Message

From: R7@Work [R7-Web@epa.gov]
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Subject: Daily Region 7 News Clips

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2/22/21 - Environmental News Clips

R7 IN THE NEWS

Lincoln (NE) Journal-Star - Editorial: As senators act, ethanol plant needs to stay closed – 2/21/21 - The AltEn Ethanol plant near Mead shut down on Feb. 8. The plant should remain shuttered for the foreseeable future, as the damaged lagoons are only the tip of the iceberg of potential environmental destruction created by the plant's use of pesticide-treated seed corn to make ethanol. http://bit.ly/3bpsoq2

Daily Iowan (University of Iowa, Iowa City) - Office of Sustainability to expand prairie research area – 2/21/21 - After receiving new funding from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Ashton Research Prairie will add six acres this spring. http://bit.ly/3si7T5v

KMA Regional Radio Shenendoah IA - Changes for 2021 Dicamba Applications in Soybeans – 2/21/21 - There's a new label for dicamba applied to soybean and, it includes a whole slew of changes farmers need to be prepared for this growing season. http://bit.ly/37CNn7O

Iowa Agribusiness Radio Network - Axne hosts biofuels roundtable with POET Biorefining – Corning – 2/19/21 - Iowa Third District Congresswoman Cindy Axne held a virtual biofuels roundtable with employees from POET Biorefining – Corning on Friday. The ethanol industry is coming off a very challenging year where sharp losses occurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. http://bit.ly/3pJQO2s

REGIONAL NEWS

KCRG Ch. 9 Cedar Rapids IA - Volunteers work to rescue sick geese in Coralville as the Iowa DNR urges caution – 2/21/21 - Volunteers continued working to rescue sick geese on Sunday as the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is urging people to use caution around when interacting with the birds. http://bit.ly/3qLghtM

KCRG Ch. 9 Cedar Rapids IA - Iowa DNR investigating reports of sick and dead geese on Iowa River in Coralville – 2/21/21 - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is investigating reports of sick and dead geese accumulating near the dam of the Iowa River in Coralville and other nearby areas after local volunteers and a wildlife organization from Des Moines recently discovered over 50 dead geese and rescued approximately 50 geese that appeared to be ill. http://bit.ly/3upJI6Q

Lake News Online - Lake level to reach unheard-of lows as Ameren fights against high energy use – 2/22/21 - High energy demands, upstream conditions at Truman Lake and downstream conditions on the Osage River, falling lake levels, and an ice jam on the Missouri River are all contributing to conditions on Lake of the Ozarks and Ameren's operations at the Bagnell Dam Power Plant. http://bit.ly/3qL6BQa

Nebraska Public Radio and Television - Lancaster County Loosens Wind Turbine Regulations, Landowners Not Happy – 2/21/21 - The Lancaster County Board of Commissioners voted 3-1 to this week to allow for the electricity-generating wind turbines in rural parts of the county to be noisier and installed closer to residents. http://bit.ly/2NtEiHu

Waterloo/Cedar Falls Courier - Guest Column: Invest in Iowa's electric grid – 2/22/21 - Transitioning away from fossil fuels to renewable energy is not only possible, it is necessary to avoid ever more extreme weather events. Investing in managing energy demand and keeping people safe should be our first step. http://bit.ly/3al5USb

KBIA Columbia MO Public Radio - Missouri Department Of Agriculture Looks To Update Pesticide Training – 2/22/21 - The Missouri Department of Agriculture is updating the way it teaches farmers to safely use pesticides, with the goals of making it easier for them and keeping the process under state control. http://bit.ly/37DZ91x

The Hill – Opinion: The blackouts have only just begun – 2/21/21 - Rolling blackouts have hit millions of Texans and people across the Great Plains, including Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma. Unfortunately, if President Biden gets his way, blackouts such as these may become a more common occurrence. http://bit.ly/3aEyALD

Eureka Alert - Long-term exposure to low levels of air pollution increases risk of heart and lung disease – 2/22/21 - Exposure to what is considered low levels of air pollution over a long period of time can increase the risk of heart attack, stroke, atrial fibrillation and pneumonia among people ages 65 and older, according to new research published today in the American Heart Association's flagship journal Circulation. http://bitly.is/3pIsoGW

TRANSITION 2021

Harvard Law Today - More Harvard Law faculty and alumni tapped to serve in the Biden administration – 2/19/21 - Since President Joe Biden took office in January, dozens of Harvard Law community members, including faculty and alumni, have been tapped to serve in high-profile positions in his administration, including the EPA. http://bit.ly/3boAq2s

NPR - U.S. Officially Rejoins Paris Agreement On Climate Change – 2/19/21 - The United States on Friday officially rejoined the Paris Agreement on climate change designed to limit global warming and avoid its potentially catastrophic impacts. http://n.pr/3kc5Kp7

Greenwire - Senate slows Biden's record-breaking staffing efforts – 2/21/21 - On day one, President Biden broke modern records by filling more than a third of the roughly 3,000 political posts across the federal government that do not require Senate confirmation. But for the administration's 1,250 political appointees that do require Senate approval, it has been slow going. http://bit.ly/3pEPfmJ

