Message

From: InsideEPA.com [insideepa-alerts@iwpnews.com]
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Subject: The Morning Headlines from InsideEPA.com -- February 10, 2020

InsideEPA

MORNING ALERT

February 10, 2020

Latest News

EPA Plans To Retain PM NAAQS, Ignoring Staff Call For Stricter Standard

EPA is planning to issue a proposal to retain the agency's suite of existing national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and larger "coarse" particles (PM10), ignoring a call from agency staff to tighten the annual health-based PM2.5 limit to adequately protect human health, an informed source says. FULL STORY

Battle Erupts Over How D.C. Circuit Auto GHG Order Affects Jurisdiction

The Trump administration and its critics are at odds over whether a district court can proceed with litigation challenging the Trump administration's rule preempting state vehicle greenhouse gas rules after an appellate court issued an order denying the parties' competing requests to pause or speed its consideration of the dispute. FULL STORY

DOJ Drops Antitrust Inquiry Of Automakers Backing California GHG Rules

The Justice Department (DOJ) has reportedly dropped its antitrust inquiry into four auto companies that agreed to a voluntary "framework" agreement with California to meet more stringent vehicle greenhouse gas standards than the Trump administration is poised to finalize, though it is unclear if other companies will now back the state's plan. FULL STORY

Fired EPA Region 9 Chief Cites Clashes With Headquarters Over Control

Mike Stoker, the EPA Region 9 administrator who was abruptly fired this week, says he often clashed with leadership in the agency's Washington, D.C., headquarters over both policy and non-policy issues and was frustrated that top officials made many key decisions for the large Pacific Southwest region without his input. FULL STORY

EPA Eyes New Metrics To Measure Mississippi Basin Nutrient Progress

EPA and other federal agencies are exploring new ways to analyze nutrient pollution in the Mississippi River Basin and Gulf of Mexico, looking to better track water quality trends in sub-basins in addition to measuring the annual size of the hypoxic, or "dead," zone in the Gulf of Mexico caused by excess nutrients. FULL STORY

Signaling Delays, House Seeks More Environmental Fixes In CCUS Bill

House Democrats are seeking fixes to proposed legislation to expand carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) -- including more protection for drinking water and ensuring carbon dioxide is actually kept from the atmosphere -- signaling the need for further negotiations on the bill that could delay moving it this year. FULL STORY

Daily Feed

Environmentalists sue California cities over alleged MS4 violations

The plaintiffs hope the suits will prompt local officials to negotiate improvements to their water infrastructure and make the litigation unnecessary. FULL STORY

In case you missed it: News of the week

Our must-read stories this week include push-back on sweeping EPA changes to cost-benefit analysis, increasingly complex litigation over the agency's Clean Water Act jurisdiction policy, and more. FULL STORY

Judge backs DOJ's schedule for California cap & trade suit

A district court's speedy briefing schedule for the challenge to California's cap-and-trade program is identical to a Justice Department request from earlier this month. FULL STORY

DNC forms permanent climate committee

The panel will urge the Democratic Party to "take bolder and more ambitious action to address the climate crisis," after the Democratic National Committee rejected sponsoring a climate-focused presidential primary debate. FULL STORY

Ewire: Senate climate caucus adds 3 new Republicans

In today's Ewire: Sens. Marco Rubio (R-FL), Susan Collins (R-ME) and Rob Portman (R-OH) are joining the bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus. FULL STORY

Environmentalists sue EPA over microplastics water pollution in Hawaii

The Center for Biological Diversity and other groups argue the Clean Water Act requires EPA to ensure Hawaii lists its marine waters as impaired due to plastic pollution, citing threats to marine life. FULL STORY

Environment Next

House Democrats Fear DOE Officials Hindering Clean Energy Grants

House Democrats are raising concerns that top Department of Energy (DOE) political officials are hindering wind, solar and other renewable projects by deliberately slowing down the use of funds for clean energy grants proposals and preventing staff from issuing the grants. FULL STORY

Democrats poised to unveil sweeping plastics recycling bill

Democratic lawmakers are readying a bill that would shift responsibility for plastics recycling away from the municipal level to both the federal government and industry, by creating "a national

recycling/composting/reusable infrastructure" while "shift[ing] the burden of managing product and packaging waste" to manufacturers. FULL STORY

Think tank says future GHG policy might halve value of oil, gas projects

A new report by the think tank Carbon Tracker Initiative (CTI) warns that oil and gas companies could see the value of their new projects cut in half and become "stranded assets" under what CTI calls inevitable future policy that will impose strict limits on greenhouse gas emissions. FULL STORY

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