EPA REGION III

Office of Public Affairs

PM Headlines

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*** PM HOT LIST ***

Marcellus Shale Reality Tour Part 3 EPA comes to Dimock

CNN ScottCannon shares with us this video from Dimock, Pennsylvania. He shot the video on January 31. The video includes an interview with Susan Roos, a resident of Dimock who claims her water supply has been contaminated by gas extraction practices. This video package also includes an interview with EPA spokesperson Trish Taylor, who is part of a team investigating claims in the area. ScottCannon says: 'Call me crazy, but this information is needed to preserve our environment, clear water, and clean air for future generations, as promised in our state constitution. For me, it's a moral obligation. Our mission is to educate the public on the negative effects of gas drilling.' He is on the executive board of the Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition, Inc. of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. This is an interview with a resident of Dimock who's water was contaminated by Cabot Oil and Gas, as well as an Trhish Taylor, EPA spokesperon overseeing water testing in the area.

Blog: Doctor Prescribes Preventive Medicine for Shale Gas

DAILY GREEN The operating assumption that generally prevails in Washington, DC, is that the facts should fit the political narrative, not the other way around. Every once in awhile, someone comes along and tries to spoil the fun. Such was the case February 1 when Dr. Bernard Goldstein, a physician, toxicologist, member of the National Academies of Science's Institute of Medicine, and former Reagan administration appointee at the Environmental Protection Agency, testified to the House Science Committee's energy subcommittee about public health issues associated with hydraulic fracturing. This was the hearing from which Josh Fox, producer of the anti-fracturing documentary *Gasland* was ejected and cuffed by Capitol Police. That unfortunate incident grabbed the headlines, but Goldstein's important testimony shouldn't be overshadowed by the fracas over Fox. The subcommittee hearing was called to rake EPA over the coals about natural gas. (Sorry for the mixed energy references.) The point in contention was EPA's controversial study in which agency experts said they found evidence of hydraulic fracturing chemicals in an aquifer in proximity to the Pavilion gas field, a tight sands formation in Wyoming.

One Virginia County Says NO To Fracking

CARE2.COM (BLOG) Fracking (the natural gas drilling method known as hydraulic fracturing, which uses high pressure blasts of water mixed with a chemical cocktail to break the rock and unlock the gas), has been losing popularity recently. Hooray!In December, 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officially blamed fracking for water contamination in Wyoming. Earthquakes in both Oklahoma and more recently Ohio may well have been caused by fracking.Now Rockingham County in Virginia has sent a firm rejection to Carrizo Oil and Gas who were seeking a permit to pursue fracking near Bergton, in the foothills of the Blue

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Mountains.The company's intent was to build Virginia's first well to explore for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale, a prehistoric shale formation that runs from Ohio to lower Virginia and contains one of the richest gas reserves in the world, according to the Energy Information Administration. As I know from driving through there, this is also an extremely beautiful area of the country, but apparently Carrizo didn't care about that. **Permit Denied!**

Clean air measure faces uncertain future

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW The future air quality in Allegheny County may be determined by pending federal standards concerning air pollution that crosses state lines. However, the power industry, some local congressmen and even the state Department of Environmental Protection are bucking the proposed clean-air measure, called the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. The rule, now suspended as it is appealed, would reduce Allegheny County's fine particulate pollution, which is among the most serious air quality problems in the region. Mostly coal-fired power plants and vehicle emissions produce these microscopic particulates that can easily lodge deep into the lungs. They are linked to a slew of health problems such as asthma, bronchitis, heart attack, strokes and increased risk of premature death. The new cross-state pollution rule, according to the EPA, would avoid 13,000 to 34,000 premature deaths.

Protesters push EPA on its order to Pa. coal-burning plant

NEWSWORKS.ORG Protesters arrived on the doorstep of the Environmental Protection Agency's regional office in Philadelphia Thursday. But they were there to support the agency, in a way. Neighbors of a Pennsylvania coal power plant in Upper Mount Bethel Township on the Delaware River want the agency to make the coal-power facility clean up its act.The neighbors, who hail from New Jersey, have been irritated by emissions from the smokestacks blowing across the state border.Greg Gorman, a member of the delegation, said there's a great fishing spot just under a mile from the plant on the New Jersey side, as the fish swims. "The first time I went [to] the Pequest [River] -- that's one of the best trout streams in New Jersey -- looking forward to it, I was wondering why my eyes were watering," he said. "It wasn't because I was sad, that's for sure."

First Energy Gets Boost From Clean Air Rules

HUFFINGTON POSTNEW YORK -- Instead of complaining about clean air rules, maybe utilities should cheer them.Sometimes, the rules lead to big gains.First Energy, a utility based in Ohio, got such a boost Thursday, a week after the company announced it would close six coal-fired plants, blaming new federal rules aimed at slowing emissions of mercury and other toxins.Without these plants, electricity prices in parts of Ohio dominated by First Energy are expected to nearly double at a power auction scheduled for May. The reason: There will now be a smaller fleet of power plants available to meet potential power needs. This smaller supply means the price to coax companies like First Energy to make their plants available will rise.

Obama's energy plan mixed bag for Va.

THE EXAMINER (late Friday) Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell remains at odds with President Obama over the issue of energy, even as Obama moved Thursday to fast track a critical piece of McDonnell's own energy agenda. The Obama administration completed a review that showed offshore wind energy projects posed little threat of environmental damage, clearing the way for new wind turbines along the East Coast, including off the shores of Virginia and Maryland. Leases could be available for companies to bid on as early as this year. McDonnell called the advancement of offshore wind farms an "important component of our overall effort to make Virginia 'The Energy Capital of the East Coast.'"

2-6-12: New Year, New [*Pollution*] Diet Plan

MARYLAND MORNING WITH SHEILAH KAST You've probably heard: Maryland is putting the Chesapeake Bay on a diet. A pollution diet, that is. The six states in the Bay watershed are being required by the

federal government to reduce the flow of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment into the bay by 15 to 25 percent by 2025.In December, Maryland submitted a second draft of its diet plan—or more formally, its watershed implementation plan–to the E-P-A. The state is taking public comments on the plan through March 9th, and will hold informational meetings around the state over the coming weeks about it — a full list of the meetings is below. The first takes place today, in Chestertown. Sheilah discusses what this latest draft means for local governments with Richard Eskin, the director of Science Services Administration at the Maryland Department of the Environment. He's been leading Maryland's Bay Cabinet in activities related to the Watershed Implementation Plans.

Lancaster, PA: The Region to Watch in Terms of Reducing Pollution from Runoff

PR NEWSWIRE WASHINGTON, Feb. 2, 2012 -- /PRNewswire/ -- Over the last two years, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has invested $1.1 million in projects around Lancaster County that take a comprehensive approach to dealing with issues related to urban/suburban runoff. Three innovative projects in the area tackle different aspects of the stormwater runoff issue – on-the-ground infrastructure, planning and assessment and community engagement – and, when combined, represent a large-scale, holistic approach that can change the status quo on this problem. **The Issue:** During storm events, rain either filters into the ground or runs off. In areas of development – roads, parking lots, rooftops, etc. – rain cannot be absorbed into the ground so it flows off in sheets, picking up nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment, bacteria, metals and chemical contaminants as it goes. Velocity is also a factor since the faster runoff moves, the more damage it can cause by scraping away stream banks and filling the waterways with sediment. In the end, the polluted stormwater flows directly into local streams or storm drains and is carried into local waters and eventually into the Chesapeake Bay.

Blog: Arundel takes aggressive stance on environmental violations

BALTIMORE-SUN An Anne Arundel County waterfront landowner and a contractor accused of doing work without a permit have been hit with financial penalties and probation in the first two cases brought under the county's aggressive new environmental enforcement strategy. County officials and prosecutors say they will continue to go beyond traditional enforcement measures, using civil and criminal penalties to protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries from serious violations. "The stakes have gone up dramatically," said Joseph F. Devlin, one of the attorneys for Emanuel Krousaniotakis, the owner of waterfront property outside Annapolis. "The criminal option certainly adds a whole new element to enforcement."

A downtown building not built

BALTIMORE-SUN (former Allied Signal site) ... For a city whose last Fortune 500 company was about to be acquired by an out-of-town corporation, there was not just consolation but actual excitement over one of the deal sweeteners: Chicago-based Exelon Corp. promised to build a new downtown office building for the merged company, the first such construction in Baltimore's central business district since 2004. "It's a world-class site without world-class access," Brodie said. Additionally, building atop what he calls "a big bathtub" — referring to the contained contamination — poses its own set of problems. "It's certainly physically possible," Brodie said, "but it comes at a high price." The site continues to be monitored by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Maryland Department of the Environment ... Like others, Russell Fish, the Philadelphia-based EPA project manager who oversees Harbor Point, said he learned of the proposed Exelon building only through news reports. Fish said that, depending on the complexity of the development, it would take a month or two to review the plans for approval, although none had been submitted as of Friday..

*** MORNING HOT LIST ***

Coal conference ends with attacks on Obama

CHARLESTON GAZETTE (Satruday) CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Coal industry officials on Friday ended a three-day symposium in Charleston with a session repeating their harsh criticisms of the Obama administration's push to reduce power plant emissions and curb environmental damage from strip-mining. Industry boosters from Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania led a panel discussion titled, "Obama's No Jobs Zone," drawing applause and occasional cheers from West Virginia mining company representatives gathered at the Charleston Civic Center. Mining operators are furious over tougher U.S. Environmental Protection Agency permit reviews and water quality guidance they say have slowed new permit approvals to a trickle and stronger federal air quality rules that are forcing some utilities to migrate toward natural gas. "EPA continues to push costly regulations designed to eliminate coal usage," said Josie Gaskey, director of the Pennsylvania Coal Association. Coal officials also heard a presentation about an industry-funded project aimed at examining the science that's found serious environmental damage and potential public health problems associated with mountaintop removal mining. John Craynon of Virginia Tech University said the project, which includes researchers from nine regional educational institutions, is trying to see if there are "other interpretations" of studies like those by West Virginia University researcher Michael Hendryx. Over the last five years, Hendryx has co-authored 20 peer-reviewed papers examining mountaintop removal and community health. He's found that living near mountaintop removal mining is statistically linked to higher rates of illnesses, including birth defects and cancer. So far, coal companies including Alpha Natural Resources, Arch Coal and Patriot Coal have provided $15 million to fund the work over the next five years, but Craynon says that money does not taint the research. "By doing solid research, you can engage in the conversation," Craynon said. "It's funded by industry, but it's not designed to be an advocate for the industry. It's not the same as consulting work." Jason Bostic, a coal association lobbyist, praised the effort as "one of the most exciting projects I've seen" and said he felt "privileged to have been involved in the development of it."

Tentative deal on Pennsylvania shale-gas fee

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER HARRISBURG - After months of wrangling behind closed doors, Gov. Corbett and Republicans who hold the majority in both legislative chambers have reached a tentative agreement to impose a fee on the extraction of natural gas from the Marcellus Shale. The so-called "local impact fee," which could be voted on as early as this week, would fluctuate depending on the price of natural gas and, starting in 2013, on the rate of inflation, according to a summary circulated to Republican senators during the weekend. For instance, if the price of natural gas is between $3 and $5, the fee would be $310,000 per well over 15 years. That fee would be lower if the price of gas falls below $3, and would increase if the price of gas rises above $5. The price now is less than $2.50, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. "Staff have been working throughout the weekend and will be working [Sunday] in order to have a proposal that we can consider as early as this week," House Speaker Sam Smith (R., Jefferson) and House Majority Leader Mike Turzai (R., Allegheny) wrote in a letter to members Saturday. According to an analysis circulated by Democrats in the House, the maximum fee a company would pay is $355,000 per well, if gas stays above $6 - and that does not account for inflation. The minimum would be $240,000, not counting inflation. One of the major sticking points in talks over the last few months has been how - and by whom - money raised by the fee would be distributed. The agreement would allow counties where drilling occurs to decide whether to impose a fee. If a county declines to impose a fee, half its municipalities would have the option to force it to do so. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission would collect and distribute the fee, according to the summary of the agreement. Sixty percent of the money would go to areas directly affected by drilling for things such as infrastructure and public-safety costs. The other 40 percent would go to statewide projects, many of them environmental, including repairs to greenways and recreational trails, protection of open space, and other beautification projects.

O'Malley renews bid to curb sprawl by limiting septic systems

WASHINGTON POST Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley is again seeking to limit new septic systems in order to curb development sprawl, and it's all about the Chesapeake Bay. "A house on septic causes six to 10 times the amount of pollution to the bay as a house on public sewer," O'Malley (D) said last week in his State of the State address, telling lawmakers that his proposed measure would help the bay and safeguard the state's farmland. The restrictions in the governor's new proposal are less stringent than those he sought to push through last year. O'Malley wanted to prohibit "major subdivisions" of five or more houses built with septic systems. Surprised lawmakers did not applaud when O'Malley announced that proposal in his address one year ago. The new approach would allow such developments "to a limited degree" in rural areas where sewer service is not planned but that are not "dominated" by farmland or forestland, Richard Hall, Maryland's planning secretary, told state senators last week. Del. Maggie L. McIntosh (D-Baltimore), chairman of the House Environmental Matters Committee, said the new proposal has a chance. "It's a different bill. . . . It's one that has some hopes of passing," she said. McIntosh chaired a task force that O'Malley created to study the septic systems issue after the first bill was shelved. The new bill reflects many of the task force's recommendations. O'Malley's effort last year to restrict septic systems galvanized Republicans, rural lawmakers, farmers and developers, and the new proposal is likely to draw opposition from some of the same quarters.