Bloomberg Law - Long Road, Tough Choices Ahead for Biden Car-Charging Pledge – 2/22/21 - President Joe Biden's plan to crank up electric vehicle infrastructure is short on publicly available details, but electric vehicle advocates already have a long list of ideas on how the administration can make it a reality. https://bit.ly/2ZGCNs4

Bloomberg Law - Kerry Vows Aggressive Climate Steps as U.S. Rejoins Paris – 2/19/21 - Presidential climate envoy John Kerry vowed on Friday that the U.S. would take aggressive steps to reduce its carbon emissions as the nation officially rejoins the Paris climate accord. https://bit.ly/3qMnWrP

CORONAVIRUS

Missouri Independent - Winter storms delay shipments of 6 million COVID-19 vaccine doses nationwide – 2/19/21 - The extreme cold weather across much of the country has delayed 6 million COVID-19 vaccine doses, slowing a vaccination rate that has been steadily rising since the Biden administration took office last month. http://bit.ly/3qLCdVA

Washington Post - 500,000 dead, a number almost too large to grasp – 2/21/21 - A year ago, covid-19 had killed just a handful of people in the United States. Now, the pandemic's official death toll equals the size of a major city, more than the population of Kansas City, Mo., and nearly as many as Atlanta or Sacramento. http://wapo.st/3uitGfi

FUELS

Nebraska Rural Radio - Biofuels Caucus co-chairs introduce legislation for transparency in RFS small refinery waiver process – 2/19/21 - Congressman Adrian Smith (R-NE) joined his fellow co-Chairs of the Congressional Biofuels Caucus, Representatives Angie Craig (D-MN), Dusty Johnson (R-SD), Cindy Axne (D-IA), Rodney Davis (R-IL), and Mark Pocan (D-WI),

in introducing bipartisan legislation to ensure transparency and predictability to the Environmental Protection Agency's small refinery exemption (SRE) process. http://bit.ly/3sh6qfF

Oil Price - Some Of Texas' Biggest Refineries Could Take Weeks To Restart – 2/19/21 - Some of the largest oil refineries in Texas could take weeks to restart as they would need to repair the damages from the big Texas freeze, Bloomberg reports, citing sources with knowledge of the situation. http://bit.ly/3brqiWN

Biofuels Digest - RFA says RFS general waiver requests are unjustified and illegal – 2/21/21 - In Washington, D.C., the Renewable Fuels Association filed comments with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in response to earlier requests from oil refiners and the governors of six oil-producing states seeking a general waiver from 2019 and 2020 renewable volume obligations under the Renewable Fuel Standard. http://bit.ly/3qKsAGV

AP – Editorial: Yes, we must change – 2/21/21 - For the past week, there's been a coordinated and cynical effort to blame renewable fuels for what happened in Texas. It was an "Ah-hah!" moment for the everything-is-fine-don't-change-a-thing crowd. Except they were wrong. We know that now. http://bit.ly/3kb0LoC

Iowa Agribusiness Radio Network - Bipartisan RFS Integrity Act Introduced in the House – 2/22/21 - The goal of the legislation is to reduce the secrecy currently surrounding the small refinery exemption process and bring more certainty into the renewable fuel marketplace. http://bit.ly/3soeIrP

Iowa Agribusiness Radio Network - Iowa Fuel Choice Coalition opposes Gov Reynolds ethanol mandate - 2/18/21 - While the biofuels industry hails this as a step towards increasing the demand for the biofuels that drive a large portion of Iowa's economy, not everybody is on board with the initiative. http://bit.ly/3kcBGJQ

Quad-City Times - Column: A 'biofuels corridor' for the Midwest: A clean air solution for today's world – 2/21/21 - Paired with existing or proposed standards, the Midwest has a unique opportunity to become a "biofuels corridor." Doing so would empower urban and rural Midwesterners alike, providing significant economic and environmental benefits. It would enable the region to participate in — and even lead — the national drive for renewable energy. http://bit.ly/2NNn3Rd

Inside EPA - Divided Refiners, Biofuels Groups Spar Over RFS 'Severe Hardship' Waivers – 2/19/21 - Refiners are clashing with each other and biofuels groups over requests from states and some small refiners for "severe economic harm" waivers from renewable fuel standard (RFS) biofuel blending obligations, in a dispute similar a fight over hardship waivers for small refiners that biofuels advocates fiercely oppose. http://bit.ly/37DjqND

NATIONAL

CNN - Chemicals in plastics damage babies' brains and must be banned immediately, expert group says – 2/20/21 - Synthetic chemicals called phthalates are damaging children's brain development and therefore must be immediately banned from consumer products, according to a group of scientists and health professionals from Project TENDR. http://bit.ly/2NTdJLu

JD Supra - Sea Change? Water Policy Under the Biden Administration – 2/19/21 - With the new year comes a new president. Will the new year and administration bring new water policy, too? Bet on it. http://bit.ly/3uviW9V

Environmental Health News - The Superfund program turns 40. And it's a mess. – 2/21/21 - A well-intentioned law hits a landmark anniversary as President Biden inherits more than 1,500 Superfund sites. http://bit.ly/3bteC5F

