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**Subject:** Daily Region 7 News Clips

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# 1/20/21 - Environmental News Clips

## EARNED NEWS

**Scottsbluff (NE) Star-Herald - Free radon kits available through PPHD – 1/19/21 -** Panhandle Public Health District (PPHD) is raising awareness by asking communities to declare January as Radon Action Month. Widespread community awareness about the dangers of radon will help keep all communities safer from the risks of lung cancer. http://bit.ly/3ivaTYp

## R7 IN THE NEWS

**Omaha World-Herald - Senator seeks to address complaints about ethanol plant near Mead – 1/19/21 -** After fielding two years of complaints about an ethanol plant near Mead, State Sen. Bruce Bostelman said it was time to seek some resolution. On Tuesday, Bostelman, who represents the Mead area, introduced a bill that would prohibit the use of "treated seed corn" in the production of ethanol. http://bit.ly/39RbxeW

## REGIONAL NEWS

**Lincoln (NE) Journal-Star - Local View: Revisiting wind rules – 1/21/21 -** As always, their challenge is to strike the proper balance between protecting the health and safety of local residents and allowing for a lawful business activity that provides a host of economic and environmental benefits. We thank our local officials for revisiting this issue. http://bit.ly/2XXgxSZ

**Fremont Tribune - Lower Elkhorn NRD hosts virtual public meeting on lowering groundwater nitrates – 1/15/21 -** As it plans to lower nitrate levels in groundwater for several counties, the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District hosted a virtual meeting to inform the public. http://bit.ly/2LOuLKh

**Ingram's (Kansas City) - UMKC receives $700K grant for health hazards study – 1/19/21 -** The UMKC School of Medicine has been presented with a $700,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for a study on intervention of residential health hazards. http://bit.ly/3c4CSNk

**Bloomberg Law - Kansas, Feds Gave Up Refuge's Water Rights, Conservationists Say – 1/19/21 -** The Interior Department worked with Kansas officials to withdraw water rights protections for a "wetland of international importance," according to a complaint filed by a wildlife conservation group in federal district court in Kansas. https://bit.ly/39Vv5iy

**TRANSITION 2021**

**NPR - Here's What Biden Plans To Do In His 1st Day As President – 1/20/21** - Just hours after he is sworn into office on Inauguration Day, President-elect Joe Biden plans to sign 17 executive actions in the Oval Office to try to hit the ground running on his top priorities — and to roll back some of President Trump's initiatives in those areas, a group of his top advisers told reporters. http://n.pr/2NeFs9e

**New York Times - A 'Nerve Center' for Climate in the Biden White House – 1/19/21 -** Joseph R. Biden Jr. will bring with him the largest team of climate change experts ever assembled in the White House, and action on global warming is expected quickly. http://nyti.ms/3p4Jlvv

**DTN Progressive Farmer - An Urban's Rural View | Secretary Vilsack, Redux – 1/19/21** - Tom Vilsack won't be the first Secretary of Agriculture to serve under more than one president. There's reason, then, to wonder how his second time around might be different. http://bit.ly/39Vi7RU

**The Independent (Washington DC) - Joe Biden's cabinet picks: Who is nominated? – 1/20/21 -** Joe Biden has formally nominated the members of his cabinet, as he prepares to take office in the White House on 20 January. Mr Biden's team vetted potential candidates for cabinet positions after he was announced as the winner of 3 November's election. http://bit.ly/3bUk4jR

**Washington Post - Biden to overturn Trump's climate legacy on dozens of fronts – 1/20/21** - Biden's Day 1 executive orders will block the Keystone XL pipeline, return the U.S. to the Paris climate accord and kick-start the effort to shift the nation away from fossil fuels. http://wapo.st/3ixi7za

**AP - What Janet Yellen can do about climate change as US Treasury secretary – 1/19/21 -** How the U.S. manages the economic recovery from COVID-19, the financial risks from climate change and inequality together will determine the chances of American prosperity over the coming decades. http://bit.ly/3oa9l7H