Coalition of rural counties preps for fight

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS CUMBERLAND — A newly-formed coalition of rural Maryland counties is already having a powerful impact and now plans to fight PlanMaryland and other fee and tax increase proposals coming from Gov. Martin O'Malley's administration. The Maryland Rural Counties coalition also plans to support legislation to block PlanMaryland. Allegany County commissioners offered something of a "State of the Coalition" talk during their regular public business meeting Thursday. Commission President Michael McKay said the coalition persuaded the Maryland Association of Counties to support House Bill 121. The bill would amend the state constitution and require funds designated for Chesapeake Bay cleanup to be actually used for that purpose. The decision was historic, McKay said, because initially, MACo staff had recommended the organization take no position on the bill. That all changed after lobbying by the coalition to support the bill and MACo officials testified in favor of the bill, McKay said. The logic of MACo getting behind the bill was the thought that "if you're going to tax people ... don't take the money and use it for other programs," McKay said. Commissioner Bill Valentine is Allegany County's representative on the MACo board. "He's robbing his piggy bank to pay other bills," Valentine said of the bay fund. Rural counties that are already strapped would be hit hard by an increased gas tax, Valentine said. House Bill 146 is designed to protect the state's transportation trust fund, another fund that has been raided for other purposes. Shifting the costs of teacher pensions to the counties could be devastating, Valentine said. Estimates project counties statewide would need to come up with $300 million in fiscal year 2014 with another $60 million on top of that each year going forward, Valentine said. The coalition also intends to battle Plan Maryland. "He (O'Malley) put it thorough the back door instead of the front door," McKay said. "At the end of the day, I think our decision was wise," McKay said in reference to hiring Bill Miles as a consultant for the coalition.

Cabot: Recording error caused false arsenic result

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE (Saturday) A high arsenic reading that a natural gas driller mistakenly attributed to the Montrose public water supply this week was in fact caused by a recording error when handwritten field notes were typed into the driller's database, Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. said Friday. The sample, which actually contained none of the chemical, was taken from water drawn from Pennsylvania American Water's Lake Montrose treatment plant and trucked to Dimock Twp. in August 2010 as a replacement for well water found to have been tainted with methane from drilling operations. Test results that found no arsenic in the water were recorded properly by a Cabot contractor in the field, spokesman George Stark said Friday. But somehow the numbers for the arsenic and barium readings were switched when the data was uploaded to a computer. The company apologized for the error. Pennsylvania American Water asked for a review of the test data after Cabot released a statement Tuesday alleging arsenic nearly four times the federal drinking water limit originated from the utility's Montrose system - a

claim the utility rebutted with six years of tests showing no evidence of arsenic in the public water. "We are glad that Cabot reviewed their records, identified the error, and clarified this information," spokeswoman Susan Turcmanovich said. "However, we feel they should have done a more thorough analysis of the information prior to issuing such a serious allegation." Cabot made the claim as it criticized federal regulators' interpretation of the same data. The Environmental Protection Agency attributed the sample to a Dimock water well during its review of past water tests and the high arsenic level prompted the agency to provide replacement water to the home. The EPA is delivering water to four homes and testing as many as 66 as it investigates potential contamination from gas drilling in a 9-square-mile area of Dimock.

Cabot admits its *Dimock* water arsenic claim was a mistake

HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS (Saturday) The arsenic Cabot Oil & Gas recently said was not in the water in Dimock wasn't even arsenic. It's the Abbott and Costello "Who's On First?" routine, Marcellus style. Cabot drilled wells in Dimock. Local residents' well water suddenly began to spit and fizzle with natural gas. Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection fined Cabot and made the company make arrangements for paying for water treatment systems at the homes. Some residents refused, choosing instead to sue Cabot. They said their wells were also contaminated with chemicals used in drilling. Cabot said that wasn't so. DEP agreed. Lots of tests were done. An independent study by researchers at Duke University found gas but no chemicals. The residents did their own tests, and took their concerns to the federal Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA agreed with DEP. Then it didn't. The EPA announced it would do its own testing and it would arrange for emergency water for four homes. It said it was doing that because some of the old test results concerned them. One test indicated a high level of arsenic. Cabot said the arsenic reading didn't come from the Dimock water, but rather from the Montrose public water system in water delivered to Dimock residents. Pennsylvania American Water, which owns the Montrose public water system, said that was bunk. Their water doesn't contain any arsenic, they said. Cabot stood by its claim. Then it didn't. On Friday, Cabot announced, "Our review found a transcription error revealing that the values for arsenic and barium were transposed in the report. There was no arsenic found in this sample from the Montrose public water supply. We apologize for this error."

Commentary: Public health impacts of Marcellus Shale drilling still unknown

HARRISBURG PATRIOT-NEWS Uncertainty prompts me to write that as a doctor I do not know what to tell Pennsylvania patients when they ask me if hydraulic fracturing — fracking — in their neighborhood or region might affect their health. I've seen anecdotal stories in the media. I've read as much as I could find about how the hydraulic fracturing process works. But I'm still uncertain because we lack data and research on the matter. My colleagues in the Marcellus Shale regions tell me that they are getting questions from patients every day, such as "I've had well water for many years — should I have it tested now that there's a gas well nearby?" and "I've had this rash off and on for a while; could it be related to the gas well they just finished a mile or so up my road?" or "A gas well was just finished near our house; my children play nearby and even though they're not sick right now, how will I know if they get sick from it — even years from now?" We have no definitive answers to these questions because we lack data. These physicians also are concerned about other rapid changes within their rural communities that could potentially impact health, such as increases in truck traffic, industrial accidents and overloads of local hospitals and health facilities. The basic question for physicians is not which side to pick for or against fracking, but rather to ask are we doing a good enough job being watchdogs for public health in these regions? As physicians, we also are scientists. We highly value evidence-based research as the basic tool we need to better assess and treat our patients and to be better advocates for protecting the community's health. Regardless of the environmental controversy, and regardless of how slowly or how quickly this new industry develops, we recognize that there is a need to conduct epidemiological studies and to educate ourselves and the public about the best ways to keep our communities healthy. Nothing frustrates me more than having my medical expertise hand-cuffed by lack of research. I support the elected leaders in Harrisburg seeking money to collect health data and conduct unbiased, comprehensive studies of the health of communities within our Marcellus Shale regions and to help educate

patients about their health.

Outdoor groups urge Corbett to uphold moratorium on state forest gas leases

ALTOONA MIRROR Pennsylvania's 20 state forests encompass more than 2.2 million acres, giving residents year-round access for pursuits such as hiking, snowmobiling, boating, hunting and fishing. But with a budget shortfall looming in Harrisburg and the Marcellus Shale industry expanding in the region, sportsmen say they are worried. Their concern: balancing the books at the expense of shrinking state forest areas. In a letter addressed to Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett ahead of Tuesday's state budget address, advocates from organizations including Trout Unlimited, National Wildlife Federation, Pennsylvania Forest Coalition and United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania are asking him to honor the moratorium then-Gov. Ed Rendell placed on new drilling operations in October 2010. Citing studies from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the groups argue any additional land leased for oil and gas development could have a significant impact on the "wild character and ecological integrity of the state's forest system." About 700,000 acres of state forests - almost one-third of the state forest land - is already leased for gas extraction by DCNR. Some residents and sportsmen are saying enough is enough.

Pennsylvania landowners fight eminent domain in Marcellus Gas natural gas field

ASSOCIATED PRESS When federal regulators approved a 39-mile natural gas pipeline through northern Pennsylvania's pristine Endless Mountains, they cited the operator's assurances that it would make sparing use of eminent domain as it negotiated with more than 150 property owners along the pipeline's route. Yet a few days after winning approval for its $250 million MARC 1 pipeline in the heart of the giant Marcellus Shale gas field, the company began condemnation proceedings against nearly half of the landowners — undercutting part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's approval rationale and angering landowners. Some of the landowners are now fighting the company in court, complaining that Central New York Oil and Gas Company LLC steamrolled them by refusing to negotiate in good faith on monetary compensation and the pipeline's location. Their attorneys say CNYOG has skirted Pennsylvania's eminent domain rules. The company, a subsidiary of Inergy LP of Kansas City, Mo., insists it's trying to reach a "fair settlement" with all property owners and wants to be a good neighbor. The dispute could foreshadow eminent domain battles to come as more pipelines are approved and built to carry shale gas to market in states like Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio. The company promotes the MARC 1 pipeline as key infrastructure in developing the Marcellus Shale, a rock formation underneath Pennsylvania and surrounding states that experts believe holds the nation's largest reservoir of gas.

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

From Early Bird Tentative deal on Pennsylvania shale-gas fee HARRISBURG - After months of wrangling behind closed doors, Gov. Corbett and Republicans who hold the majority in both legislative chambers have reached a tentative agreement to impose a fee on the extraction of natural gas from the Marcellus Shale. The so-called "local impact fee," which could be voted on as early as this week, would fluctuate depending on the price of natural gas and, starting in 2013, on the rate of inflation, according to a summary circulated to Republican senators during the weekend. For instance, if the price of natural gas is between $3 and $5, the fee would be $310,000 per well over 15 years. That fee would be lower if the price of gas falls below $3, and would increase if the price of gas rises above $5. The price now is less than $2.50, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. "Staff have been

working throughout the weekend and will be working [Sunday] in order to have a proposal that we can consider as early as this week," House Speaker Sam Smith (R., Jefferson) and House Majority Leader Mike Turzai (R., Allegheny) wrote in a letter to members Saturday. According to an analysis circulated by Democrats in the House, the maximum fee a company would pay is $355,000 per well, if gas stays above $6 - and that does not account for inflation. The minimum would be $240,000, not counting inflation. One of the major sticking points in talks over the last few months has been how - and by whom - money raised by the fee would be distributed. The agreement would allow counties where drilling occurs to decide whether to impose a fee. If a county declines to impose a fee, half its municipalities would have the option to force it to do so. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission would collect and distribute the fee, according to the summary of the agreement. Sixty percent of the money would go to areas directly affected by drilling for things such as infrastructure and public-safety costs. The other 40 percent would go to statewide projects, many of them environmental, including repairs to greenways and recreational trails, protection of open space, and other beautification projects.

From Early Bird Improved wind turbines under way Wind turbine manufacturer Gamesa, a Spanish company with a manufacturing plant in Ebensburg, Cambria County, is working with the Department of Energy to transform wind power technology, making it cheaper and more reliable. If the project is successful, it could lead to the next generation of wind turbines, officials said. Gamesa has sent a turbine to the department's National Renewable Energy Lab in Colorado, where scientists will load it with sensors to verify how much power is produced at certain windspeeds and otherwise check the accuracy of computer models used to design the equipment. With all the instrumentation, one might compare the turbine to a heart patient, except "this is more like an athlete," said Jeroen van Dam, senior engineer at the lab. By better understanding how the turbine works, engineers can design closer to the limits, he said. They can, for example, get more power with smaller blades. "The idea is to continue to drive down the cost of wind energy to make these units operate more reliably, more efficiently, and to be competitive with other forms of energy," said David Rosenberg, Gamesa's vice president of communications. "We're getting there," he added. "We're getting there much more quickly than we thought."

From Early Bird A solar farm's slow going When Bob Keares proposed building Pennsylvania's largest solar farm in the heart of Chester County, he expected a warm reception, certainly from environmentalists. With 35,000 panels arrayed on a steep slope in Caln Township, the farm would generate 10 megawatts of energy, pollution-free. It could power 2,000 homes, he asserted, while reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 200,000 tons over 40 years - equivalent to planting eight million trees. Keares' green dream did not end there. He envisioned the farm attracting other solar companies to the area. "It could be a much bigger thing," said the president of Keares Electrical Contractors Inc., of Downingtown, which moved into the solar-production business five years ago. "I see our future. I see clean energy."

Water Department will seek rate increasesThe Philadelphia Water Department just announced that it will seek rate changes starting Oct. 1, 2012 to ensure that the city has top quality water, alleviate flooding, meet regulatory requirements and improve the quality of local rivers and streams. Currently, a monthly bill is about $57.43. With the increase the average monthly bill for a residential customer using 600 cubic feet of water a month will increase by $4.10 a month, or 6.5 percent. Philadelphians who qualify for the 25 percent senior citizen discount, rates will increase by an average of $2.73 per a month.Check out the press release below for more information:

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE

From Early Bird Deal at hand on shale fees and controls HARRISBURG -- A deal between Republican lawmakers and Gov. Tom Corbett on a Marcellus Shale regulatory and impact fee measure is nearly complete, with summaries of the expected compromise plan circulating among lawmakers over the weekend. Top legislative and administration aides said action on that final plan could begin as soon as today. A bipartisan General Assembly conference committee still must be formed to approve the plan, followed by final votes in both chambers, before it can reach the governor's desk. Staffers were in the Capitol on Sunday afternoon and evening for some final revisions. The bulk of the framework detailed to rank-and-file lawmakers is expected to remain the same, though

local zoning rights is one issue that remains in flux. "Sen. [Joe] Scarnati is very pleased with the progress made to date and anticipates movement on the final package this week," said Drew Crompton, chief of staff to Mr. Scarnati, R-Jefferson, the Senate president pro tem. "There are final pieces of the puzzle that need to be added, but the framework has been consistent since [Saturday]." The recent weeks of negotiations, which capped off a year of focus on how to update the state's drilling rules, appear to have resulted in a proposal that meshes aspects from the bills that passed the House and Senate, with a few new twists. A version of the proposal sent to House Democratic lawmakers -- who gained their first peek this weekend, after not being included the negotiations -- would peg the per-well fee to the price of natural gas. That tiered system would raise between $190,000 and $355,000 per well over 15 years, compared with the House version's $160,000 over 10 years and the Senate's $360,000 over 20 years.

From Early Bird PPG refuses to recall leaded paint in Cameroon PPG Industries has been selling house paint high in lead content in the African nation of Cameroon for years, and although it says it stopped production of that paint late last year, it has rejected a request that it recall or accurately label its lead paints now selling in stores there. Occupational Knowledge International, a San Francisco-based environmental health advocacy organization, said its inquiries pushed PPG to direct its Cameroon subsidiary, Seigneurie, to stop making the lead-based paint, which would be banned in the U.S. In a statement issued in response to questions by the Post-Gazette, the Pittsburgh-headquartered company maintains that it "initiated its own action to review its consumer coatings to ensure the lead content conforms to applicable legal requirements." What isn't in dispute is that PPG has refused to order Seigneurie, which it acquired in 2007, to recall the lead paint already on the Cameroon market or label it as containing lead, according to Perry Gottesfeld, executive director of Occupational Knowledge. The continuing sales of lead paint in Cameroon, Mr. Gottesfeld said, are contributing to a short- and long-term health hazard that will take decades to correct. "In this day and age it's just irresponsible to operate that way, and it's irresponsible because we know it's unsafe," said Mr. Gottesfeld. "PPG also said it wouldn't remove the lead from its industrial paints in Cameroon, and that's a problem because there is no distinction between industrial and house paint at the stores in Cameroon." The U.S. banned interior and exterior household paint with lead content above 600 parts per million in 1978. And based on subsequent scientific studies, it tightened the standard to 90 parts per million in 2008 to reduce the risk of lead poisoning in children who can ingest paint chips, flakes or peelings or inhale lead paint dust.

From Early Bird Pitt's conference will spotlight nontraditional career paths in the field of sustainability New nuclear power plants at Westinghouse Electric Co. New drilling rigs in Washington County. New legislation out of Harrisburg. All of this energy development is going to need some legal help, isn't it? That's what the University of Pittsburgh Law School is thinking, so it's planning a conference dedicated to exploring the role attorneys can play in developing sustainable neighborhoods in light of the rapid-fire energy growth seen throughout the region. "Building Sustainable Neighborhoods" is a look at how the region's burgeoning energy portfolio is rewriting sustainability opportunities. The conference also aims to offer a preview of how new law school graduates could help those opportunities along. The conference -- a one-day crash course in the political, environmental, nonprofit and very-much-for-profit elements of the sustainability industry -- will be held next Monday at Phipps Conservatory in Oakland. Anyone can register at http://law.pitt.edu/events . The energy issue can be overwhelming to prospective attorneys or employees, say local leaders, and panels like this are a first step toward making sense of a new Pittsburgh economy.

From Early Bird Commentary: The Morning File: 'Hate last year's state budget? You'll hate this even more Gov. Tom Corbett delivers a budget address to the General Assembly Tuesday, touting his spending plan and policy agenda for Pennsylvania in 2012-13. Normally, The Morning File would have sources feeding us advance dope (no pun intended) about the governor's announcements. Unfortunately, all of those sources are either incarcerated due to political corruption; homeless from economic calamities and thus unreachable; or unreliable because of brain damage caused by sports concussions. Therefore, we'll just try to wing it -- or as we journalists like to say in news meetings whenever we're flummoxed, "Let's just make up some stories!" So here's what the governor might say:
Greetings, distinguished lawmaker and 252 other legislators present. I regret to tell you that we here in Pennsylvania are in one sorry state, but I pledge we can overcome this because I am a man of conviction -- every

bit as much as Rep. Bill DeWeese should be. Sorry, Bill -- just a little ex-attorney-general humor there. A year ago at this time I presented to you one of the most draconian, tight-fisted, stingy, unhelpful budgets of Pennsylvania's modern era. It was wonderful, and together we succeeded in getting much of it passed. I stand here proudly today to tell you that if you liked last year's cutbacks, you'll love this new budget even more.Sure, it'd be great if we could all go back to some "Fantasy Island" version of Pennsylvania, where we fed our hungry families, saved our mass transit systems and paid for a sufficient number of teachers, but the era we inhabit is more like "Survivor" -- someone has to get voted out each week. My vote, personally, is against welfare moms, but I'm flexible.

More pain expected in Corbett's budget proposal
... Shale One of the most closely watched policy issues -- the regulation and assessment of Marcellus Shale gas drillers -- remains in a holding pattern. Top aides to GOP lawmakers and the governor have been ironing out disagreements over that policy for weeks, in the aim of wrapping up a per-well impact fee and dozens of updates to state rules for gas drilling before the governor's budget is unveiled.That remains unfinished, though some close to the negotiations say a final agreement could begin circulating on Monday. The governor's proposal for environmental funding could factor into how that measure proceeds. "It may affect the politics around the shale bill when people see those cuts and perhaps decide to take another look at passing a more substantial fee on drillers," said Jan Jarrett, president and CEO of the environmental advocacy group PennFuture.

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE REVIEW

From Early Bird Lawmakers near vote on gas well fees HARRISBURG — The state House and Senate are near final agreement on Marcellus shale legislation that would establish an optional fee for counties to levy on drillers and provide state funding to help attract companies to process natural gas. Voting is expected to begin this week on a proposal that would allow each county with deep gas wells to approve a resolution authorizing a fee, which would not vary from county to county. The fee would be tied to the price of natural gas and be in place for 15 years, according to a "draft framework" sent to House GOP members. One key provision would provide a share of the statewide revenue to the Department of Community and Economic Development through 2013 that could be used to encourage the building of an ethane processing plant in Western Pennsylvania or help investment in Eastern Pennsylvania refineries, said Drew Crompton, chief counsel for Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati, R-Jefferson County. Royal Dutch Shell plc and other companies plan to build such plants, called "crackers," in Appalachia, sparking a competition for the plants among Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. "We are working diligently to finalize an agreement on Marcellus shale that balances growth in the Marcellus sector because we want good jobs and capital brought to the region while also providing environmental protections," said House Majority Leader Mike Turzai, R-Bradford Woods. "We want to take it to the members." House Minority Leader Frank Dermody, D-Oakmont, called it a "near deal." "This (shale bill) has been close so many times," he added.

From Early Bird s Bill would register, set limits on Allegheny *shale* well sites (Saturday) Two Allegheny County councilmen will introduce legislation on Tuesday that would create a registry of permits issued for Marcellus shale gas well sites and set restrictions on where drilling operations can be situated on county-owned property. The bill creating the registry is designed to make sure "people are informed as quickly as possible when a permit has been issued for a well," said Councilman John Palmiere, D-Baldwin Township, the measure's sponsor. "All I want to do is make sure that the county provides the information about where wells will be located so residents aren't running around in the dark trying to find out whether there will be a gas well in their neighborhood," Palmiere said. Joe Osborne, legal director for the nonprofit environmental organization Group Against Smog and Pollution said creation of a permit registry is a good idea so long as the information is placed in "a user-friendly format." "More transparency is exactly what the industry needs," said Osborne, adding that while the state has a database containing all of the well permits, it can be cumbersome to navigate when trying to find information. A separate ordinance being introduced by Councilman Michael Finnerty, D-Scott, would prohibit new gas wells and compressor stations from being built within 1,000 feet of a residential structure or school and 500 feet from a "permanent" water source such as a pond, lake or stream. Finnerty described his measure as "a compromise" from what was initially proposed when council began discussing the issue a year ago. "Environmental groups

wanted it to be 2,000 feet from a residential structure and 1,000 feet from a water source," Finnerty said. "We're probably never going to be able to come up with something that makes everyone happy, but I believe the distances that are outlined in my bill are a balance between providing safety and allowing the industry to operate."

National study targets Sharpsburg, EtnaThe national nonprofit American Rivers plans to study flooding and other drainage problems in Sharpsburg and Etna this year. The group will examine existing studies and plans to develop recommendations to address flooding and sewage issues in the two river towns that are situated at the base of miles of suburban development and its drainage.At the very least, officials of the nonprofit will suggest some "green" infrastructure solutions such as rain gardens and water-permeable sidewalks, which are either in the works or on the drawing boards of both communities. "The reason we are working with Sharpsburg and Etna is that these areas have had some long-standing problems," said Lisa Hollingsworth-Segedy, associate director for river restoration for the national group.The study of the two communities was picked as part of a pilot project for American Rivers, which is paying the cost for the study project."These towns already have organizations working individually to address the problems," she said. "And we recognize that there is a lot of really good work in the area."

Commonwealth Court upholds Fayette zoning decision
The Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania on Friday affirmed the decision of the Fayette County Zoning Hearing Board and the Fayette County Court of Common Pleas to deny a request by Amerikohl for a special exception to conduct surface mining on property located along Camp Carmel Road in Dunbar Township.The order was filed by President Judge Bonnie Brigance Leadbetter.Amerikohl had petitioned Fayette County to mine two plots or 213.5 acres. The plots are zoned A-1 (agricultural-rural). The properties that were to be leased by Amerikohl are owned by Louis J. and Charles D. Curry of Uniontown and John M. Health of New Jersey. The Fayette County Zoning Board's decision to deny Amerikohl's request was made in August 2009 following testimony that was given on March 18, April 29 and June 10. At that time complaints were heard from citizens as well as officials from the Mountain Watershed Association. Opponents raised concerns about the proposed mine's proximity to Ohiopyle State Park and the Great Allegheny Passage as well as the impact on a watershed at the Youghiogheny River.

Clean air measure faces uncertain futureThe future air quality in Allegheny County may be determined by pending federal standards concerning air pollution that crosses state lines. However, the power industry, some local congressmen and even the state Department of Environmental Protection are bucking the proposed clean-air measure, called the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. The rule, now suspended as it is appealed, would reduce Allegheny County's fine particulate pollution, which is among the most serious air quality problems in the region. Mostly coal-fired power plants and vehicle emissions produce these microscopic particulates that can easily lodge deep into the lungs. They are linked to a slew of health problems such as asthma, bronchitis, heart attack, strokes and increased risk of premature death. The new cross-state pollution rule, according to the EPA, would avoid 13,000 to 34,000 premature deaths.

POCONO RECORD

From Early Bird Editorial: Reduce gas escapes at well sites Natural gas is widely touted as a clean alternative to coal and other fossil fuels. But recent scientific research shows that may not be the case. Evidence that the drilling process itself releases quantities of dangerous methane gas into the atmosphere should prompt a closer look at the supposed advantages of natural gas' role in the energy supply. Cornell University researcher Robert Howarth has found that methane leakage at well sites, along older pipelines and at other points actually gives natural gas a worse "carbon footprint" than coal. His work found that during the gas extraction process, as much as 8 percent of methane escapes into the atmosphere. Scientists say methane is a worse greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide. That's a big problem because federal energy officials predict that natural gas from shale will comprise nearly half of all domestic gas production by 2035. That risk comes on top of the risks to surface and groundwater from the controversial hydraulic fracturing technique that drillers use to obtain the gas. Opponents to "fracking" worry that the chemicals used in the millions of gallons of water they deploy to fracture rock and release the gas pose undue threats to drinking water. There have been numerous instances of fracking-related water pollution in Pennsylvania, much of which is underlain by the gas-rich Marcellus Shale, and elsewhere. The charge of atmospheric pollution

has other Cornell scientists challenging the validity of Howarth's data. They also point out that natural gas burns cleaner than coal, without producing unwanted byproducts like sulfur, mercury, ash and particulates. Natural gas also yields twice the energy per unit of weight. Both sides of the atmospheric debate offer persuasive arguments. What's important about Howarth's claims, though, is that possibly improved gas-capture techniques at well sites could reduce the accidental release of methane. Well drilling continues at a rapid pace in Pennsylvania, including in neighboring counties that have Marcellus Shale, so it's important that drillers adopt the best possible practices during the well installation period. Dealing with hundreds of miles of aging pipelines is another matter; repairing or replacing them in many cases is likely to be deemed
cost-prohibitive.

Letter: Gas drilling has many still-unknown costs Editor, the Record:Upon reading about and hearing of the "earthquakes" being fathered by the "fracking" systems used by the gas companies, along with water pollution, road damage, etc., I took it as another reason to protest the lack of taxing of the industry. As a homeowner, I called my insurance company to question about potential cracks in the foundation of my home should they occur during or by these "manmade" earthquakes. I found I would have to acquire "earthquake insurance," a separate policy to be covered against any damage caused by these quakes at my expense by an industry that is lauded by our governor. Also on my mind is the fact that there hasn't been, to my knowledge, any input by the water companies with reference to the pollution of the aquifers by methane. There's also the issue of the chemicals of the brine used in the fracking process and contaminating water supplies, and the question about possible earthquakes associated with the reinjection of the waste water in this delicate state with all its old coal mines.

Letter: Shale drilling exploits land before our eye
Editor, the Record: I recently watched a movie in which a mineral baron was using a hydraulic technique to literally wash away entire mountainsides in search of gold. Residents were horrified but helpless because the baron had great power due to his wealth. His comment was, "We better get as much done before they catch up to us." Marcellus shale, anyone?

TOWANDA DAILY REVIEW

From Early Bird Commentary: Capitol Matters: Impact fee has no impact at this time HARRISBURG - The private negotiations in recent weeks among Gov. Tom Corbett and House and Senate Republican leaders to reconcile different Marcellus Shale impact fee bills have yielded little clarity except for the realization that informal deadlines for agreement continue to slip by. Like white puffs of smoke from a papal chimney, Mr. Corbett and a bloc of nine GOP senators from districts outside Northeast Pennsylvania have now circulated letters that point to local zoning control over gas drilling activities as a key stumbling block to an agreement at this point. Both bills approved by the House and Senate would make the state attorney general the referee in disputes between drillers and local officials over zoning ordinances. If the attorney general ruled against the municipality and the officials reaffirmed their ordinance, it would not receive any impact fee revenue under the bills. The issue involves an industry looking for consistent treatment of its drilling operations across Pennsylvania and environmental groups and a number of local officials concerned that this one industry will undermine land use plans developed with participation from local residents. Two weeks ago, the nine GOP senators wrote a letter to their leadership saying the bills as written go too far in imposing one standard for regulating drilling on municipalities. "We want to express our opposition to language that removes local municipality's ability to regulate and control all land use in their area," the senators wrote. "We do support the ACRE concept in allowing the Attorney General or other entity's review to provide for the reasonable development of oil and gas. However, we feel the language included in the current version of the bills goes far beyond that concept and actually works more like a model ordinance by specifically spelling out permitted uses." In a response, Mr. Corbett sent a letter to all lawmakers saying it's paramount that the final bill provide uniform standards for drillers.

ALTOONA MIRROR

From Early Bird Outdoor groups urge Corbett to uphold moratorium on state forest gas leases Pennsylvania's

20 state forests encompass more than 2.2 million acres, giving residents year-round access for pursuits such as hiking, snowmobiling, boating, hunting and fishing. But with a budget shortfall looming in Harrisburg and the Marcellus Shale industry expanding in the region, sportsmen say they are worried. Their concern: balancing the books at the expense of shrinking state forest areas. In a letter addressed to Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett ahead of Tuesday's state budget address, advocates from organizations including Trout Unlimited, National Wildlife Federation, Pennsylvania Forest Coalition and United Bowhunters of Pennsylvania are asking him to honor the moratorium then-Gov. Ed Rendell placed on new drilling operations in October 2010. Citing studies from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the groups argue any additional land leased for oil and gas development could have a significant impact on the "wild character and ecological integrity of the state's forest system." About 700,000 acres of state forests - almost one-third of the state forest land - is already leased for gas extraction by DCNR. Some residents and sportsmen are saying enough is enough.

HARRISBURGH PATRIOT NEWS

From Early Bird Cabot admits its *Dimock* water arsenic claim was a mistake The arsenic Cabot Oil & Gas recently said was not in the water in Dimock wasn't even arsenic. It's the Abbott and Costello "Who's On First?" routine, Marcellus style. Cabot drilled wells in Dimock. Local residents' well water suddenly began to spit and fizzle with natural gas. Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection fined Cabot and made the company make arrangements for paying for water treatment systems at the homes. Some residents refused, choosing instead to sue Cabot. They said their wells were also contaminated with chemicals used in drilling. Cabot said that wasn't so. DEP agreed. Lots of tests were done. An independent study by researchers at Duke University found gas but no chemicals. The residents did their own tests, and took their concerns to the federal Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA agreed with DEP. Then it didn't. The EPA announced it would do its own testing and it would arrange for emergency water for four homes. It said it was doing that because some of the old test results concerned them. One test indicated a high level of arsenic. Cabot said the arsenic reading didn't come from the Dimock water, but rather from the Montrose public water system in water delivered to Dimock residents. Pennsylvania American Water, which owns the Montrose public water system, said that was bunk. Their water doesn't contain any arsenic, they said. Cabot stood by its claim. Then it didn't. On Friday, Cabot announced, "Our review found a transcription error revealing that the values for arsenic and barium were transposed in the report. There was no arsenic found in this sample from the Montrose public water supply. We apologize for this error."

From Early Bird Commentary: Public health impacts of Marcellus Shale drilling still unknown Uncertainty prompts me to write that as a doctor I do not know what to tell Pennsylvania patients when they ask me if hydraulic fracturing — fracking — in their neighborhood or region might affect their health. I've seen anecdotal stories in the media. I've read as much as I could find about how the hydraulic fracturing process works. But I'm still uncertain because we lack data and research on the matter. My colleagues in the Marcellus Shale regions tell me that they are getting questions from patients every day, such as "I've had well water for many years — should I have it tested now that there's a gas well nearby?" and "I've had this rash off and on for a while; could it be related to the gas well they just finished a mile or so up my road?" or "A gas well was just finished near our house; my children play nearby and even though they're not sick right now, how will I know if they get sick from it — even years from now?" We have no definitive answers to these questions because we lack data. These physicians also are concerned about other rapid changes within their rural communities that could potentially impact health, such as increases in truck traffic, industrial accidents and overloads of local hospitals and health facilities. The basic question for physicians is not which side to pick for or against fracking, but rather to ask are we doing a good enough job being watchdogs for public health in these regions? As physicians, we also are scientists. We highly value evidence-based research as the basic tool we need to better assess and treat our patients and to be better advocates for protecting the community's health. Regardless of the environmental controversy, and regardless of how slowly or how quickly this new industry develops, we recognize that there is a need to conduct epidemiological studies and to educate ourselves and the public about the best ways to keep our communities healthy. Nothing frustrates me more than having my medical expertise hand-cuffed by lack of research. I support the elected leaders in Harrisburg seeking money to collect health data and conduct unbiased, comprehensive studies of the health of communities within our

Marcellus Shale regions and to help educate patients about their health.

From Early Bird Commentary: Marcellus Shale gas industry supports fair, uniform policies There is much debate surrounding House Bill 1950, the Marcellus Shale legislation that is working its way through the General Assembly. HB 1950 is not an industry giveaway, nor is it lax on environmental standards. The legislation increases setbacks from buildings, streams and waterways. It limits drilling in floodplains, protects water supplies, increases bonding requirements and enhances the Department of Environmental Protection's enforcement powers. The Associated Petroleum Industries of Pennsylvania did not support every aspect of earlier versions of HB 1950 and the proverbial jury is still out until we see a final product emerge from the conference committee. What is clear, however, is that the legislation establishes strict compliance standards for well-site selection, construction and production through a comprehensive regulatory and permitting process. Regulations are only one factor a business takes into account when making investment decisions. The decision on whether to move operations from one state to another is based on the competitiveness of one investment versus another.

From Early Bird Pennsylvania Department of Health expects to confirm if more sickened by raw milk from the Family Cow farm The Pennsylvania Department of Health expects to confirm Monday whether more people have been sickened by contaminated raw milk from a Shippensburg-area farm, the Family Cow. The department reported Friday that he number of people sickened after drinking raw milk from the Family Cow had increased to 38.Authorities were still waiting for test results Friday that would conclusively link the outbreak of campylobacter jejuni to the raw milk produced at the farm. On Friday, Edwin and Dawn Shank, owners of Your Family Cow, released a heartfelt letter of apology to their customers. "So now the wondering, suspense and uncertainty is over for our family and farm crew and is replaced by humiliation and embarrassment," Edwin Shank said in the letter. "Dawn and I have shed a lot of tears over this. Now we know for sure what the growing list of emails and calls from you were pointing to. It was us. We are very sorry." Shank said the milk was bottled on Jan, 16 and carried a best by date of Jan. 31. Shank said he would provide customers with a full refund. He said he had received emails from people who had fallen ill from the raw milk. "Thank you so much for honoring our family that way," he wrote. "It shows a trust between us that has always been our goal. It was even more meaningful when we could talk to you directly by phone. As much as Dawn and I dreaded to see those emails and make those calls, it never failed to bring healing to our souls and bring strength to our hearts to hear the forgiveness in your voices and emails. We hope the emotional healing was mutual. We are so glad that we were able to personally express our sympathy and apologies." The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene this week confirmed campylobacter jejuni in two unopened raw milk samples purchased from the Franklin County farm.

STATE COLLEGE CENTRE DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Editorial: Corbett should impose drilling tax The annual taffy pull that is the state budget-making process kicks off Tuesday when Gov. Tom Corbett presents his proposal for fiscal 2012-13. Expect an austere spending plan from the governor, whose presentation to a joint session of the General Assembly serves as the template for the give-and-take among legislative leaders, the governor's office and powerful lobbyists between now and the end of the fiscal year at midnight on June 30. We would be stunned — albeit pleasantly surprised — if Corbett's proposed budget includes any serious and realistic proposals to increase revenues. A little over a year into his first term, the governor has steadfastly stood by his Grover Norquist no-tax-increase pledge, and interpreted it to mean not making any individual or any entity contribute one dime more in any way, fashion or form. We understand the governor's concern that this is not the time for a tax increase for a beleaguered middle class still treading water from the 2008 recession and its snail-like recovery. But there are two very plausible sources of new revenue that don't involve increasing the personal income or sales taxes — the two levies that most directly affect the average Pennsylvanian. One is to impose an extraction tax on natural gas drillers in the booming Marcellus Shale, and use at least a portion of that revenue toward the state's general fund. The other is to close the "Delaware Loophole'' that allows corporations— Toys R Us, Home Depot and Wal-Mart among them — to avoid paying taxes on profits earned in Pennsylvania.

SCRANTON TIMES-TRIBUNE

From Early Bird Cabot: Recording error caused false arsenic result A high arsenic reading that a natural gas driller mistakenly attributed to the Montrose public water supply this week was in fact caused by a recording error when handwritten field notes were typed into the driller's database, Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. said Friday. The sample, which actually contained none of the chemical, was taken from water drawn from Pennsylvania American Water's Lake Montrose treatment plant and trucked to Dimock Twp. in August 2010 as a replacement for well water found to have been tainted with methane from drilling operations. Test results that found no arsenic in the water were recorded properly by a Cabot contractor in the field, spokesman George Stark said Friday. But somehow the numbers for the arsenic and barium readings were switched when the data was uploaded to a computer. The company apologized for the error. Pennsylvania American Water asked for a review of the test data after Cabot released a statement Tuesday alleging arsenic nearly four times the federal drinking water limit originated from the utility's Montrose system - a claim the utility rebutted with six years of tests showing no evidence of arsenic in the public water. "We are glad that Cabot reviewed their records, identified the error, and clarified this information," spokeswoman Susan Turcmanovich said. "However, we feel they should have done a more thorough analysis of the information prior to issuing such a serious allegation." Cabot made the claim as it criticized federal regulators' interpretation of the same data. The Environmental Protection Agency attributed the sample to a Dimock water well during its review of past water tests and the high arsenic level prompted the agency to provide replacement water to the home. The EPA is delivering water to four homes and testing as many as 66 as it investigates potential contamination from gas drilling in a 9-square-mile area of Dimock.

From Early Bird Landfill proposes to mill Marcellus waste Keystone Sanitary Landfill plans to process rock waste from natural gas drilling at its property in Throop and Dunmore in a switch from its years-old practice of accepting already processed waste from the region's Marcellus Shale well sites. The first-of-its-kind facility in the state, proposed in a permit application to the Department of Environmental Protection in December, has raised concerns in Throop, where community leaders oppose Keystone taking the waste at all. "Bad enough bringing the stuff here," Throop council President Thomas Lukasewicz said, "but treating it here is almost like adding insult to injury." Keystone proposes to import the rock waste, called cuttings, in "unprocessed or unsolidified form," then mix it in a custom-designed mill with lime-based material to solidify it for disposal or as a replacement for soil to cover the working face of the landfill at the end of each day. The landfill has been accepting cuttings for years from Marcellus Shale drillers who mix it with lime or sawdust at their well sites. The cuttings are displaced as the drillers bore to and through the gas-bearing rock about a mile underground. Keystone accepts 600 tons of cuttings daily, the landfill said last spring in an application to increase its total daily waste capacity, which is pending. It wants to increase its daily intake of cuttings to at least 1,000 tons - the processing capacity of the mill.

Water utility rebuts Cabot arsenic claims (Saturday) Pennsylvania American Water released six years of test results showing no evidence of arsenic at its Montrose public water supply on Thursday after a natural gas driller said this week that a Dimock Twp. water sample showing high levels of the chemical originated from the Montrose system. Annual samples taken at the Lake Montrose treatment plant between Feb. 6, 2006, and June 1, 2011, all show no detection of arsenic, which is known to cause cancer in humans. The water utility brought attention to the clean results Thursday to counter a claim by Cabot Oil and Gas Corp. this week that a water sample cited by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in its investigation of gas drilling's impact on water supplies was trucked to Dimock from Montrose. Cabot raised the issue to criticize the foundation of the EPA's ongoing investigation in Dimock. The federal agency is conducting widespread water sampling and delivering replacement water to four homes as it tries to determine the source of several constituents of concern in Dimock well water, including arsenic, manganese, barium, glycols, sodium, phenol and the manufactured chemical commonly called DEHP. The contested sample contained arsenic at 37 micrograms per liter, or nearly four times the federal drinking water limit. Cabot said the EPA selectively cited or misinterpreted water quality data to reach a "predetermined" conclusion to justify its investigation - including mistaking replacement water delivered to backyard tanks for native Dimock well water. Pennsylvania American Water is now probing the source of Cabot's claims.|

WGAL-TV LANCASTER

From Early Bird Developing Story: Details Of Natural Gas Drilling Fee Deal Emerge at State Capitol
HARRISBURG, Pa. -- Legislative staffers at the State Capitol in Harrisburg are working through the weekend, hammering out final details of what's being described by those close to negotiations as an agreement on legislation to enact an impact fee on gas drilling companies tapping Pennsylvania's natural gas deposits."The deal would break a nearly two-year log jam on one of the state's most controversial issues to be considered by the General Assembly," News 8 Political Analyst Dr. G Terry Madonna said.The apparent deal comes with just days to spare before Governor Tom Corbett delivers his second budget address Tuesday, which is expected to spend nearly the same amount as this year's $27 billion spending plan. A vote in conference committee on the impact fee legisaltion could come as early as Tuesday morning. Madonna says that would allow Corbett to tout the progress in his speech before the General Assembly."A Marcellus Shale deal has been one of the most important and talked about items on Governor Corbett's to-do list," Madonna said.An outline of the proposed impact fee structure and other details sent to rank-and-file lawmakers this weekend obtained by News 8 explains counties would be able to decide whether to enact a fee. Counties that do not choose to enact a drilling fee would not share in the revenues. If a county declines, but more than half of municipalites in that county support a fee, the municipalities can overrule the county decision. The impact fee is expected to raise between $190,000 to $355,000 per well as it's collected over a period of 15 years. The size of the per-well fee fluctuates based on the price of natural gas. The money raised is split 60 percent to local governments impacted by natural gas activity for things like road repairs. The remaining 40 percent is reserved for state-wide initiaitives like environmental protections.The Pennsylvania Public Utility commission would have the authority to review local zoning regulations to determine whether they are reasonable based on the guidelines outlined in the bill. The bill also increases the distance wells must be set back from occupied structures or water wells to 1,000 feet, which is not as much as many Democrats has sought. It also creates an incentive program for buying or converting fleet vehicles to natural gas

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

From Early Bird Generaous side of gas - Compainies involved in community Central Pennsylvania has seen a lot of changes the last few years due to the development of Marcellus Shale. The symbolic over-sized white pickup trucks and water-hauling tankers can be seen throughout our region, hotels and restaurants are often full, retail sales have increased, and new companies seem to appear every day. This thriving industry has brought countless new businesses and jobs to our community and along with that has come a wave of generosity and compassion. Lycoming County United Way (LCUW) has seen an increase in volunteerism as well as campaign participation through gas and gas-related companies. "We have a 'Natural Resources' division of campaign now specifically for the Marcellus and related businesses, run by volunteers who work in the industry," explained Kate Pacacha of LCUW. "This nine-person team is led by Marty Muggleton, of Larson Design Group. It is a group of very bright, talented and kindhearted people who sincerely want to help our neighbors." Kendall Simon is one of those volunteers. "Stallion has made a donation to United Way and designated the gift to assist the homeless in our community. Due to the increasing population in Williamsport and the major flood last fall, we are well aware of the ever- increasing need for affordable housing for all Lycoming County residents," said Simon, office manager at Stallion Oilfield Services and an active community volunteer. "Part of the product line for Stallion is providing homes for employees living on the wellsite locations and we would like our emphasis on accommodations to resound in our community donation as well." Simon and her husband, Cameron, moved to Williamsport four years ago with Stallion after living in Texas, Alaska, and Wyoming.