The Hill - Refineries released tons of pollution into air during Texas winter storm – 2/21/21 - The arctic freeze in Texas caused refineries to release tons of pollutants into the air last week, Reuters reported Sunday. Reuters reports that refineries and petrochemical plants rushed to shut down as freezing temperatures spread out across the state and impacted the power and natural gas supplies needed to run the plants. http://bit.ly/2ZHcjq9

E&E Daily - Democrats look to strengthen federal workforce – 2/22/21 - A House Oversight and Reform subcommittee will hold a hearing tomorrow on the federal workforce, which has been dealing with challenges including mass retirements. http://bit.ly/37ABrDC

E&E Daily - Lawmakers introduce biofuel, energy and mine cleanup bills – 2/22/21 - Lawmakers introduced dozens of bills last week, including on issues related to energy policy, biofuels and cleaning up abandoned coal mines. Rep. Jeff Duncan (R-S.C.) introduced H.R. 1119 to codify a Trump executive order on cyber protections for the bulk power system. http://bit.ly/3qLpxht

Utility DIVE - Florida water utility hack reveals thousands of organizations vulnerable to Window 7 exposure – 2/22/21 - Critical infrastructure providers and small and medium businesses continue to operate the outdated Microsoft OS without security updates and patches. http://bit.ly/3dCuENu

Bloomberg Law - Ice, Fire, Floods: Extreme Weather and Climate Change: QuickTake – 2/19/21 - The connections between warming trends and extreme weather aren't completely understood, but it's becoming increasingly apparent that there's a connection between climate change and rising damage from hurricanes, typhoons, rainstorms, wildfires and heat and cold. https://bit.ly/3dCCYws

Greenwire - Agricultural emissions rose, but farm group sees progress – 2/19/21 - U.S. agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions climbed in 2018, continuing a long-term trend — but the largest U.S. farm lobbying group found some rays of optimism. http://bit.ly/2ZEAi9t

Greenwire - States press for fast-track review of soot standard – 2/19/21 - Intensifying their attack on one of the Trump administration's most contested environmental decisions, states and advocacy groups are asking EPA to swiftly revisit a December rule that leaves national soot standards unchanged for years to come. http://bit.ly/37F3quj

Greenwire - Study finds rare earth metals in plastic products – 2/19/21 - A new study found rare metals in plastic consumer products ranging from food packaging to children's toys, suggesting manufacturers are using recycled electronics to make them. http://bit.ly/2ZIl2s4

NBC News - U.S. rejoins Paris climate agreement. Now comes the daunting part. – 2/19/22 - The Biden administration seeks to show seriousness of purpose to meet its emissions-cutting commitments and restore the U.S.'s diminished standing on the world stage. http://nbcnews.to/3qJnpqP

Inside Climate - Inside Clean Energy: Explaining the Crisis in Texas – 2/21/21 - This is what happens when the challenges of climate adaptation run into the challenges of the energy transition. http://bit.ly/3uqksxE

Inside Climate - How Much Does Climate Change Cost? Biden Expected to Raise Carbon's Dollar Value – 2/19/21 - The administration is expected to temporarily increase the "social cost" of carbon, at least to the level set by Obama, but climate-concerned economists say that's not high enough. http://bit.ly/2NQxfbw

Bloomberg Law - Restarting Texas's Frozen Energy Hub Will Be a Climate Mess – 2/21/21 - Like a cold-blooded animal—a lizard or a snake—the petrochemical hub that is the state of Texas went dormant during the deep freeze. Eventually, it'll wake up again, and when it does the damage will be worse than if it never went to sleep. https://bit.ly/3pJfBnq

Bloomberg Law - Weak Grids Expose Risks for the Electrification of Everything – 2/20/21 - The freezing, snowy weather in Texas exposed how quickly an energy system can be brought down and how widespread the chaos can be. That raises questions about the vulnerability of power grids around the world just as more parts of our everyday lives electrify. https://bit.ly/3qJr7kd

Bloomberg Law - Bayer Fails to Win Approval for PCB Settlement Once - 2/19/21 - Bayer AG again failed to persuade a judge to approve a $650 million settlement with hundreds of cities, counties and ports over PCB contamination. https://bit.ly/3uoALuv

Inside EPA - Think Tank Sees Senate Barrier To Carbon Tax That Curbs EPA Rules – 2/19/21 - Senators could approve a carbon tax under streamlined budget reconciliation procedures, but it is not clear it can do so with language that would limit EPA's regulatory authority for greenhouse gases, a condition that many industry supporters have attached to any carbon tax plan, according to a new paper from a free-market think tank. http://bit.ly/3kclZT7

Inside EPA - Biden EPA Publishes Final Trump-Era Industrial Stormwater General Permit – 2/19/21 - The Biden EPA has formally published a Clean Water Act (CWA) general permit for industrial stormwater that appears unchanged from a version that the Trump administration finalized earlier this year as a result of a 2016 settlement agreement with environmentalists and industry but did not have time to publish. http://bit.ly/3qNVDtq

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