**Inside EPA - Court Gives Biden New Opening to Pursue Strict Power Plant GHG Curbs – 1/19/21 -** The appellate ruling vacating EPA's Affordable Clean Energy Rule (ACE) rejects the agency's claims that it cannot pursue beyond-the-fenceline greenhouse gas controls, giving the

Biden administration a fresh opening to pursue strict power plant GHG curbs administratively or in cooperation with Congress, observers say. http://bit.ly/35Xxic0

**Inside EPA - Biden expected to pick U.S. Water Alliance CEO to lead EPA water office – 1/19/21** - President-elect Joe Biden is expected to nominate U.S. Water Alliance CEO Radhika Fox to head EPA's water office, a candidate who has extensive experience with water infrastructure and affordability issues. http://bit.ly/2M9oLeM

**Inside EPA - Biden Order Will Direct EPA To Review Dozens Of Trump Actions To Undo – 1/20/21** - President-elect Joe Biden plans to sign an executive order (EO) shortly after being sworn in that will direct EPA to immediately review and "take appropriate action" to potentially undo dozens of Trump agency actions that it deems harmful to public health and the environment, covering air, climate, waste, water, toxics and other issues. http://bit.ly/38ZOXkZ

**Inside EPA - Biden Moves To Reverse Trump Deregulation, Pursue Climate Actions – 1/20/21** - Incoming President Joe Biden is poised to sign a pair of actions Jan. 20 withdrawing a series of Trump administration orders that created new hurdles for pursuing stringent environmental and other rules, with Biden's transition team saying Trump's actions are "needless obstacles" blocking policies in the public interest. http://bit.ly/3bZZQoW

**E&E News - Gina McCarthy outlines Biden's first climate actions – 1/20/21** - Joe Biden will spend his first hours as president trying to obliterate much of the Trump administration's deregulatory agenda, restore public land protections and reestablish the United States as a global leader on climate change policy. http://bit.ly/3939WUm

**FUELS**

**Business Record - Iowa biodiesel production up in 2020 despite fewer plants operating – 1/19/21** - The production of biodiesel in Iowa increased in 2020 despite only nine of the state's 11 plants being in operation, according to the Iowa Renewable Fuels Association. http://bit.ly/39SE7wD

**Farm News - American Coalition for Ethanol says EPA's proposed ethanol rule is a tough pill to swallow – 1/20/21** - A proposed biofuels rule from the EPA is getting criticism from ethanol supporters. The part of the rule ethanol supporters like would address E-15 labeling and infrastructure requirements and not act on 66 petitions for Small Refinery Exemptions. http://bit.ly/391lxmB

**Agri-Pulse - Tax extenders provide certainty for ag rail, biofuels – 1/20/21** - Railroads that are critical to agricultural shippers have won some permanent tax relief, while biofuel producers have received extensions of tax benefits that subsidize next-generation products and installation of blender pumps. http://bit.ly/2MaDztz

**Energyworld - US EPA to release update on biofuel blending waivers – 1/20/21 -** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was expected to release an update late on Tuesday on pending waivers for oil refiners that would exempt them from U.S. biofuel blending obligations, EPA said in a notice. http://bit.ly/2XYXDlq

**Energy.Agwired.com - Trump EPA Grants Last Minute Refinery Waivers – 1/19/21** - At an agricultural event last week, EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler said he would not resign from the Trump Administration before the inauguration because he believed it was important for him to stay on "in the best interests of the agency. https://bit.ly/3bYfXUa

**Brownfield Ag News - Biodiesel is ready to meet demand, low-carbon challenges – 1/19/21 -** The CEO of the National Biodiesel Board says despite the challenges caused the pandemic, there has been increased demand for biodiesel and renewable diesel. Donnell Rehagen tells Brownfield several factors have contributed to increased demand. http://bit.ly/2M8FTi6

**Brownfield Ag News - RFA says it will fight EPAs illegal refinery exemptions – 1/19/21 -** The president and CEO of the Renewable Fuels Association says they will fight the last-minute and illegal small refinery exemptions granted to three oil refiners by the Trump administration Tuesday evening, just hours before President Trump leaves office. http://bit.ly/3p1ZGkP

**DTN Progressive Farmer - EPA Grants 3 Refinery RFS Exemptions | Agency Makes Decision on Evening Before New Administration Takes Over – 1/19/21 -** The Trump administration granted three pending requests for small-refinery exemptions to the Renewable Fuel Standard for 2018 and 2019 on Tuesday evening. http://bit.ly/2XVqaZ1

**Market Screener - Farmers Union Denounces Last Minute RFS Waivers – 1/19/21 -** In its final hours under President Donald Trump's jurisdiction, the EPA today issued three waivers retroactively exempting oil refineries from their 2018 and 2019 obligations under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS). The decision comes on the heels of the Supreme Court's agreement to hear a Tenth Circuit case that overturned three small refinery exemptions that had been inappropriately granted. http://bit.ly/3o58mFwb

**CORONAVIRUS**

**Missourinet - Eligible for the COVID-19 vaccination in Missouri? Here is what you need to know – 1/20/21 -** Missourians who are first responders, 65 years or older, or have certain serious health problems are now eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccination. But state Health and Senior Services Department Director Dr. Randall Williams tells Missourinet there's not enough vaccine to immunize all the people who fall into this category. http://bit.ly/3sKsBvE

**Des Moines Register - Iowa reports another 8 COVID-19 deaths, 954 confirmed coronavirus – 1/19/21** - The Iowa Department of Public Health on Tuesday was reporting another eight COVID-19 deaths and an additional 954 confirmed cases. http://bit.ly/2KB2pme

**Kansas City Star - Thousands overwhelm Johnson County COVID vaccine survey. Officials: 'We apologize' – 1/20/21 -** Thousands of Johnson County residents trying to complete a COVID-19 vaccine survey bogged down the online system, forcing the health department to boost its server capacity and encourage people to keep trying. http://bit.ly/3p179R6

**KMBC Ch. 9 Kansas City - Missouri reports 1,357 new coronavirus cases Tuesday – 1/19/21** - Kansas City metro area health officials are grappling with how to handle continuing case count increases after reopening businesses more than four months ago. http://bit.ly/3nVrJ3W

**Wichita Eagle - Here is how Kansas' COVID-19 deaths in 2020 compare to other top causes of death – 1/19/21 -** Despite the first COVID-19 death in Kansas being reported in March, the virus will end up as one of the leading causes of Kansas deaths in 2020 if recent trends hold. http://bit.ly/3o8xc7K

**Missouri Independent - Missouri COVID-19 case numbers down as lawmakers begin work on pandemic-related bills – 1/19/21 -** Amid signs that COVID-19 is loosening its grip on Missouri, the state Senate this week will hold hearings on coronavirus liability protections while the state House is home as leaders attempt to control a Capitol Building outbreak. http://bit.ly/3sl7LNH

**NATIONAL**

**ABC News - Monarch butterfly population moves closer to extinction – 1/20/21 -** Researchers say the number of western monarch butterflies wintering along the California coast has plummeted to a record low, putting the orange-and-black insects closer to extinction. http://abcn.ws/3p2nQvq

**Lexology - Sustainable Chemistry Research and Development Act Passed as Part of National Defense Authorization Act – 1/19/21** - No later than 180 days after enactment, an interagency working group will be convened to oversee the coordination of federal programs and activities in support of sustainable chemistry. http://bit.ly/2Nexf4U

**Fitch Ratings - New Lead and Copper Rule to Raise Costs for Water Utilities – 1/19/21 -** The EPA's new Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) is not expected to impact utility credit quality over the near-term, but it could have a material effect on certain water utilities' capex and credit profiles over the medium- to long-term. https://bit.ly/2Y0OqJe

**Associated Press - Supreme Court takes on early stage of global warming case – 1/19/21** - The Supreme Court on Tuesday seemed cautious about siding with oil and gas companies in a case involving global warming. The case the court was hearing is not about whether the companies can be held responsible for harms resulting from global warming. http://bit.ly/2XX9zEj

**Associated Press - Federal court strikes down major Trump climate rollback – 1/19/21** - In a last-minute slap at President Donald Trump, a federal appeals court struck down one of his administration's most momentous climate rollbacks on Tuesday, saying officials acted illegally in issuing a new rule that eased federal regulation of air pollution from power plants. http://bit.ly/3sFwh1T

**Associated Press - Zoom work relationships are a lot harder to build – unless you can pick up on colleagues' nonverbal cues – 1/19/21** - Participants reported that it was harder to understand their coworkers' nonverbal cues and to listen intently to what others were saying during virtual meetings compared with their in-person communications. http://bit.ly/2LOt1kd

**The Hill - Groups sue EPA over 'backwards' lead rule – 1/15/21** - Environmental and civil rights groups are suing the EPA over a new lead rule critics argue doesn't do enough to remove the lead pipes that contaminate drinking water. http://bit.ly/360i61X

**Wichita (KS) Eagle - DuPont chemical company charged in toxic gas release that killed 4 in Texas, feds say – 1/19/21** - A chemical company and former employee are charged in a poisonous gas release that led to the deaths of four workers in Texas, authorities say. In 2014, four employees at the DuPont chemical plant in La Porte died after the release of 24,000 pounds of methyl mercaptan, a highly toxic and flammable gas, authorities say. http://bit.ly/39NhiKB

**Inside Climate News - The Supreme Court Hears Arguments on Climate Change. Is it Ready to Decide Which Courts Have Jurisdiction? – 1/19/21** - Cities, counties and states suing the fossil fuel industry want state courts to award damages. But industry says it's a federal, if not a global, concern. http://bit.ly/3itLJtn

**Salon - Chemicals called SVOCs, emitted from household objects, are altering children's microbiomes – 1/19/21** - The chemicals in our environments, while sometimes useful, can also hurt us. But free-floating, harmful chemicals are also emitted from the furniture, wallpaper, flooring, and household items around us. And these chemicals are entering our bodies, damaging them in many different ways. http://bit.ly/3p4dMBU

**Bloomberg Law - States Blast EPA Over Carbon, Air Rules in Litigation Barrage – 1/19/21** - A slew of top state attorneys general unleashed a spate of last-minute lawsuits against Trump

administration environmental actions, including standards on toxic air controls and carbon emissions. https://bit.ly/3bVXAyZ

**Bloomberg Law - White House Memo on Chemical Decisions Sparks Concern, Confusion – 1/19/21 -** Polluters could have more power over the science that helps determine federal and state cleanup standards if a recent White House memo from the Trump administration is or becomes final, several attorneys and former agency scientists say. https://bit.ly/3iwaXXW

**Bloomberg Law - In Switch, Chamber Endorses Climate Action, Possible Carbon Tax – 1/19/21 -** The Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday embraced tougher action to combat climate change through carbon taxes, emissions caps or other "market-based" policies -- the latest shift by the nation's biggest business lobbying group as it pivots to a Washington dominated by Democrats. https://bit.ly/3p28Xt1

**Bloomberg Law - Foes of New EPA Water Guidance Hope It Ends Up 'in the Dumpster' – 1/19/21 -** The EPA has finalized fast-tracked guidance clarifying Clean Water Act permitting requirements for indirect pollution, the agency announced Tuesday. In just over a month's time, the EPA proposed and finalized the guidance, drawing swift criticism from both industry and environmental lawyers. https://bit.ly/3qJgltT

**Bloomberg Law - Solar and Hydrogen to Flourish in 2021 as Green Spending Grows – 1/19/21 -** The race to decarbonize the world is on, and 2021 is set to break fresh records for investment and installations in renewable energy and clean technologies. https://bit.ly/3o5Rm1Y

**Bloomberg Law - Democrats Blame Politics for Problems in EPA's Chemical Analyses – 1/19/21 -** Multiyear setbacks in completing certain EPA chemical analyses are delaying needed health protections, a federal watchdog report said Tuesday. But top House and Senate Democrats say the blame lies squarely on "political interference" by Scott Pruitt, the EPA's former administrator, and outgoing Administrator Andrew Wheeler. https://bit.ly/38ZwTaM

**Bloomberg Law - States Blast EPA Over Carbon, Air Rules in Litigation Barrage** – 1/19/21 - A slew of top state attorneys general unleashed a spate of last-minute lawsuits against Trump administration environmental actions, including standards on toxic air controls and carbon emissions. https://bit.ly/35XUeaR

**Bloomberg Law - Green Groups Follow States on Fine Particle Pollution Rule Suit – 1/19/21 -** Environmentalists and health organizations sued the Trump administration Tuesday for upholding air quality standards they say are too weak to protect against particulate matter pollution. https://bit.ly/3ixurM4

**Inside EPA - Environmentalists sue EPA in bid to force stricter lead and copper rule – 1/19/21 -** Environmental and civil rights groups are suing EPA for allegedly failing to reduce the public's exposure to lead in drinking water and are calling on the incoming Biden administration

to issue a new lead and copper rule (LCR) that addresses their public health and environmental justice concerns. http://bit.ly/3bZWXc6

**Inside EPA - D.C. Circuit Faults EPA For 'Misconstruction' Of 111(d) Power In ACE Rule – 1/19/21 -** The divided appellate court panel that vacated the Trump EPA's Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule says the exiting administration relied on a "fundamental misconstruction" of its Clean Air Act authority when it scrapped the Obama-era Clean Power Plan (CPP) climate rule and replaced it with the narrower ACE policy. http://bit.ly/3sLpDYa

**Inside EPA - Environmentalists file suit over EPA decision to retain PM NAAQS – 1/19/21 -** Environmental groups are filing a lawsuit challenging EPA's recent final rule retaining the existing suite of national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for particulate matter (PM), echoing litigation filed by 17 states over the decision and adding to pressure on the incoming Biden administration to pursue stricter PM limits. http://bit.ly/3oXf8yt

**Inside EPA- Lawyers Float Novel Options For Biden To Advance Climate Agenda – 1/19/21 -** The incoming Biden administration could have several novel options at the White House and various federal agencies besides EPA to advance its sweeping climate change agenda, several legal experts say, though they also warn that any measures will face scrutiny from conservative judges. http://bit.ly/3isa8zu

**Inside EPA - Brightbill Says New DOJ Rule May Block Biden Bid To Quickly Undo SEP Ban – 1/19/21 -** Jonathan Brightbill, the Justice Department's (DOJ) outgoing environment chief, says the incoming Biden administration cannot easily revoke the Trump DOJ's ban on popular supplemental environmental projects (SEPs) and other settlements involving payments to third parties, in part because the bans were recently codified into DOJ rules. http://bit.ly/3sS9ikq

**Inside EPA - Lawsuit Over EPA Air Toxics Policy Reversal Creates Early Test For Biden – 1/19/21 -** A coalition of 10 environmental groups is suing the Trump EPA over its final rule scrapping a decades-old "once in, always in" policy that permanently subjected industrial sources of air toxics to strict emissions controls, creating an early test for the incoming Biden administration on how to respond to the suit and calls to undo the policy rollback. http://bit.ly/2Y00smu

**Inside EPA - EPA Finalizes CWA Groundwater Permit Guide But Policy's Future Unclear – 1/19/21 -** EPA's final guidance to implement a landmark Supreme Court ruling on when pollutants that travel through groundwater to surface waters require a Clean Water Act (CWA) permit is scheduled to appear in the *Federal Register* Jan. 21, but it is unclear whether the document will take effect once the Biden administration takes office. http://bit.ly/3iweZQ4

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