JOHNSTOWN TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT

From Early Bird Carrolltown divides Ohio, Susquehanna systems— Water from Cambria County affects the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and also the Susquehanna River system that runs into the Chesapeake Bay. Carrolltown is the line of demarcation and waters flowing east are governed by the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) while those to the west are monitored by the Ohio River Basin Alliance (ORBA). Both agencies have similar goals, to protect the quantity and the integrity of the water. But each goes about reaching

those goals through different methods. The SRBC has full regulatory powers controlling how much and when water is removed from the basin. The top portion of Cambria County is in the West Branch Susquehanna subbasin. It is sandwiched between the Chemung Subbasin, Upper Susquehanna and Middle Susquehanna subbasins to the north and the Juniata and Lower Susquehanna subbasins to the south. "We have regulatory responsibilities the Ohio River Basin Alliance does not have," said Susan Obleski, SRBC communications director. "We got our authority through our compact back in 1970." The key is to make sure there is plenty of water flowing through the river basin, something that is becoming more of a challenge with the boom in Marcellus Shale natural-gas drilling as far west in the Susquehanna system as northern Cambria County and also to counties in northeastern Pennsylvania. The SRBC has been in the news in recent years because it must give approval before water can be pulled from the Susquehanna's streams and headwaters for Marcellus drilling. Horizontal drilling and vertical fracking of the Marcellus Shale bed can use as much as 5 million gallons of water per well and much of that water is pulled from local streams that help feed the Susquehanna River Basin.

Elusive cleanup project: Rosebud awaiting permits to begin treating Topper Run dischargeST. MICHAEL — The Topper Run acid-mine discharge – said to be the single largest contributor to pollution in the Little Conemaugh River – continues to remain elusive to cleanup. The subject of a pilot sulfate and metal extraction project in 2007, the discharge, also known as the St. Michael site, continues to spew pollution into the river north of Johnstown, despite a company eager to step in and act. John Garcia, director of government affairs for Rosebud Mining, said his company "has been in the process of trying to get a permit for the past several years." The general consensus is that the best way to slow the Topper Run discharge is to allow construction of a treatment plant coupled with additional mining in the area, said Robb Piper, head of the Cambria County Conservation District. The state Department of Environmental Protection four months ago issued Rosebud an amendment to its mining permit to allow construction of the treatment plant to begin, DEP spokesman John Poister said.

Study examines Cresson-area mine sites
Decades of deep and surface coal mining have left scars on much of Cambria County.

Clearfield Creek Watershed group lands $528G grant
A group striving to rejuvenate a major Mainline watershed received $528,616 in DEP cleanup funds Friday.

Casey bill to urge increased use of natural gas (Friday) — A new bill will be introduced in the near future by U.S. Sen. Bob Casey in hopes of encouraging increased use of natural gas and other alternate fuels....Casey said he will introduce the legislation in "days not months," then it will start through the committee process. "With so much natural gas at our disposal, this would give Pennsylvanians a leg up, but it will benefit the whole nation," he said.

AMBLER GAZETTE

From Early Bird Whitpain approves contribution to West Ambler flooding study The Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors is "putting its money where its mouth is" to follow through on its commitment to address flooding concerns in West Ambler. The board approved an agreement with Temple University's Center for Sustainable Communities at its Jan. 31 meeting. The agreement commits the township for up to $25,000 toward the center's Rose Valley Creek Flood Hazard Mapping and Mitigation Study. "This step, while not the first step in the township's plan of action for West Ambler, is the first financial commitment," board Vice Chairman Fred Conner said, later remarking, "We're putting our money where our mouth is, so to speak." The West Ambler section of the township has historically been impacted by flooding, most recently during Tropical Storm Lee in September 2011, which caused one building to collapse and forced residents to evacuate as flood waters rose. The neighborhood is located at the bottom of the drainage area for the Rose Valley Creek, causing storm water from the local area to funnel into West Ambler during weather events. Township officials have previously said the drainage infrastructure in West Ambler is too narrow to handle the amount of water received during heavy rain events. Conner said with the agreement, the township was making a contribution to Temple's ongoing study that would determine where the flood plain is in West Ambler and how to best address flooding in the township. "That's the most pressing problem

in West Ambler," he said.

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)

From Early Bird Pennsylvania landowners fight eminent domain in Marcellus Gas natural gas field When federal regulators approved a 39-mile natural gas pipeline through northern Pennsylvania's pristine Endless Mountains, they cited the operator's assurances that it would make sparing use of eminent domain as it negotiated with more than 150 property owners along the pipeline's route. Yet a few days after winning approval for its $250 million MARC 1 pipeline in the heart of the giant Marcellus Shale gas field, the company began condemnation proceedings against nearly half of the landowners — undercutting part of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's approval rationale and angering landowners. Some of the landowners are now fighting the company in court, complaining that Central New York Oil and Gas Company LLC steamrolled them by refusing to negotiate in good faith on monetary compensation and the pipeline's location. Their attorneys say CNYOG has skirted Pennsylvania's eminent domain rules. The company, a subsidiary of Inergy LP of Kansas City, Mo., insists it's trying to reach a "fair settlement" with all property owners and wants to be a good neighbor. The dispute could foreshadow eminent domain battles to come as more pipelines are approved and built to carry shale gas to market in states like Pennsylvania, New York and Ohio. The company promotes the MARC 1 pipeline as key infrastructure in developing the Marcellus Shale, a rock formation underneath Pennsylvania and surrounding states that experts believe holds the nation's largest reservoir of gas.

From Early Bird Top GOP lawmakers seek vote on Pa. gas-drilling bill framework this week HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — A final framework is at hand on sweeping legislation to impose an impact fee and update safety regulations on Pennsylvania's booming natural gas industry, top Republican state lawmakers say. Republicans notified rank-and-file lawmakers Saturday night that they hope to hold votes this week on a framework reached by negotiators from the House, Senate and Gov. Tom Corbett's office during closed-door negotiations over the past six weeks. "These discussions have progressed rapidly over the course of the last two weeks," House Speaker Sam Smith and House Majority Leader Mike Turzai said in a letter to lawmakers. "In fact, staff have been working throughout the weekend and will be working (Sunday) in order to have a proposal that we can consider as early as this week."Pennsylvania is the only major gas-producing state that doesn't tax natural gas production, and Democrats have not been part of the negotiations after trying unsuccessfully for three years to win enough Republican votes to impose a severance tax on the industry. Because Corbett opposes a tax on the industry, Republicans, who control the Legislature, have instead pursued an "impact fee" that he views as being fundamentally different than a tax. But House and Senate Republicans have clashed over the size of the fee, while Democrats and environmental groups view their proposals as too low and members of the industry have been split over paying any levy.

Consol Energy plans to expand longwall minesWIND RIDGE — Consol Energy Inc. plans to expand longwall mining at its Bailey Mine in southwestern Pennsylvania, one of the two highest producing underground coal mines in the nation. The Bailey Mine, referred to as BMS Mine by Consol, already has two longwall mining machines in operation. It's part of the Bailey-Enlow Fork mining complex along the border between Greene and Washington counties. The Enlow Fork mine also uses two longwall machines. A report by the Observer-Reporter of Washington says Consol plans to add a third longwall machine at the Bailey Mine so it will produce about 5 million tons of coal annually by 2014. The mine has about 300 workers but will add about 375 more as part of the expansion.

NEWSWORKS.ORG

Protesters push EPA on its order to Pa. coal-burning plantProtesters arrived on the doorstep of the Environmental Protection Agency's regional office in Philadelphia Thursday. But they were there to support the agency, in a way. Neighbors of a Pennsylvania coal power plant in Upper Mount Bethel Township on the Delaware River want the agency to make the coal-power facility clean up its act.The neighbors, who hail from New Jersey, have been irritated by emissions from the smokestacks blowing across the state border.Greg Gorman, a member of the

delegation, said there's a great fishing spot just under a mile from the plant on the New Jersey side, as the fish swims. "The first time I went [to] the Pequest [River] -- that's one of the best trout streams in New Jersey -- looking forward to it, I was wondering why my eyes were watering," he said. "It wasn't because I was sad, that's for sure."

CHESTER DAILY LOCAL NEWS

West Vincent supervisor's farm investigated for manure storage

WEST VINCENT — Township Supervisor Kenneth I. Miller Jr.'s farm was recently the subject of a Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection investigation.According to the DEP report, the investigation took place in August and focused on improper manure storage, which can be a potential source of pollution and a violation of the state's Clean Streams Law. "In the scheme of things, this was not a very serious violation," said DEP representative Deborah Fries. "It was a violation but it was corrected quickly and we have not been involved with this farm prior to July 2011." The Pennsylvania DEP requires conservation and manure management plans for the storage of manure on a property.

GANT DAILY

DEP Awards 73 Grants to Protect, Improve Watersheds in 36 CountiesHARRISBURG – The Department of Environmental Protection announced today that it will invest in 73 watershed protection projects intended to improve watersheds, stormwater runoff, acid mine drainage and educational programs, among other environmental efforts. This year, the Growing Greener program, which is funded by the Environmental Stewardship Fund, will award $9.72 million for 57 projects around the state. An additional project, funded by the Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Grant, will cost$72,912. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program, which was created through the federal Clean Water Act to help reduce water pollution from nonpoint sources, is funding 15 additional projects, which would total $3.12 million. "We are delighted to provide support to local communities and watershed groups to fund projects that enhance and protectPennsylvania's water quality," DEP Secretary Mike Krancer said. "That includes projects that address abandoned mine drainage, stream bank restoration, stormwater reductions and agricultural runoff."

Pennsylvania lawmakers reach compromise on natural gas drilling billHarrisburg, PA, United States (AHN) – Lawmakers in Pennsylvania have reached an agreement on a bill charging companies an "impact fee" for drilling natural gas in the Marcellus Shale, legislation that is expected to be part of Gov. Tom Corbett's budget address on Tuesday.Compromise legislation reconciling differences between House Bill 1950 and Senate Bill 1100 is said to have been drafted over the weekend by top legislative aides.Corbett, a Republican at the end of his first year in office, and the GOP-controlled legislature have not released details on the tentative measure. The *Post-Gazette* reports that the impact fee would be between $190,000 and $355,000 per drilling well depending on the price of natural gas.Debate on the legislation centers on whether to tax energy producers for operations in the Marcellus Shale, a massive land formation rich in natural gas reserves that encompasses parts of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio. Corbett is against imposing a severance tax for fear of scaring away natural gas companies, which have created 72,000 jobs in the state since 2007.

PENN NEWS

RecycleMania 2012 Begins at *Penn*

RecycleMania kicks off this week with tabling events each day across campus. PHILADELPHIA –- As part of its Year of Games, the University of Pennsylvania is among the 600-plus colleges and universities across the United States and Canada competing during the next eight weeks in RecycleMania 2012. This competition is designed to see which schools will minimize their waste stream most significantly and achieve the greatest recycling rate. As Penn gears up its recycling efforts for the tournament, it has set a goal of 32 percent – three percentage points higher than currently -- for recycling glass, plastic, metal, paper and cardboard. The challenge is to reduce, reuse and recycle and compete against peer schools.

ESSENTIAL PUBLIC RADIO

Senator Wozniak: "*Emissions* Test A Waste of Consumers' Money"A Democratic state lawmaker wants the federal government to reconsider the requirement for vehicle emissions inspections in Pennsylvania. State Senator John Wozniak (D-Cambria, Somerset Counties) is sponsoring a resolution calling on Congress to reevaluate the enhanced emissions inspection program. "Today's cars are cleaner and annual emission testing isn't as effective," Wozniak said. "Virtually all cars pass the test and it's time to reevaluate whether it's just a waste of money for consumers."

CNN

Marcellus Shale Reality Tour Part 3 EPA comes to *Dimock*

CNN PRODUCER NOTE ScottCannon shares with us this video from Dimock, Pennsylvania. He shot the video on January 31. The video includes an interview with Susan Roos, a resident of Dimock who claims her water supply has been contaminated by gas extraction practices. This video package also includes an interview with EPA spokesperson Trish Taylor, who is part of a team investigating claims in the area. ScottCannon says: 'Call me crazy, but this information is needed to preserve our environment, clear water, and clean air for future generations, as promised in our state constitution. For me, it's a moral obligation. Our mission is to educate the public on the negative effects of gas drilling.' He is on the executive board of the Gas Drilling Awareness Coalition, Inc. of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. This is an interview with a resident of Dimock who's water was contaminated by Cabot Oil and Gas, as well as an Trhish Taylor, EPA spokesperon overseeing water testing in the area.

PR NEWSWIRE

Lancaster, PA: The Region to Watch in Terms of Reducing Pollution from Runoff

WASHINGTON, Feb. 2, 2012 -- /PRNewswire/ -- Over the last two years, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has invested $1.1 million in projects around Lancaster County that take a comprehensive approach to dealing with issues related to urban/suburban runoff. Three innovative projects in the area tackle different aspects of the stormwater runoff issue – on-the-ground infrastructure, planning and assessment and community engagement – and, when combined, represent a large-scale, holistic approach that can change the status quo on this problem. **The Issue:** During storm events, rain either filters into the ground or runs off. In areas of development – roads, parking lots, rooftops, etc. – rain cannot be absorbed into the ground so it flows off in sheets, picking up nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment, bacteria, metals and chemical contaminants as it goes. Velocity is also a factor since the faster runoff moves, the more damage it can cause by scraping away stream banks and filling the waterways with sediment. In the end, the polluted stormwater flows directly into local streams or storm drains and is carried into local waters and eventually into the Chesapeake Bay.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WASHINGTON POST

From Early Bird With deep concerns over fracking, a Va. county says no to more gas drilling In BERGTON, Va. — Carrizo Oil and Gas had every reason to believe this rustic town in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains was an ideal place to build Virginia's first well to explore for natural gas in the state's Marcellus Shale. Carrizo liked Bergton's location — eight miles from the West Virginia border, not far from where other operations are extracting gas. Carrizo bet that gas was locked in the shale under the town and put up tens of thousands of dollars for landowner leases as collateral. All it needed to start the job was a special land-use permit from the four Republicans and one Democrat on Rockingham County's Board of Supervisors. Carrizo didn't even come close. Concerned about controversial drilling methods, the supervisors never voted on the permit, and recently the company shelved its application following a two-year pursuit, ending its immediate hopes of exploring for gas. The rejection in Rockingham County was yet another hard knock against companies trying to extract natural gas from

the Marcellus Shale closest to Washington. Negative publicity about water contamination at drilling sites in the Chesapeake Bay region and out west in Texas, Wyoming and Oklahoma is raising concern even among those who support gas exploration. Virginia has 7,700 natural gas wells in operation, but none extracts gas from the rich Marcellus — a prehistoric shale formation that runs from Ohio to lower Virginia and entombs one of the most bountiful gas reserves in the world, according to the Energy Information Administration. No other company has approached Virginia since Carrizo abandoned its permit application.

From Early Bird O'Malley renews bid to curb sprawl by limiting septic systems Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley is again seeking to limit new septic systems in order to curb development sprawl, and it's all about the Chesapeake Bay. "A house on septic causes six to 10 times the amount of pollution to the bay as a house on public sewer," O'Malley (D) said last week in his State of the State address, telling lawmakers that his proposed measure would help the bay and safeguard the state's farmland. The restrictions in the governor's new proposal are less stringent than those he sought to push through last year. O'Malley wanted to prohibit "major subdivisions" of five or more houses built with septic systems. Surprised lawmakers did not applaud when O'Malley announced that proposal in his address one year ago. The new approach would allow such developments "to a limited degree" in rural areas where sewer service is not planned but that are not "dominated" by farmland or forestland, Richard Hall, Maryland's planning secretary, told state senators last week. Del. Maggie L. McIntosh (D-Baltimore), chairman of the House Environmental Matters Committee, said the new proposal has a chance. "It's a different bill. . . . It's one that has some hopes of passing," she said. McIntosh chaired a task force that O'Malley created to study the septic systems issue after the first bill was shelved. The new bill reflects many of the task force's recommendations. O'Malley's effort last year to restrict septic systems galvanized Republicans, rural lawmakers, farmers and developers, and the new proposal is likely to draw opposition from some of the same quarters.

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON GAZETTE

From Early Bird Coal conference ends with attacks on Obama CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Coal industry officials on Friday ended a three-day symposium in Charleston with a session repeating their harsh criticisms of the Obama administration's push to reduce power plant emissions and curb environmental damage from strip-mining. Industry boosters from Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania led a panel discussion titled, "Obama's No Jobs Zone," drawing applause and occasional cheers from West Virginia mining company representatives gathered at the Charleston Civic Center. Mining operators are furious over tougher U.S. Environmental Protection Agency permit reviews and water quality guidance they say have slowed new permit approvals to a trickle and stronger federal air quality rules that are forcing some utilities to migrate toward natural gas. "EPA continues to push costly regulations designed to eliminate coal usage," said Josie Gaskey, director of the Pennsylvania Coal Association. Coal officials also heard a presentation about an industry-funded project aimed at examining the science that's found serious environmental damage and potential public health problems associated with mountaintop removal mining. John Craynon of Virginia Tech University said the project, which includes researchers from nine regional educational institutions, is trying to see if there are "other interpretations" of studies like those by West Virginia University researcher Michael Hendryx. Over the last five years, Hendryx has co-authored 20 peer-reviewed papers examining mountaintop removal and community health. He's found that living near mountaintop removal mining is statistically linked to higher rates of illnesses, including birth defects and cancer. So far, coal companies including Alpha Natural Resources, Arch Coal and Patriot Coal have provided $15 million to fund the work over the next five years, but Craynon says that money does not taint the research. "By doing solid research, you can engage in the conversation," Craynon said. "It's funded by industry, but it's not designed to be an advocate for the industry. It's not the same as consulting work." Jason Bostic, a coal association lobbyist, praised the effort as "one of the most exciting projects I've seen" and said he felt "privileged to have been involved in the development of it."

From Early Bird Jay asks Obama for more natural gas support (Saturday) CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W.Va., wrote to President Obama earlier this week, asking him to continue the support of natural gas development that the president mentioned during his State of the Union address. Rockefeller asked the White House to promote the use of federal funds for workforce development in states that have natural gas reserves. Federal programs could help "get local workers the training they need to obtain good jobs working in the natural gas industry." Rockefeller also called for increased investments in fossil energy research, including clean coal technology. In his letter, Rockefeller wrote, "The safe and environmentally responsible development of our nation's shale resources presents a tremendous opportunity for our country. "In West Virginia, we already have started down this road with the development of the Marcellus Shale and recognize the additional potential of the Utica Shale in our region." Utica Shale reserves are concentrated in eastern Ohio. Development of these gas reserves, Rockefeller believes, will offer the entire region "significant benefits, including increased employment and economic activity and a broadened tax base at the local and state levels.

Cracker tax break could cost locality $300 million CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- A tax break that Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin rushed through the Legislature to try to lure a natural gas "cracker" plant to West Virginia could cost the community where such a facility locates $300 million in revenues for schools and other local government efforts, according to an analysis released Friday. The reduced property taxes allowed under the bill would save the developers of any cracker facility an average of $12 million per year over the next 25 years, according to a review by the West Virginia Center for Budget and Policy.

CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL

From Early Bird Natural gas alliance has more backers The Just Beneath the Surface Alliance, which began operating last June, said 11 organizations are now affiliated with it. The Independent Oil and Gas Association of West Virginia established the alliance to "serve as a forum for factual information about the vast natural gas energy resources found in West Virginia." The West Virginia Petroleum Council, a division of the American Petroleum Institute, joined the alliance in September. On Thursday the alliance said the following organizations also are now affiliated with it: The Polymer Alliance Zone of West Virginia, Independent Petroleum Association of America, Energy In Depth, Chemical Alliance Zone, Mountaineer Energy Forum, Charleston Regional Chamber of Commerce, West Virginia Roundtable and West Virginia Manufacturers Association. Also, the alliance announced it will host a "Community Day" from 4 to 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Alan Mollohan Training Center in Moundsville. Industry representatives will be on hand "to answer questions and provide accurate information about the natural gas industry," the alliance said.

From Early Bird Green energy conference set in Charleston There will be a "Shades of Green Conference" in Charleston on March 27 that will focus on helping businesses make choices that conserve resources and energy. The conference was announced Thursday by the Discover the Real West Virginia Foundation Inc., an organization Sen. Jay Rockefeller established in 1988. According to an email, conference attendees will "learn about how to use tax credits and finance 'green' initiatives, connect to a trained workforce, and market your commitment to sustainability for maximum impact." The email says there also will be industry-specific breakout sessions "to focus on challenges and opportunities tailored to your business." The conference will be hosted by the Discover the Real West Virginia Foundation, the Center for Economic Options and the Bridgemont Sustainability Institute and is sponsored by AT&T. For more information contact Sara Dearing at 304 345-0700 or email her at sdear...@drwvfoundation.org.

WHEELING INTELLIGENCER

From Early Bird Processor Facilities To Be Built CAMERON - As the latest example of the how quickly the Marcellus and Utica shale rush is burgeoning, MarkWest Energy will more than double the capacity of its Majorsville processing plant in eastern Marshall County by the end of next year. The Denver, Colo.-based company will also build totally new processing plants on the western side of the Ohio River in Monroe and Harrison counties, an investment that Ohio Gov. John Kasich said will total about $500 million. Although Kasich quoted the

$500 million figure for the Monroe and Harrison County investments during a JobsOhio board meeting Wednesday, a spokesman for MarkWest, who declined to give his name, said the company would not divulge the cost of the new plants. He also said the company is still working out the details for the exact locations for the Ohio facilities. The work in Ohio should create about 700 construction-related jobs and more than 40 full-time, long-term positions with MarkWest, company information notes. "We are very excited to announce significant midstream projects that are critical to the full development of the liquids-rich areas of the Marcellus Shale in southwest Pennsylvania and northern West Virginia and the Utica Shale in eastern Ohio," said Frank Semple, chairman, president and chief executive officer of MarkWest.

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING

From Early Bird Coal slurry debate February 4, 2012 · The Senate Economic Development Committee has approved legislation creating a tax break for companies that invest in new technologies to deal with coal slurry. There was heated debate. Several committee members questioned the need for the legislation. Putnam County Senator Mike Hall says a Federal tax break is already in place, but defenders like Logan County Senator Art Kirkendoll supported the move against opposition from Braxton County Senator Don Facemyer… "We lost 250 jobs yesterday. So I kind of in one sense of the word conservatively agree that people should pay for their own ticket. But when the public's involved and it's long term effects on rules and regulations regarding the industry that at some times struggle to even exist through some of the interpretations. Believe it or not it's going to be an expense," said Kirkendoll. "It seems like every time the coal industry wants to do something they want the taxpayers to pay for it. The only thing I'm saying is, if you folks think these coal companies aren't making money, you better start doing a little checking because they are. That's the old game. The scare tactics," responded Facemire.

From Early Bird Coal heritage public lecture series starts The Appalachian Studies program at Concord offers a Coal Heritage Public Lecture series every Spring. The latest series starts Monday night with a performance by a 20-year coal mine veteran from McDowell County. Miles underground in the hidden world of the coal miner," Fred Powers explains, "myself having worked down there 20 years I lived this." "I might have a story or two for them HA! brothers and sisters you better pack a lunch because I whole dag burned bucket full of them." Fred Powers worked the hoot owl shift at a mine in Keystone while he attended Bluefield Sate College and got his history degree. Powers says he wants to talk about his experiences underground to honor fallen miners. "Being underground and working I've seen the dangers these miners experience day in and day out," he said. "People give us kind of a bad image, but they're strong brave people. They carry-on a lot and people look at them as kind of being foolish but this carrying-on helps them in the face of tremendous danger at times, tremendous danger."

DELAWARE

NEWARK POST

Md. ag secretary uses Middletown as example of farmland loss from sprawl

ANNAPOLIS - Middletown, Del. ended up being cited as a poster child for the runaway loss of farmland in a discussion between Maryland's agricultural chief, legislators and the poultry industry.State Senate Minority Leader E.J. Pipkin, R-Upper Shore. was among those who spoke Friday with Maryland's top agriculture official about the war he says the governor is waging on rural property owners. Middletown is a few miles away from the Cecil County line and some of its prime farmland. While much of the Delaware farmland has been lost to residential and commercial development, Middletown was recently able to attract an expansion at Johnson Controls and a new Amazon.com distribution center.

REUTERS

PBF reports offline Delaware City compressor ES(Reuters) - PBF Energy reported sulfur dioxide emissions due to a compressor going offline at its 182,200 barrel-per-day (bpd) Delaware City, Delaware, refinery, according to a filing with state pollution regulators. The release has been stopped and lasted for about 10 minutes, the filing added.PBF purchased the refinery, which processes heavy crude oil, in 2010 from Valero Energy Corp.

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE SUN

From Early Bird Stink bug population is down, but scientists not sure if it will last The combined fury of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee may have drowned much of the region's stink bug population, but scientists are still hesitant to say that homeowners will see fewer of them when the weather warms. Scientists say something caused a substantial decline in the number of the bugs last fall before they hunkered down in the region's attics and closets. Perhaps it was due to natural predators or an unknown parasite. Just as likely, they say, it was the deluge that began just before Labor Day and lasted through September. "We suspect it was heavy rain because of the regional effect on them," said Tracy Leskey, research entomologist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "The population is substantially lower, but we don't know the reason definitely." From Aug. 31 through September, the Middle-Atlantic region received more than 16 inches of wind-driven rain, four times the average for the period. "That knocked bugs off trees and crops and it probably drowned a large number of them," said Jerry Burst, a pest management and vegetable specialist at the University of Maryland's Central Maryland Research and Education Center in Upper Marlboro. "That contributed to the decline."

Blog: Arundel takes aggressive stance on environmental violations
An Anne Arundel County waterfront landowner and a contractor accused of doing work without a permit have been hit with financial penalties and probation in the first two cases brought under the county's aggressive new environmental enforcement strategy. County officials and prosecutors say they will continue to go beyond traditional enforcement measures, using civil and criminal penalties to protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries from serious violations. "The stakes have gone up dramatically," said Joseph F. Devlin, one of the attorneys for Emanuel Krousaniotakis, the owner of waterfront property outside Annapolis. "The criminal option certainly adds a whole new element to enforcement." Traditional enforcement strategies include stop-work orders and requiring people to apply for permits after they have begun a project. Krousaniotakis, of Bowie, and Mixqui Construction Inc., also of Prince George's County, agreed to pay the county $10,125 for clearing the landowner's property along Ridout Creek without permits, county attorney Jonathan A. Hodgson said. The waterfront property falls within the 100-foot buffer known as the Chesapeake Bay's Critical Area, and disturbing the land comes under state and local regulation. The defendants were sentenced to probation before judgment, according to court records. Krousaniotakis received the sentence — which is not a conviction — in December on a charge of clearing a site in the environmentally sensitive strip of land along the creek. The contracting company received the sentence last month.

A downtown building not built (former Allied Signal site) ... For a city whose last Fortune 500 company was about to be acquired by an out-of-town corporation, there was not just consolation but actual excitement over one of the deal sweeteners: Chicago-based Exelon Corp. promised to build a new downtown office building for the merged company, the first such construction in Baltimore's central business district since 2004. "It's a world-class site without world-class access," Brodie said. Additionally, building atop what he calls "a big bathtub" — referring to the contained contamination — poses its own set of problems. "It's certainly physically possible," Brodie said, "but it comes at a high price." The site continues to be monitored by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Maryland Department of the Environment ... Like others, Russell Fish, the Philadelphia-based EPA project manager who oversees Harbor Point, said he learned of the proposed Exelon building only through news reports.

Fish said that, depending on the complexity of the development, it would take a month or two to review the plans for approval, although none had been submitted as of Friday..

SALISBURY DAILY TIMES

From Early Bird Canada geese do damage to farmers' crops SALISBURY -- Driving by area farms it's hard not to notice the thousands of Canada geese roaming the fields nibbling on whatever they can find. During colder winters the geese would only be able to graze the top of winter wheat and barley, but this year's mild temperatures and rain have led to the geese pulling up farmers' crops by the root, causing damage to crop yields and farmers' finances. "Generally it does not hurt the crop if conditions are right for them to graze it," said Tom Pinto, a Somerset County farmer who has been having issues with Canada geese this winter. "But, if their timing is such that there has been a freeze and it's just thawing when they are grazing, it's easy to uproot."

Environmental education tackledThis week more than 500 educators will convene in Ocean City for the largest state environmental education conference in the nation. They will stay in local hotels, eat and drink at local establishments, enjoy local nature and discuss the challenges, complexities and successes of environmental education.

FREDERICK NEWS POST

From Early Bird Farm Bureau convention focuses on water A gathering of 7,000 farmers at the 93rd annual American Farm Bureau Federation Meeting in Hawaii focused on water regulations that affect 11 states, including Maryland, Point of Rocks farmer Chuck Fry said. The national organization met Jan. 8 to 11 and discussed new laws from the federal government that could drive farmers out of business, Fry said. After the annual meeting, the American Farm Bureau Federation filed a lawsuit Monday against the Environmental Protection Agency, stating the federal agency is over-reaching its authority by imposing new regulations for the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The EPA's rules dictate how much nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment can be allowed into the bay and its tributaries from different areas and sources. The farm bureau's lawsuit alleges the EPA "goes far beyond traditional and lawful scope and authority." The EPA's regulations will affect economic activity in the watershed with potentially devastating impacts for agriculture within the watershed, the federation said. Approximately 5,500 Maryland farmers are required to follow nutrient management plans on their farms and submit annual reports describing how they used nutrients in the previous calendar year, according to the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

EASTON STAR DEMOCRAT

From Early Bird Shore farmers' shared burdens ANNAPOLIS State Senate Minority Leader E.J. Pipkin spoke Friday with Maryland's top agriculture official about the war he says the governor is waging on rural property owners. The General Assembly delegation from Maryland's Eastern Shore met with state Department of Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance and officials from Delmarva Poultry Industry Inc. Much of the discussions were on a series of initiatives undertaken by Gov. Martin O'Malley's administration including a pollution diet for the Chesapeake Bay, a new growth policy and proposed limitations on the use of new septic systems. To Pipkin, those three initiatives amount to an attack on farmers' property rights, while the agriculture community frequently has been willing to come to the table to work on improving its environmental stewardship efforts. "The challenge I think is from our perspective or at least I'll speak for myself only is that you're the advocate for the property rights issue for the farmers," Pipkin told Hane. Regarding Pipkin's comments, Hance, a western shore grain farmer, said there is a physical impact on limiting development, and tough decisions need to be made for the long-term good of the state. He said 275,000 acres of farmland in Maryland are expected to be lost to development in the next 25 years. Hance used Middletown, Del., as an example of what could happen if farmland is not preserved. He said over the past decade, most of the farms around the small town have been turned into large developments. "I struggle with myself about the financial opportunity that's taken away by down-zoning or restrictions on septics out in the rural areas, and the future of agriculture," Hance said.

CUMBERLAND TIMES-NEWS

From Early Bird Coalition of rural counties preps for fight CUMBERLAND — A newly-formed coalition of rural Maryland counties is already having a powerful impact and now plans to fight PlanMaryland and other fee and tax increase proposals coming from Gov. Martin O'Malley's administration. The Maryland Rural Counties coalition also plans to support legislation to block PlanMaryland. Allegany County commissioners offered something of a "State of the Coalition" talk during their regular public business meeting Thursday. Commission President Michael McKay said the coalition persuaded the Maryland Association of Counties to support House Bill 121. The bill would amend the state constitution and require funds designated for Chesapeake Bay cleanup to be actually used for that purpose. The decision was historic, McKay said, because initially, MACo staff had recommended the organization take no position on the bill. That all changed after lobbying by the coalition to support the bill and MACo officials testified in favor of the bill, McKay said. The logic of MACo getting behind the bill was the thought that "if you're going to tax people ... don't take the money and use it for other programs," McKay said. Commissioner Bill Valentine is Allegany County's representative on the MACo board. "He's robbing his piggy bank to pay other bills," Valentine said of the bay fund. Rural counties that are already strapped would be hit hard by an increased gas tax, Valentine said. House Bill 146 is designed to protect the state's transportation trust fund, another fund that has been raided for other purposes. Shifting the costs of teacher pensions to the counties could be devastating, Valentine said. Estimates project counties statewide would need to come up with $300 million in fiscal year 2014 with another $60 million on top of that each year going forward, Valentine said. The coalition also intends to battle Plan Maryland. "He (O'Malley) put it thorough the back door instead of the front door," McKay said. "At the end of the day, I think our decision was wise," McKay said in reference to hiring Bill Miles as a consultant for the coalition. He credited Miles for the work he's already done in Annapolis for the coalition. A position paper created by Miles outlines a critique of the policy.

From Early Bird Letter: Keeping streams, waterways clean will help bay The Times-News reported in December on Maryland's efforts to reduce pollution in the Chesapeake Bay and how Allegany County did its part by submitting a local plan to the Maryland Department of the Environment ("State's bay cleanup plan to EPA concerns clean water advocates," Dec. 20, Page 1A). More recently, I read that our legislative delegation to Annapolis has been talking about the importance of Chesapeake Bay cleanup and making sure funding is available to get the job done "Beitzel's bay cleanup bill hearing set: Delegate wants Chesapeake funds used 'for their intended purposes'," Feb. 2, Page 1A). But while we hear a lot about the need to restore the Chesapeake Bay to good health, we also need to remember how important it is to make sure our local streams and waterways aren't polluted. For example, after every large storm event we read in the newspaper about thousands of gallons, sometimes tens of thousands of gallons, of polluted water running into our waterways from combined sewer overflows. Problems like these demand our attention and need to be corrected. This is what our local Watershed Implementation Plan is all about — identifying and implementing practical solutions that will correct real problems. Here in western Maryland we are fortunate to have high quality water in rivers and streams like Fifteen Mile Creek in eastern Allegany County and the Savage River in Garrett County that residents and visitors alike can enjoy. Let's be sure we protect these treasures. I'd like to commend the team led by Angie Patterson in the county's Department of Community Services for all the hard work they did on Allegany County's plan. Work like this is often thankless, not easy to get done, and many of us in the community aren't even aware that it's going on. Our rivers and streams and the Chesapeake Bay weren't polluted overnight, and it will take time and effort from everyone to clean them up — and yes, money, too. We appear to be off to a good start, but we know there's more to be done. Let's hope our government officials will stay focused on the big picture — clean water in our local rivers and streams and ultimately in the Chesapeake Bay.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND NEWSPAPERS

From Early Bird Builders poll shows few want higher taxes to clean bay (Friday) Three-fourths want state to help create jobs. In a survey commissioned by the Maryland State Builders Association, fewer than one-quarter of voters agreed the state should increase taxes and fees to pay for cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay. Of the 808 voters interviewed for the telephone poll, which was conducted by Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies from Jan. 9

through 15, 70.2 percent said the cleanup should be paid for with existing funds only; 23.4 percent favored raising taxes and fees. Although the interviewer asked respondents simply whether they thought the cleanup should be paid for with new charges or only existing funds, 1.7 percent said both should be used, 1.5 percent said neither should be used and 3.2 percent gave no answer. Nearly 74 percent said they "agree" the state "needs to do more to help new construction in the state to create jobs and recover from the current economic downturn."Almost 24 percent said they "disagree," and 2.5 percent gave no answer.

Poultry Industry Cites Univ. of Del Study; Claims Chicken Manure Pollution Overstated
Eastern Shore farmers and representatives of the poultry industry told lawmakers Friday that EPA estimates on nutrient pollution from poultry production are outdated and way overstated, according to a new study from the University of Delaware. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimated in the 1980s that Delmarva poultry growers contributed 6% of all nutrient runoff into the Chesapeake Bay. "The EPA is using a formula that is about 30-years-old," said Delmarva Poultry Industry Inc., President Andrew McLean. "It does not reflect today's chicken breeds and chicken raising methods." The study conducted by James Glancey at the University of Delaware indicated the volume of manure from the current breed of chicken is much lower than in the 1980s and that nutrient concentrations (nitrogen and phosphorus) estimated by EPA then were 1-1/2 times greater for nitrogen and 2-1/2 greater for phosphorus, according to the study. Glancey's study factored in new management practices, feed technology, and genetics that improved efficiencies over the last 30 years. The Eastern Shore poultry industry is feeling the weight of regulators to bring the state into compliance with an EPA mandated Watershed Implementation Plan by 2020 – which reduces nutrient runoff into the Bay in increments by 2020.

MARYLAND MORNING WITH SHEILAH KAST

2-6-12: New Year, New [*Pollution*] Diet Plan You've probably heard: Maryland is putting the Chesapeake Bay on a diet. A pollution diet, that is. The six states in the Bay watershed are being required by the federal government to reduce the flow of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment into the bay by 15 to 25 percent by 2025.In December, Maryland submitted a second draft of its diet plan—or more formally, its watershed implementation plan–to the E-P-A. The state is taking public comments on the plan through March 9th, and will hold informational meetings around the state over the coming weeks about it — a full list of the meetings is below. The first takes place today, in Chestertown. Sheilah discusses what this latest draft means for local governments with Richard Eskin, the director of Science Services Administration at the Maryland Department of the Environment. He's been leading Maryland's Bay Cabinet in activities related to the Watershed Implementation Plans.

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH

From Early Bird Residents, workers collect hundreds of dead fish in Henrico People bearing pitchforks, rakes and sharp sticks fetched hundreds of dead, smelly fish Saturday from two ponds in Winchester Green in western Henrico County. About 1,100 fish died mysteriously about a week earlier in a roughly 3-acre pond and a smaller adjoining pond. The Saturday harvest ranged from tiny sunfish to a 3-foot blue catfish estimated to weigh 25 pounds. Other fish included carp, bowfins and gizzard shad. "They are not hard to find at all," resident John Snyder said as he hauled in carcasses from the bank with a rake. "They are everywhere." Some of the dead fish were floating. Some lay just under the surface in shallow water. Many lay in deep, murky, tough-to-reach water, residents said. "I have not seen a single thing alive (in the water) today," said Tim Terry, vice president of the Winchester Green Association, a homeowners group. Twins Harrie and Bill Siegfried manned a 14-foot canoe to pluck fish out with a net. "There are still a lot underneath that are decomposing that we just couldn't dig out," Bill Siegfried said. "We'll leave them and, if they come back up, we'll do the same thing — we'll net them." About 15 residents and four county workers took part in the cleanup. They put the fish in black plastic trash bags, and

workers hauled them in a trash truck to a landfill. One resident estimated the haul at more than 500 fish. Virginia environmental officials believe chlorinated water from a waterline break Jan. 27 killed the fish. Henrico officials are skeptical of that, saying lines have broken before without killing fish. The fish kill was reported Monday. A beaver also died; workers have removed its body. Residents are investigating the possibility of having the lake restocked with fish. Some residents say they fear for the health of two bald eagles and a great blue heron that frequent the lake. The birds are fish eaters. "This has hurt my feelings," said resident Sandra Register. "You get pretty close to these little critters."

From Early Bird Henrico to help clean up after fish kill Henrico County officials said Friday that they will help Winchester Green homeowners clean up two ponds in which more than 1,000 fish died. Details still were being worked out late Friday afternoon, but the cleanup could get under way as early as today. "Right now, obviously, I'm very happy," said Charles Small, manager of the Winchester Green Association, a homeowners group. Small was less happy earlier in the day when, four days after the kill was reported, he was having trouble finding help in getting rid of the stinky catfish, carp and other carcasses. By midafternoon, Henrico officials were devising a plan. "I'm very pleased that the county is helping to coordinate the cleanup," said Tuckahoe District Supervisor Patricia S. O'Bannon. About 1,100 fish died in the ponds in the Short Pump area of western Henrico. The fish kill was reported Monday to the state Department of Environmental Quality.

From Early Bird Editorial: Science: Important if true According to nearly every report on global warming, the vast majority of scientists line up on the side of those who contend human activity has something to do with it. That is the anthropogenic thesis, and far be it from us to gainsay so many experts. Still, we couldn't help noting with a wry smile the news that a hundred years of settled science, as Al Gore might call it, recently may have been overturned. An experiment at the world's largest physics lab seems to have shown tiny particles called neutrinos traveling faster than the speed of light. This is supposed to be impossible. Scientists have described the news in unusually blunt terms — "a shock," "can't be real," "sensational," and so on. At the moment the results remain unconfirmed. It's possible somebody made a mistake somewhere — forgot to carry the two, divided by zero, something like that. But if it turns out that the foundational concepts of modern physics are, well, just plain wrong, then that, too, would be a rather inconvenient truth, wouldn't it?

From Early Bird Energy-efficient upgrades under $50 Do you cringe when your utility bills arrive during the winter months? You can save money with a few energy-efficient upgrades. Here are seven upgrades for less than $50.

NEWPORT NEWS DAILY PRESS

From Early Bird Local lawmakers want sea-level rise study With its low-lying military bases and waterfront houses, Hampton Roads is more vulnerable to sea-level rise than most of the United States. Yet there is no coordinated plan to adapt to waters that, combined with slow-sinking land around the Chesapeake Bay, threaten to submerge entire neighborhoods by 2100. One Republican and six Democratic state lawmakers hope to change that with a first-of-its-kind study that would inventory what's been done and what can be done to mitigate the effects of sea level rise in coastal Virginia. They are sponsoring a General Assembly resolution asking the Virginia Institute of Marine Science to perform the study, which backers say will give them leverage when seeking state and federal aid to address the issue. "This isn't something we can ignore. We're going to have to deal with it now," said Bryan Pennington, director of the city of Norfolk's Office of Intergovernmental Relations. Norfolk and other low-lying localities such as Hampton, Poquoson and Gloucester County routinely flood during hurricanes and other powerful storms. The events cause millions of dollars of damage and occasionally serious injuries or death. It's a trend that scientists say will worsen because land around the bay is subsiding and water levels are rising.

From Early Bird Army Corps of Engineers continues Fort Monroe cleanup More than a dozen sites throughout the property have been identified. HAMPTON — The Army Corps of Engineers continues to oversee testing, and in some cases, cleanup of more than a dozen contaminated sites on Fort Monroe. The Army is addressing areas of

concern that have so far yielded soil contaminated with metals, mercury and other chemicals, said Robert Reali Fort Monroe Base Realignment and Closure environmental coordinator. The cleanup continues during the Army's complex departure from Fort Monroe, which was forced to close following the 2005 BRAC decision to realign military bases nationwide. The cost for the environmental cleanup has been pegged at $60 million to $70 million. Along Stillwell Road, more than 300 yards of soil contaminated with pesticides will be excavated in the upcoming weeks. The tainted soil will be shipped to Ohio and Canada, and clean soil will be brought in to backfill the excavated area, said Reali while addressing the Restoration Advisory Board Thursday night.

STAUNTON NEWS-LEADER

From Early Bird Federal Chesapeake Bay cleanup mandates irk officials in Augusta County When the Augusta County's Agricultural-Industry Board held its first meeting of the year on Jan. 24 in the basement of the Agriculture Extension office at the Augusta County Government Center, the agenda was mostly housekeeping items like budget votes, election of officers and summer agriculture festivals. What started as routine officer elections, budget approvals and discussion of upcoming agriculture events became consumed for more than an hour in an intense, lively discussion, dire warnings and defiance about the Environmental Protection Agency's Chesapeake Bay cleanup plan — the Total Maximum Daily Load or TMDL pollution diet that mandates watershed states and Washington D.C. reduce nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment flowing into rivers that empty into the bay. "This is still the bull's eye as far as Virginia is concerned in terms of bulk concentrations of manure" running off from farms into waterways, Augusta County Agriculture Extension Agent Jason Carter told the board, reminding them Augusta is the No. 1 county in the state for nonpoultry meat production. Augusta County also has the most acres of farmed land in the state.In a discussion emblematic of ones farmers are having across the 64,000-square-mile watershed, the board questioned the computer model the EPA is using to gauge pollution levels and measure reduction — "the math is complicated and the data used has been questioned by many groups," Carter, secretary of the board, told the other members — as well as how the EPA established land-use values for the model and if they are accounting for the ongoing measures farmers are taking to reduce runoff. "There's things going on out there that we might not be getting credit for," Carter added later.

McDonnell says he is 'Friend' of Coal Industry
RICHMOND – Calling his administration “a friend to the coal industry,” Gov. Bob McDonnell reiterated his goal to make Virginia “the energy capital of the East Coast.” McDonnell made those remarks last week in delivering the keynote speech at the Eastern Coal Council’s annual legislative breakfast .“We’ve been called the Saudi Arabia of coal because the amount of coal we got in our country is akin to what Saudi Arabia has in oil,” McDonnell said. “Why would we ever want to sacrifice a strategic American advantage?”

ASSOCIATED PRESS (Va.)

From Early Bird Md., Va. governors square off on air, disagree WASHINGTON -- The governors of Maryland and Virginia disagreed on issues ranging from the economy to the presidential race, religion and health care during a nationally televised talk show. Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley and Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell appeared Sunday on CNN's "State of the Union" program. When asked if Mitt Romney has wrapped up the Republican presidential nomination, O'Malley said he thinks people are still shopping. McDonnell says Romney will be the nominee, the only question is when. They also disagreed on job creation and the president's decision to require Catholic charities, churches and schools to provide contraception as part of health insurance plans. O'Malley defended the decision while McDonnell criticized the president. McDonnell is head of the Republican Governors Association and O'Malley heads the Democratic Governors Association.

CARE2.COM (BLOG)

One Virginia County Says NO To Fracking
Fracking (the natural gas drilling method known as hydraulic fracturing, which uses high pressure blasts of water mixed with a chemical cocktail to break the rock and unlock the gas), has been losing popularity recently. Hooray! In December, 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency officially blamed fracking for water contamination

in Wyoming. Earthquakes in both Oklahoma and more recently Ohio may well have been caused by fracking.Now Rockingham County in Virginia has sent a firm rejection to Carrizo Oil and Gas who were seeking a permit to pursue fracking near Bergton, in the foothills of the Blue Mountains.The company's intent was to build Virginia's first well to explore for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale, a prehistoric shale formation that runs from Ohio to lower Virginia and contains one of the richest gas reserves in the world, according to the Energy Information Administration. As I know from driving through there, this is also an extremely beautiful area of the country, but apparently Carrizo didn't care about that. **Permit Denied!**

THE EXAMINER

Obama's energy plan mixed bag for Va.
(late Friday) Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell remains at odds with President Obama over the issue of energy, even as Obama moved Thursday to fast track a critical piece of McDonnell's own energy agenda. The Obama administration completed a review that showed offshore wind energy projects posed little threat of environmental damage, clearing the way for new wind turbines along the East Coast, including off the shores of Virginia and Maryland. Leases could be available for companies to bid on as early as this year. McDonnell called the advancement of offshore wind farms an "important component of our overall effort to make Virginia 'The Energy Capital of the East Coast.'"

MISCELLANEOUS

BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT

From Early Bird EPA Accepts Industry Methods for Calculating Warming Potential of Gases EPA says it has made a preliminary decision to accept industry methods for calculating the global warming potential of seven fluorinated greenhouse gases, approval that will help manufacturers of the gases comply with the agency's greenhouse gas reporting rule. The methodologies, originally submitted for EPA's consideration by DuPont and Honeywell International, would be used by industry in calculating and then reporting their greenhouse gas emissions as required under the agency's mandatory greenhouse gas reporting rule

From Early Bird v EPA Clarifies Compliance Status for Five States Added to Cross-State Rule EPA will not require five additional states to comply with the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule while litigation over the regulation is ongoing, the agency says in a notice to be published today. EPA in July 2011 finalized the rule to reduce interstate transport of nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide and in December it expanded the rule to require Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin to reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides from power plants during the summer ozone season. The cross-state rule has been stayed by a federal appeals court.

BUFFALO NEWS

From Early Bird EPA says Le Roy toxic site is monitored (Feb. 3) In response to criticism from environmental activists regarding a neglected Superfund toxic waste site in Le Roy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said Thursday that ongoing work has been done in recent years to monitor and address the toxic chemicals spilled in a 1970 train derailment. The EPA also stated that it is testing the material from the corroded steel drums located in a fenced-in area and hopes to have the drums removed by the end of the month. Despite posted signs to the contrary, the EPA stated Thursday that the drum material may not present a danger to residents. "Soil and rock material from the drilling of the ground water monitoring wells was placed in drums and stored at the site in a fenced-in area," the EPA stated. "Based upon data previously collected from the drilling activities, this material is believed to be nonhazardous."

CNN

From Early Bird Blog: Could toxic chemical be source of tics in NY town? (Saturday) Trichloroethene (TCE) has become a chemical of interest after environmental activist Erin Brockovich suggested that the derailment of a train carrying chemicals 41 years ago could be involved in the mysterious illness striking 16 people, mostly high school students in New York. Brockovich's team was dispatched to the Le Roy Junior/Senior High School, in Le Roy, New York, this week to collect water and soil samples. The school is more than three miles from the train wreck site, but some worry that the school was built in 2006 with contaminated supplies. The school district has called the speculation a "distraction" and a "publicity stunt." The New York State Department of Health, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency have been involved. But the agencies have not found an environmental or infectious cause, according to a school district statement. TCE was one of 58 different chemicals and 63 pesticides tested for; the results showed nothing out of the ordinary, according to the state's health department.

BLOOMBERG

EPA Accepts Industry Methods for Calculating Warming Potential of Fluorinated Gases

The Environmental Protection Agency has made a preliminary decision to accept industry methods for calculating the global warming potential of seven fluorinated greenhouse gases, approval that will help manufacturers of the gases comply with the agency's broader greenhouse gas reporting rule, according to a Feb. 3 *Federal Register* notice (77 Fed. Reg. 5514). The methodologies, originally submitted for EPA's consideration by DuPont and Honeywell International, would be used by industry in calculating and then reporting greenhouse gas emissions as required under the agency's mandatory greenhouse gas reporting rule. The reporting methodologies would apply to five facilities categorized as fluorinated gas production facilities under Subpart L (Fluorinated Gas Production) of EPA's mandatory greenhouse gas reporting rule. ... Those facilities are Honeywell International's Buffalo (N.Y.) Research Laboratory and four DuPont plants in Fayetteville, N.C.; Deepwater, N.J.; Washington Works, W.Va.; and Eldorado, Ark. ... EPA is requesting comments by Feb. 21 on the preliminary decision on the seven compounds as well as on certain data underpinning its decision.

NEW YORK TIMES

California Car Deal Criticized as Hurting Green Sales

When California's air regulators approved new car-pollution rules to cut down on smog and global warming, they included a provision that critics described as a loophole that could substantially reduce the number of electric vehicles sold in the state in coming years.

POLLUTION ONLINE

Ozone Pollution Damage Crops Across Continents

Man-made air pollution from Southeast Asia causes the loss of 6.7 million tonnes of wheat and about 11.6 million tonnes of rice globally each year, while pollutants from North America reduce wheat yields in Europe by 1.2 million tonnes each year, according to a new study. The study shows that ozone pollution causes millions of tonnes of crop losses not just in the regions where it's emitted, but also across continents. On a global scale, pollution from Southeast Asia has the biggest impact. The research, led by the University of Leeds and co-authored by researchers from the Stockholm Environment Institute at the University of York, shows for the first time the extent of the Northern Hemisphere's intercontinental crop losses caused by ozone – a chemical partly produced by burning of fossil fuels.

HUFFINGTON POST

First Energy Gets Boost From Clean Air Rules NEW YORK -- Instead of complaining about clean air rules, maybe utilities should cheer them.Sometimes, the rules lead to big gains.First Energy, a utility based in Ohio, got such a boost Thursday, a week after the company announced it would close six coal-fired plants, blaming new

federal rules aimed at slowing emissions of mercury and other toxins.Without these plants, electricity prices in parts of Ohio dominated by First Energy are expected to nearly double at a power auction scheduled for May. The reason: There will now be a smaller fleet of power plants available to meet potential power needs. This smaller supply means the price to coax companies like First Energy to make their plants available will rise.

STATEIMPACT

Drilling's Dangers: What Might Reduce Worker Deaths

As drilling for oil and gas has surged in Texas, so have injuries and deaths at drilling rigs and well sites. It has become a significant concern to Federal regulators and to the industry. But there are promising efforts to reduce accidents. One of those was hatched in South Texas. The number of workers killed in Texas "mining", as the Department of Labor classifies oil and gas drilling, has risen in the past decade. Deaths rose from 35 in 2003 to a high of 49 in 2007 and totaled 45 in 2010.

DAILY GREEN

Blog: Doctor Prescribes Preventive Medicine for Shale Gas

The operating assumption that generally prevails in Washington, DC, is that the facts should fit the political narrative, not the other way around. Every once in awhile, someone comes along and tries to spoil the fun. Such was the case February 1 when Dr. Bernard Goldstein, a physician, toxicologist, member of the National Academies of Science's Institute of Medicine, and former Reagan administration appointee at the Environmental Protection Agency, testified to the House Science Committee's energy subcommittee about public health issues associated with hydraulic fracturing. This was the hearing from which Josh Fox, producer of the anti-fracturing documentary *Gasland* was ejected and cuffed by Capitol Police. That unfortunate incident grabbed the headlines, but Goldstein's important testimony shouldn't be overshadowed by the fracas over Fox. The subcommittee hearing was called to rake EPA over the coals about natural gas. (Sorry for the mixed energy references.) The point in contention was EPA's controversial study in which agency experts said they found evidence of hydraulic fracturing chemicals in an aquifer in proximity to the Pavilion gas field, a tight sands formation in Wyoming.

NEWSWISE

Park, wildlife agencies opposed to strip mine near Utah's Bryce Canyon National ParkSALT LAKE CITY — Federal biologists say a strip mine at the backdoor to Utah's storybook Bryce Canyon National Park will wipe out the southernmost population of sage grouse, even as their agency resists a broader effort to protect the bird across the West. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is among three federal agencies that have registered opposition to the lease of 3,500 acres of public range land sought by a coal mine that got its start on 440 acres of private land. The mining is under way about a dozen miles from a corner of Bryce Canyon National Park, a high plateau of southern Utah prized for its clean air, wildlife and sparking night skies.

Air Pollutant Levels of Particulates and Ozone Add to Public Health Burden

Newswise — Washington D.C. – Despite reductions in US air pollution over the past several decades, resulting from the combined efforts of government, nonprofit and industrial sectors, concentrations of both fine particles and ozone remain a public health concern, particularly in urban areas. A new study by economists, scientists, and modelers at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shows that levels of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and ozone (O3) pose significant risks to public health, including an increased risk of mortality. These findings could be used to inform policy decisions about approaches to reducing key pollutants and thereby improve health outcomes, particularly in urban areas.