Message

From: Alpern, Michael [Alpern.Michael@epa.gov]
Sent: 10/7/2020 3:45:39 PM
To: Jordan, Deborah [Jordan.Deborah@epa.gov]
Subject: FW: Daily News Clips: Morning Edition, 10/07/20

From: Kibilov, Nicholas
Sent: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 8:45:33 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: AO OPA OMR CLIPS
Subject: Daily News Clips: Morning Edition, 10/07/20

Daily News Clips: October 7, 2020 (morning edition)

Agriculture

AGWired: EPA Administrator Wheeler Visits Ohio Farm
Raccoon Valley Radio: MENLO FARMER COMMENTS ON SMALL REFINERY EXEMPTIONS DENIAL

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Energy Star Certification

BakingBusiness: Fifteen Flowers bakeries earn Energy Star certification

Enforcement

Reuters: Tribes slam EPA move to give Oklahoma control of environmental rules

Green Power Awards

Supermarket Perimeter: ALDI wins EPA award for green power

Land Management

Register Guard: County's emergency declaration paves way for no-cost hazardous Holiday Farm Fire-related cleanup

Pollution

CentralJersey: EPA finalizes change to cleanup plan for Imperial Oil Superfund site in Marlboro
BinghamtonHomepage: EPA Finalizes Cleanup Plan to Address Creosote Contamination at the GCL Tie and Treating Superfund

Water

News5Cleveland: EPA administrator visits Cleveland announcing delisting of Ashtabula River AOC
Patch: EPA Celebrates Progress Of Northeast Ohio Waterways
Des Moines Register: Two companies in Iowa escape enforcement action despite dozens of clean water violations, environmental group finds

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EPA Administrator Wheeler Visits Ohio Farm

http://agwired.com/2020/10/07/epa-administrator-wheeler-visits-ohio-farm/?shared=email&msg=fail

By CINDY ZIMMERMAN
OCTOBER 7, 2020

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Andrew Wheeler kicked off a swing through northeast Ohio Tuesday which included attending an Ohio Farm Bureau event on a dairy farm in Stark County where he highlighted EPA's commitment to working with Ohio's farmers on a number of environmental issues.

During the event, Administrator Wheeler delivered remarks to a group of farmers highlighting President Trump's commitment to the agriculture community, and the Trump EPA's efforts to strengthen partnerships with farmers and rebuild trust with rural America. Additionally, Administrator Wheeler discussed EPA's Navigable Waters Protection Rule (NWPR) that replaced the overreaching Obama Administration's Waters of the United States rule that lacked clarity. He reiterated that NWPR provides clarity on waters that are federally regulated, specifically noting they no longer include farm ditches or stock water ponds.

Administrator Wheeler also touted how EPA is ensuring crop protection tools are made available for the agriculture community. For example, following the 9th Circuit of Appeals decision in June that threatened to upend the growing season for many farmers, the Trump Administration fought to ensure farmers were able to use already-purchased dicamba.

MENLO FARMER COMMENTS ON SMALL REFINERY EXEMPTIONS DENIAL
https://www.raccoonvalleyradio.com/2020/10/07/menlo-farmer-comments-on-small-refinery-exemptions-denial/
Posted By: Sam McIntosh
October 7, 2020 @ 5:21 am

In a year that's seen few rewards for Iowa corn producers, they recently scored a win from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Last month the EPA denied a majority of the "gap-year" small refinery exemptions from 2011-2018 compliance years under the Renewable Fuel Standard. Iowa Corn Promotion Board District 7 Director and Menlo farmer Ralph Lents says his Board and the Iowa Corn Growers Association has repeatedly pushed the EPA to deny these gap-year waivers for months, and he is glad the agency has taken steps to uphold the integrity of the RFS by denying the vast majority of the refinery petitions. Lents comments on whether this will lead to a larger ethanol output, "We hope so, we've got a couple foreign countries that would love to buy ethanol from us, that'd be in China and India. If we'd ever straighten out our trade issues they would buy a lot of ethanol from us because they both need to clean up their environments."

Small refinery exemptions are granted from refineries' annual Renewable Volume Obligations if they can demonstrate that compliance with the RVOs would cause the refinery to suffer disproportionate economic hardship. Gap-waivers for 2019 and 2020 are yet to be denied, and Lents says the ICPB and ICGA will continue to work on behalf of corn farmers to ensure the RFS is upheld, which requires a certain volume of renewable fuel to replace or reduce the amount of petroleum-based transportation fuel.

CFACT to EPA: Wrong time for new Clean Air Act burdens

https://www.cfact.org/2020/10/07/cfact-to-epa-wrong-time-for-new-clean-air-act-burdens/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=cfact-to-epa-wrong-time-for-new-clean-air-act-burdens
By Craig Rucker
7 Oct 2020

The Clean Air Act has been a great success — until eco-radicals got a hold of it.

America enjoys our cleanest air and water since pre-industrial times.

Basic economics teaches us that free markets are efficient, but government must protect us from problems such as over-pollution. Pollution is an example of what economists term "externalities;" impacts caused by producers who do not bare the costs.

We can all be proud of the work we've done to curb pollution.

We must be on guard, however, against efforts to misuse our anti-pollution laws and regulations. Our laws were written to clean and conserve, not as tools for an anti-capitalist Left that never saw a constructive activity it wouldn't thwart.

CFACT senior policy analyst Bonner Cohen sent a detailed official comment to EPA on clean air standards which focuses on ozone. We posted it to CFACT.org.

Bonner makes a compelling case that EPA would be foolish to further tighten ozone standards at a time when America can least afford them. The costs would be too high, while the benefits would be too little to matter.

EPA is wisely working to keep current high clean air standards in place, without foolishly expanding them to the point of destruction.

Comments roll in for 14-hour HOS pause
https://www.fleetowner.com/resource-center/regulations/article/21143975/comments-roll-in-for-14hour-hos-pause
By Catharine Conway
OCT 07, 2020

FMCSA has set Nov. 2 as the deadline for public input on a Split Duty Period Pilot Program, which would allow commercial drivers one off-duty break up to three hours that would pause a truck driver's 14-hour driving window.

The Federal Register has received over 170 public comments as of Oct. 7, favorable and unfavorable, since the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) originally requested public input on a pilot program that would create hours of service (HOS) regulatory relief. The program would allow participating drivers to pause their on-duty driving period with one off-duty period up to three hours. FMCSA has set the deadline for public comment for Nov. 2, the day before the 2020 presidential election.

The Split Duty Period Pilot Program, which would allow drivers one off-duty break of at least 30 minutes, but not more than three hours, that would pause a truck driver's 14-hour driving window, provided the driver takes 10 consecutive hours off duty at the end of the work shift.

“The pause button, as you call it, would help because of being stuck at shipper or receivers or stuck in traffic (due to a wreck)," one commenter said. "This would greatly help the driver to continue on to a safe place to park and get a rest period in as it would help drivers to be able to continue the day without being in such a great hurry as to be a danger on the highway.”

Another commenter said the pause “makes perfect sense.” “[The pause] should have been implemented years ago. [It] would work great if you got held up at an accident scene, caught in bad weather, slow shippers, etc. With the most important reason being a driver can stop for a power nap and not feel rushed because his/her driving clock is always ticking away.”

“Please pause the 14-hour clock,” said another commenter. “We get to shippers and receivers, and it can take them three hours or longer. By the time they finished loading or unloading, we don't have time left to make it to a safe haven. This would help out a lot. I would be interested in being a driver for this pilot program.”

While many were in favor, many others pointed out the negative consequences, such as impacting sleep cycles.

One commenter wrote: “Extensive sleep studies were conducted and researched to come up with the 14-hour clock in the first place. Adding a potential three additional hours to the 14-hour clock would go directly against the sleep research and studies already done to create it in the first place. Strongly not advised.”

In that same vein, many commenters discussed the limits of human endurance in their responses.

“I have been in the trucking industry for nearly 30 years, and I am 100% certain that allowing drivers to pause the 14-hour clocks will be detrimental to safety,” one stated. “Fourteen hours is a long day; 75% longer than the average employee works in a day. To allow the driver to be on our nation’s highways in excess of 14 hours is a very bad idea. Drivers will choose to pause their 14-hour clock while at a loading or unloading facility while they are waiting but not resting. To think that the time at the customer is restful is wrong. Before the 14-hour clock was implemented, there was a saying in trucking that a driver ‘works all day and drives all night’. Please do not allow the industry to return to that mode of operation.”

Another point of contention was that the rule could be bent to benefit the carrier, not the driver.

“My first concern is that a 'pause' is a violation of HOS limitations of safe human driving endurances,” one detractor explained. “My second concern is that it will be used by carriers to pressure their drivers to use the 'pause' for scheduling considerations convenient to the carrier, not the driver. Only an owner/operator who isn't leased to anyone might be able to make the decision to 'pause' in an independent frame of mind, but he still can't 'choose' to drive as alert beyond the well-established 14-hour mark for having safe reaction times.”

This same commenter quoted Truckers Report, saying that “the proposal is very similar to the ‘pause’ provision that was proposed in an early draft of the HOS reform rule that [went] into effect at the end of September. One of the reasons that it was removed from the final rule was that there was concern that carriers would coerce drivers to use the ‘pause’ for non-restful detention time, tiring them out and effectively lengthening the number of hours they work in a day.”

Another remarked how dangerous the program could be for truck drivers.

“This dangerous push to put immature young minds behind the wheel of tractor-trailers has scared me more than I'd like to admit,” one said. “If this goes through, I will quit the industry. Hire one, you'll have two quit. We drivers are done playing games.”

Comments on the Split Duty Period Pilot Program can be made via the Federal Register through Nov. 2.

Study: Air pollution makes you more likely to contract, and die from COVID-19
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/air-pollution-severe-covid-19-coronavirus-deaths-environment-sustainability/
07 Oct 2020
By Jennifer Rainey Marquez Associate Director of Research Communications, Georgia State

A study has shown that exposure to air pollution may influence the severity of coronavirus.
Researchers compared data from the US Environmental Protection Agency and the COVID-19 mortality data collated from Johns Hopkins University.
They found a small decrease of one microgram of particulate matter per cubic meter of air reduces the number of deaths by 3 to 5%.
It also reduces the number of newly confirmed COVID-19 cases by 2%.

Contemporaneous exposure to air pollution may influence the severity of COVID-19 illness and increase the likelihood people will die from the disease, a new study shows.

Researchers examined daily air pollution data collected from US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) monitoring stations across the United States as well as COVID-19 mortality and caseload data from the Johns Hopkins University Center for Systemic Science and Engineering.

The study harnesses plausibly random changes in wind direction, which lead to large fluctuations in air pollution, to assess the relationship between air pollution exposure and COVID-19 caseload and mortality.

The researchers used cell phone data and state-level policies adopted to curb the spread of the virus to control for social distancing measures. The findings show that between January 22 and August 15, decreases in contemporaneous exposure to fine particle air pollution linked to decreases in confirmed COVID-19 cases and decreases in mortality.

Could reducing air pollution prevent COVID-19 deaths?
Image: Georgia State University

"Local governments are weighing the trade-offs between reopening the economy and minimizing the toll of COVID-19," says Stefano Carattini, assistant professor of economics at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University. "Our paper shows that by keeping current air pollution low, it's possible to help offset the disease burden created by reopening."

Air pollution levels in the US have not decreased significantly during the pandemic, despite the concurrent increase in remote work and decrease in travel.

"For the past few years, the US has deregulated facilities that are responsible for large amounts of emissions," says Carattini. "During the pandemic, these facilities were exempt from reporting their levels of emissions to the EPA, and other research has shown that this has increased pollution levels around those facilities."

The effects of air pollution on COVID-19 mortality are relatively large, according to the study. A decrease of one microgram of particulate matter per cubic meter of air (one microgram equals one-millionth of a gram) is sufficient to almost immediately reduce the number of newly confirmed COVID-19 cases by 2% and the number of deaths by 3 to 5%.

The researchers suggest a number of policy changes that could help reduce levels of fine particles and improve COVID-19 outcomes.
At the federal level, reinstating EPA regulations may reduce air pollution by large emissions producers.
States can limit non-essential travel and encourage continued teleworking.
Local governments can regulate vehicle emissions by moving forward with congestion fees or tolls to limit traffic or using their cleanest bus fleet, especially if buses are not running at full capacity.

"We know that policymakers have no room to change past exposure to pollution," Carattini says. "But they have power to change the current conditions and the future."

"The paper's findings also help to explain the fact that some socioeconomic groups have been disproportionally impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic," says coauthor John Gómez Mahecha, a PhD student at the Andrew Young School.

"These groups, indeed, are known to be more likely to be living in areas where exposure to pollution, including fine particulate matter, is higher."

We are what we breathe
https://riverreporter.com/stories/we-are-what-we-breathe,39849
Posted Wednesday, October 7, 2020 8:53 am
By CAROL ROIG

How many times have I told myself to "take a deep breath" over the past four years? Actually, I do practice deep breathing to reduce stress and it often helps. But as the pandemic unfolds, wildfires rage in the West and an astounding rollback of environmental protections continues, the simple act of taking a deep calming breath has assumed a new aura of risk.

Fifty million Americans can't take a deep breath right now because of wildfire smoke. An NPR analysis of the EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) data found that one in seven Americans had experienced air rated "unhealthy," "very unhealthy" or "hazardous" for at least one day during this year's wildfire season, posing danger even for the healthiest individuals. On average, the "very unhealthy" air lingered for 4.1 days this year, more than twice as long as the average over the previous decade.

Environmental toxicologist Luke Montrose, writing in Scientific American, explains that wildfire smoke "contains thousands of individual compounds, including carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides. The most prevalent pollutant by mass is particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, roughly 50 times smaller than a grain of sand. Its prevalence is one reason health authorities issue air quality warnings using PM2.5 as the metric." The body has defense mechanisms against larger particles, but PM2.5 can travel deep into the lungs, causing inflammation and impairing the lungs' ability to isolate foreign material and pathogens. Exposure to PM2.5 causes a range of respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, and young children and older adults are most vulnerable. Two separate PM2.5 studies from the University of Montana have found that our lungs continue to deteriorate for years after significant exposure, and that residents showed a higher incidence of influenza following particularly active fire seasons, a finding that could have implications for both incidence and mortality rates for COVID-19 in the coming flu season.

All of this may seem very far away from the Upper Delaware, but there is a bigger picture about air pollution, lung health and COVID-19, because wildfires are not the only source of PM2.5 and other pollutants. Any domestic or industrial process that uses combustion can produce PM2.5, either directly, from fossil fuel-burning

vehicles and equipment, and the burning of fuels such as wood, heating oil, gas or coal to heat buildings, or indirectly through the chemical reactions of gases from sources such as power plants that burn fossil fuels. Backyard burning of household or construction refuse can create a lingering toxic cloud that may contain hydrogen chloride, hydrogen cyanide, formaldehyde, dioxin, benzene, arsenic, lead, cadmium, mercury and chromium as well as fine particulate matter, which is why it is illegal.

With the spread of COVID-19, and the realization that many of the specific health impacts associated with air pollution—asthma, COPD, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and impaired immune system—are also co-morbidities for COVID-19, the issue deserves urgent attention. A reasonable response might be to connect up all of the valuable air quality data collected and analyzed by the Environmental Protection Agency and use it to develop public health strategies. But that has not been the case.

The EPA monitors the six "criteria pollutants" specified in the Clean Air Act (ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide; nitrogen dioxide; sulfur dioxide; and lead), and it tracks 188 toxic air pollutants designated as Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPS). It also maintains the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) database, required reporting from some 21,800 industrial and government sites around the country; roughly 221.5 million people (two-thirds of the U.S. population) have at least one TRI facility in their zip code. In March, as the COVID-19 pandemic deepened, the American Petroleum Institute asked the Trump administration to suspend the EPA's enforcement of the TRI reporting and monitoring requirements. Six days later, the government announced a sweeping freeze on civil enforcement of environmental laws, exempting the oil and gas industry, coal plants and other industrial facilities from reporting toxic emissions for the foreseeable duration of the pandemic. Nine states, including New York, filed lawsuits and the exemption was rescinded after 172 days.

