners.