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From: EPA Press Office [press=epa.gov@cmail19.com]
on behalf of EPA Press Office [press@epa.gov]
Sent: 3/23/2018 3:30:02 PM
To: Ringel, Aaron [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=1654bdc951284a6d899a418a89fb0abf-Ringel, Aar]
Subject:EPA's Weekly Report for 3/23/18

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

WWW.EPA.GOV/NEWSROOM

EPA'S WEEKLY REPORT

This week Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt sat down with more than a dozen reporters across all mediums to discuss the important work the Agency is doing to ensure regulatory certainty for America's farmers, ranchers, and businesses during National Agriculture Week. Pruitt also advanced the Trump Administration's infrastructure agenda with a push to eradicate lead from drinking water and convene a national leadership summit on PFAS to update America's crumbling water infrastructure.

NATIONAL NEWS ...

In an exclusive interview with the Daily Caller, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt laid out his plans to end the use of "secret science" to craft Agency regulations. "Pruitt will reverse long-standing EPA policy allowing regulators to rely on non-public scientific data in crafting rules. Such studies have been used to justify tens of billions of dollars worth of regulations. EPA regulators would only be allowed to consider scientific studies that make their data available for public scrutiny under Pruitt's new policy. Also, EPA-funded studies would need to make all their data public."

EPA Administrator Pruitt sat down with AgDay to talk about issues impacting farmers and ranchers including EPA's efforts to provide certainty by redefining "Waters of the U.S." According to Pruitt, a substitute or replacement definition will be issued sometime this year, a definition that will recognize private property ownership and the roles of states, and will answer the question of what exactly is a water of the United

States. 'We're going to get that right going forward, and the definition is going to provide clarity, objective measurements by which we know where federal jurisdiction begins and ends,' he said."

OP-ED ...

In the Washington Times, EPA Administrator Pruitt outlined the Agency's efforts to overhaul the permitting process to "rebuild and revitalize our nation's crumbling infrastructure." "The president's ambitious proposal calls for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to play a leading role in the administration's efforts ... America's infrastructure was once the envy of the world. The president's proposal will restore our roads, bridges and waterways to greatness and create a safer, stronger America. Through regulatory reforms and targeted investments, EPA will spearhead the much-needed repairs to infrastructure in a way that provides tangible environmental benefits to all Americans."

REGIONAL NEWS ...

The Detroit News reported that eradicating lead from drinking water is one of EPA Administrator Pruitt's top priorities. "'I do think that what happened in Flint is something that could happen elsewhere. We just simply need to take steps to do all that we can to address it prospectively and proactively,' Pruitt said. Pruitt said President Donald Trump's $1.5 trillion plan to bolster the nation's infrastructure over the next decade would include investments in aging water infrastructure."

While speaking with the New York Post, Pruitt called for a local, state, and federal response to the lead crisis in New York City and across the country. "EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt called for a 'coordinated' response between New York State and City officials to address the ongoing lead crisis."

In an interview with Newark Star-Ledger, Pruitt discussed efforts to make cleaning up Superfund sites a priority to advance the Agency's core mission. "The Environmental Protection Agency plans to step up efforts to get companies who dumped toxic waste at New Jersey's Superfund sites to pay to clean them up, Administrator Scott Pruitt said. Pruitt on Monday blamed a lack of urgency... New Jersey has 114 designated Superfund sites, the most in the nation, included three of Pruitt's 21 highest-priority locations."

Pruitt reiterated his commitment to prioritizing the Superfund program to clean up America's most contaminated sites, including Tar Creek, in an interview with the Tulsa World. "Administrator Scott Pruitt of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said his new push on the nation's Superfund program finally can provide clarity and accountability to the Tar Creek area, for decades one of the oldest, largest and most complex toxic sites in the nation. 'It is really unacceptable,' Pruitt said as he

recalled the history of the Tar Creek area in far northeastern Oklahoma, whose Superfund legacy dates back to 1983, as well as the amount of money and time deployed there."

At this week's regional roundtable, the Albuquerque Journal **reported on progress the Trump Administration is making on claim stemming from the 2015 Gold King Mine spill.** "Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt said Monday that the federal government is close to finishing its assessment of roughly 400 claims for financial damages stemming from the 2015 Gold King Mine spill, which dumped toxic chemicals into waters in New Mexico, Colorado and Utah, and final recommendations could be ready by the end of the month."

RADIO ...

This week, Administrator Pruitt joined WZFG 1100 AM The Flag - North Dakota **to talk about his first year accomplishments, including repeal and replacement of both "Waters of the U.S." rule and Clean Power Plan.**

Administrator Pruitt also joined the Lars Larson Show**, based in Portland, Ore., and discussed how he's working to get the EPA back to basics and provide regulatory certainty for all Americans.**

On the St. Louis, Missouri's own Mark Reardon Show**, Administrator Pruitt talked a little about baseball and a lot about the good work the Agency is doing to improve environmental outcomes across the country.**

Scott Voorhees on 1110 KFAF-Omaha had Administrator Pruitt on his show Wednesday to talk about what's to come at the EPA this year, including a continued focused on Superfund clean-up and regulatory transparency.

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt

March 21, 2018 • 9 min

Interesting insight from the former OK AG on his work this past year, the road ahead, how he sees his responsibilities compared with the past administration, and working with President Trump.

TWEETS ...

Administrator Pruitt @EPAScottPruitt · Mar 21

What a beautiful surprise, snow on the second day of spring!

Administrator Pruitt @EPAScottPruitt · Mar 21

Spent the morning with friendly folks from @GaFarmBureau. We had a great discussion about ongoing work at the Agency to rewrite the #WOTUS rule and provide regulatory certainty for our farmers and ranchers across #America. #NationalAgWeek

Administrator Pruitt @EPAScottPruitt · Mar 19

Wrapped up our regional roundtable discussing important environmental issues like air, lead, Superfunds & infrastructure.

Albuquerque Journal, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, New York Post and 2 others

Administrator Pruitt @EPAScottPruitt · Mar 20

Had a great visit with hardworking farmers and ranchers from Wisconsin and Kentucky on #NationalAgDay! @EPA will continue to work with our agriculture partners across the country. #AgDay #EPAInAction

WI Farm Bureau

Administrator Pruitt @EPAScottPruitt · 15h

#ICYMI .@EPA announced $463K in funding for 31 Phase 1 student teams through the People, Prosperity, and the Planet grants program. Find out more

epa.gov/newsreleases/g...

CONTACT: press@epa.gov

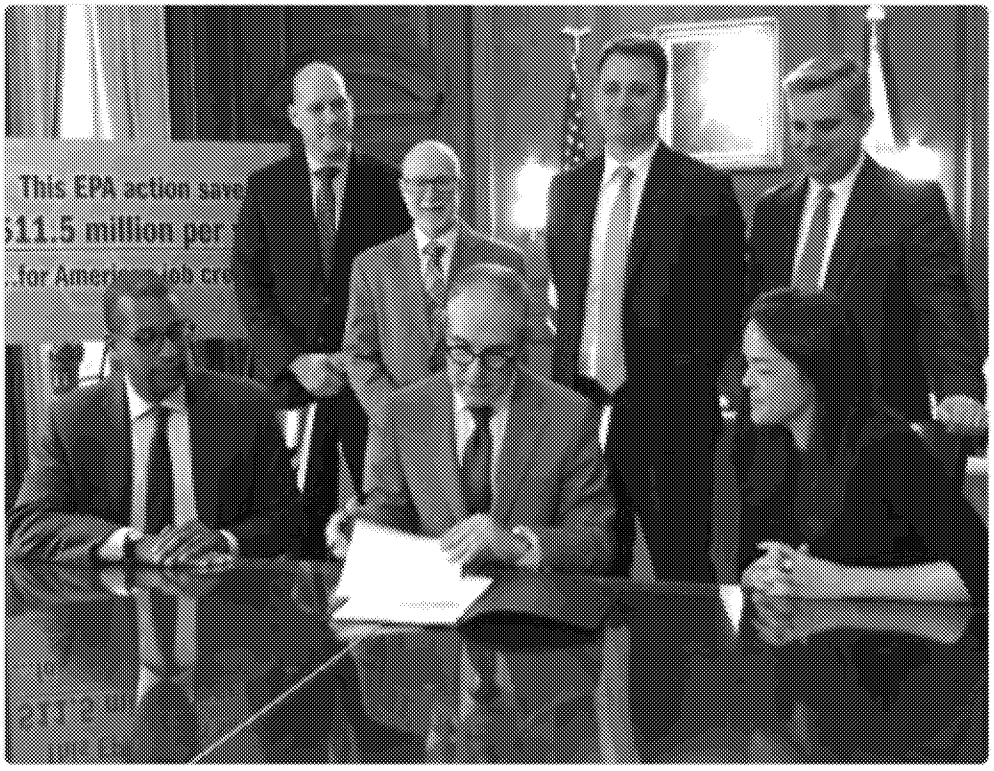
EPA Awards Grants to 31 College Teams for Innovative Technology Projects

WASHINGTON (March 22, 2018) — Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced over $463,000 in funding for 31 Phase I student teams through the People, Prosperity, and the Planet (P3) grants program. These teams, made up of college students from across the country, are developing sustainable technologies to solve current environmental and public health challenges.

"This year's P3 teams are applying their classroom learning to create innovative and practical technologies," **said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.** "This next generation of scientists has

Administrator Pruitt @EPAScottPruitt · Mar 20

Every bit of certainty matters. I just signed proposed amendments that will simplify compliance with national standards, generate significant cost-savings while protecting human health and the environment. #EPAInAction



FRONT PAGES ...

South Jersey TIMES
GLOUCESTER COUNTY TIMES EDITION

S1 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2018 N

AFFILIATED WITH nj.com

GLOUCESTER TWP.

Cut down on the way home

Megan Fiori holds a wedding photo of her and her husband, Joseph Fiori, on Monday. Joe Fiori, 42, died approximately a week after suffering injuries in a road rage assault in Deptford Township on March 7. Lou M. Sichuda, for South Jersey Times

Victim of deadly road rage, a devoted father 'came face-to-face with evil' during storm

Matt Gray *for South Jersey Times*

Sitting on a couch in the living room of her Blackwood home, Megan Fiori carefully recalled the last conversation she had with her husband.

Joe Fiori was preparing to head home from work and wanted his wife to know he might be a little later than usual. It was March 7 and a nor'easter was dumping ice on across the region, making for a slow commute.

"Just take your time and be careful," she told him. They ended their conversation with their traditional "I love you."

Joe Fiori never made it home that night.

Fiori, 42, was shot in the face during a road rage assault in Deptford Township that afternoon. He died of his injuries a week later.

"He just wanted to come home and he didn't make it home," his wife said, her voice cracking with grief.

Fiori was able to speak to emergency responders and gave them his wife's phone number. By the time his family arrived at the hospital, they couldn't speak with him, explained Megan Fiori's mother, Betty Jean Hampton.

"He was unconscious," she said. "He never came to."

His injury was covered by the time they saw him. "It went from one side of his nose to the other side of his face," Hampton said. "We don't know what happened. We just know a very good man was taken from all of us."

He remained on life support until Thursday.

Fiori was an organ donor and "he saved some lives," she said, pointing the doctors and nurses who cared for him at

SEE FIORI, A8

PITTSGROVE

4 who trafficked dogs for pit fights are sent to prison

Thomas Moriarty *for South Jersey Times*

Three South Jersey men were among four sentenced this month to years in federal prison for their roles in a criminal network prosecutors said trafficked dogs across state lines for bloody pit fights.

In the course of a sprawling multistate investigation, the U.S. attorney's office said in a statement, federal agents discovered the basement of a defendant's home caked in blood, evidence it had been used as a fighting pit. One man admitted his dog died on the way home after losing a fight.

Of the four defendants, Vineland residents Anthony "Bentley" Gaines and Jodell Harris received sentences of 42 months and 37 months, respectively, for charges that included conspiracy and possessing a dog with the intent to use it in a dog fight.

Frank Sicinski, of Millville, was sentenced to 57 months on charges that included being a felon in possession of a firearm. The fourth defendant, Peter Chaffee of Willow Springs, Illinois, received a year in prison after pleading guilty to a conspiracy charge.

All four of the men previously had pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Mary L. Cooper in Trenton.

Prosecutors said their arrests stemmed from Operation Grand Champion, a coordinated effort targeting dog fighting across multiple federal districts.

Court records show agents seized six pit bulls when they served a search warrant at Gaines' home in November 2015, and federal authorities have said a total of 44 dogs were recovered in New Jersey as part of the investigation. Investigators said they also seized treadmills, heavy chains and breeding stands — meant to restrain female dogs — as they built their case against the men.

Prosecutors said a fifth defendant, 42-year-old Asbury Park resident Bernie Atkinson, has also pleaded guilty and is scheduled to be sentenced on April 26. Other defendants remain awaiting trial.

Thomas Moriarty, NJ Advance Media, tmoriarty@njadvancemedia.com

STATEHOUSE

AG orders random drug tests for police

S.P. Sullivan *for South Jersey Times*

All police officers in New Jersey are now subject to random drug testing under a directive from the state's new attorney general.

Police departments are also required to implement "early warning systems" triggered by problem behavior such as excessive sick movements, lawsuits, domestic abuse and drunken driving, under a separate directive announced by Attorney General Gurbir Grewal's office.

Grewal, who was appointed by Gov. Phil Murphy in January, said Tuesday that most police departments and county prosecutors already have such policies in place. The new directives would mandate them statewide.

"We support our officers in their difficult jobs, and at times that means intervening with a troubled officer to protect the public, the individual officer, and his or her fellow officers," he said in a statement announcing the move.

HOW IT WORKS

Under the new rules, every state, county and local law enforcement agency is required to conduct one random drug screening in 2018 and perform such tests twice a year going forward.

Departments are required to report any failed tests — or officers who refuse a test — as well as any resulting discipline to the county prosecutor or other supervising agency.

The early warning system requirement spells out 18 "performance indicators" that

SEE TESTING, A8

WASHINGTON

EPA to make polluters clean Superfund sites in N.J.

Associated Press *for South Jersey Times*

The Environmental Protection Agency plans to step up efforts to get the companies that dumped toxic waste at New Jersey's Superfund sites to pay to clean them up, administrator Scott Pruitt said.

Pruitt on Monday blamed a lack of urgency, not a lack of funding, for the slow progress in cleaning up the sites. New Jersey has 114 designated Superfund sites, the most in the nation, including three of Pruitt's 21 highest-priority locations.

"I'm going to get accountability with whomever it is on these Superfund sites and we will use every means of enforcement to do so," Pruitt said. "I don't think we've done it as well as we should here historically and we're going to do better going forward."

While President Donald Trump has proposed cutting the EPA's budget, Pruitt said the agency will have the money it needs by ensuring that the companies responsible for the contamination clean it up.

"Most of our sites across the country have a responsible party," Pruitt said. "We have very few exceptions."

SEE EPA, A8

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Heart help

First recipient has device implanted after new procedure is approved for use in New Mexico

HEALTH >> B5

Back to the Pit

UNM women's basketball team faces Rice tonight in a WNIT second-round game

SPORTS >> B1

NEW MEXICO'S LEADING NEWS SOURCE

ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL

TUESDAY MARCH 20, 2018

FINAL ★★★★

A few gun owners brought their AR-15 rifles to the Las Cruces City Council meeting and spoke out against a resolution to ask the governor and state legislators to restrict semiautomatic weapon sales and ownership in New Mexico.

Cruces council tables gun restriction measure

Resolution intended to urge action against semiautomatic weapons

BY ANGELA NICOLETTI-CABRERA
Journal Staff Writer

LAS CRUCES — A standing-room-only crowd packed the Las Cruces City Council meeting Monday where councilors voted to table a resolution asking the governor and state lawmakers to restrict semiautomatic weapons.

Six members of the audience openly carried firearms.

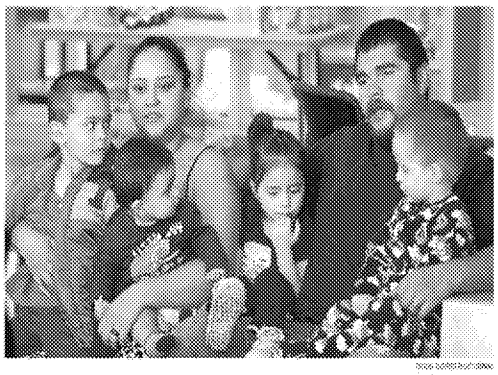
"I'd like members of the public to understand reality is not the same thing as hate," said Cruces other Greg Smith, who introduced the resolution.

Smith said the "Resolution to Secure Ensure the Safety of Students in Las Cruces Schools" was in response to "parents and grandparents" who were concerned after incidents of school schools following threats made on social media.

"I would not be invited to go to schools," Ryan Lebsock, a senior at Las Cruces High School, told the council.

She said students had to take

See COUNCIL >> A4



Jacqueline Arellano and her twin , Daniel Crespin, talk in the Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center on Monday about their escape from a fire at their apartment building on Sunday. With twins are their sisters, from left, Francisco Arellano Crespin, 5; Daniel Crespin Jr., 6 months; Ainsley Crespin, 4; and Vincente Crespin, 2.

Residents smelled gas before fire

70 stay in shelter after blaze destroys, damages SE Albuquerque apartments

BY RICK NAHMIAS
Journal Staff Writer

Residents on a Southeast Heights apartment complex Sunday said they smelled gas before their building exploded and burned, forcing them to flee.

About 70 people who lived in the apartment building in the 400 block of Georgia SE were temporarily relocated to the Manzano Mesa Multigenerational Center, where they were housed overnight, and given assistance by the city of Albuquerque and the Red Cross, said Anna Sanchez, director of the city's Office of Senior Affairs.

The center was closed to the public Monday. Sanchez thanked the public for being understanding, and said the building would be open for normal activities and services today.

St. Martin's Episcopal has since provided volunteers as the displaced families, which include children under age 18, could stay at a hotel room, Sanchez said.

See RESIDENTS >> A2

Union urges teachers to skip survey

APS leader calls APS budget questionnaire problematic, divisive and inappropriate

BY SHELBY RIXEN
Journal Staff Writer

Former Albuquerque Public Schools teacher Julia Burnett says she left APS after two years because she felt like she had no voice in the district.

She often tried to share her input as classroom and curriculum procedures with administrators, saying she was told "Sorry, Line and Transcript."

But Burnett, now a second- and third-grade teacher at the state-chartered Mission Achievement and Success Charter School, was concerned when she saw APS' new 2018-2019 budget survey, which doesn't include the voices members of the public, including parents, teachers and students, to weigh in on budget priorities for next year.

"I was excited to hear they were progressing," she said.

That enthusiasm was stopped in its tracks upon reading a letter from the Albuquerque Teachers Federation, the local union, urging APS employees to skip the survey about APS' $1.2 billion budget.

APS' survey notes, 14 question survey included ranking school subjects and programs in order of importance and suggestions for reducing expenses, among other questions.

Teachers have complained about the budget survey

Albuquerque Teachers Federation President Ellen Bernstein

See UNION >> A4

ABQ TIES IN FACEBOOK DATA MINING SCANDAL

A powerful private data mining firm founded by Albuquerque native Robert Mercer received thousands upon information to help propel Donald Trump into the White House in 2016.

METRO & NM >> A6

EPA close to settling claims on mine spill

Scott Pruitt

$1.3 billion in damages sought after toxic waste polluted rivers

BY MICHAEL COLEMAN
Journal Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt said Monday that the federal government is close to finalizing the assessment of roughly 300 claims for financial damages demanded from the 2015 Gold King Mine spill, which dumped toxic chemicals into waters in New Mexico, Colorado and Utah and that recommendations could be ready by the end of the month.

Former EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, an Obama-era appointee, announced toward the end of her tenure in 2016 that the government would not pay any damages to farmers and others harmed by the toxic spill, arguing it was not allowed under the Government Tort Claims Act. But when President Donald Trump

See EPA >> A4

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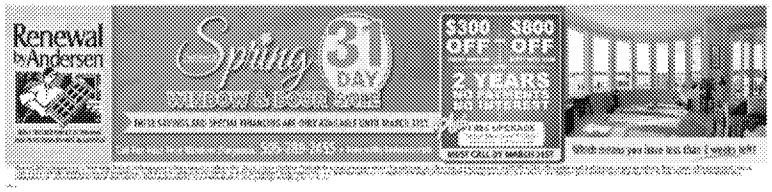

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