But the rollback was damaging, and we get a good idea of the health and environmental justice consequences from a study by American University's Department of Public Administration and Policy. Using EPA daily air quality data, the study reached two key findings. First, that pollution increased: counties with six or more TRI sites averaged about 14.4 percent higher rates of PM2.5 pollution and a five percent increase in ozone. Second: increased pollution during the rollback led to "large and statistically significant increases in COVID-19 cases and deaths." Counties with six or more TRI sites experienced a 10.5 percent increase in daily COVID-19 deaths and a 53.1 percent increase in daily confirmed COVID-19 cases compared to counties with fewer TRI sites. The study authors also found that increased pollution exposure was worse for counties with a higher proportion of African American residents. "This suggests that the rollback is associated with large, heretofore unmeasured social costs."

I'd take a deep breath, but someone in my neighborhood is burning refuse.

EPA Approves Non-Selective Tiafenacil Herbicide
https://www.no-tillfarmer.com/articles/10043-epa-approves-non-selective-tiafenacil-herbicide
October 7, 2020 | Posted in Crop Protection
Source: Aju Business Daily

SEOUL -- According to Aju Business Daily, Terrad'or, a new product developed by South Korean herbicide and fertilizer company Farm Hannong, has been registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a non-selective herbicide that shows a prompt and powerful burndown efficacy.

Terrad'or (tiafenacil) is a new pyrimidinedione herbicide that inhibits chlorophyll formation in weeds and generates active oxygen to destroy cells.

Farm Hannong said that the shipment of Terrad'or to the U.S. would begin in December. "Terrad'or's entry into the U.S. will be an opportunity to promote its global product competitiveness. We will focus more on expanding overseas markets in the future," CEO Lee You-jin said in a statement.

Farm Hannong said that EPA's move would accelerate the company's entry into the global market because the registration of herbicides for edible crops in the U.S. is subject to much stricter standards than herbicides for grass. Since a Terrad'or product was registered in Sri Lanka in January 2019 as a non-selective herbicide for pre-plant burndown treatment, the company has actively entered overseas markets.

Glyphosate, a broad-spectrum systemic herbicide and crop desiccant, has been used widely to kill weeds, especially annual broadleaf weeds and grasses that compete with crops. However, the development of glyphosate resistance in weed species has become a costly problem.

EPA has proposed tiafenacil for pre-plant and pre-emergence burndown use in corn, cotton, soybeans and wheat. The agency said earlier on its website that tiafenacil is expected to be useful for herbicide-resistance management. For more, see the background info and proposed label for tiafenacil.

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week and Protecting Children, Families and Workers from Exposure Hazards
https://www.webwire.com/ViewPressRel.asp?aId=264895

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

Clark Seif Clark provides industrial hygiene and environmental testing and consulting to identify and mitigate exposure risks to lead and other hazardous materials.

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (NLPPW) takes place this year from October 25th through the 31st. The week of recognition is a joint initiative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The goal of NLPPW is to encourage organized, local community events, and to empower families and other stakeholders to take action to help prevent lead poisoning. This is imperative as approximately 3.6 million American households have children under 6 years of age who live in homes with lead exposure hazards. The CDC also reports that about 500,000 American children between ages of 1 and 5 years have blood lead levels greater than or equal to the blood lead reference value (BLRV), the level (5 micrograms per deciliter) at which the agency recommends public health actions.

Much of the lead poisoning is due to the fact that the toxic heavy metal can still be found inside and outside of many homes. This may include the home's water and the soil around the house in some cases; however, the most common source of exposure is from lead-based paint, which was used in many homes built before 1978.

Both adults and children can get lead into their bodies by breathing in lead dust (especially during activities such as renovations, repairs or painting) or by swallowing lead dust that settles in food, food preparation surfaces, floors, window sills and other places, or eating paint chips or soil that contain lead. Children can also be exposed to lead dust from an adult's job or hobbies, and from some metal toys or toys painted with lead-based paints.

"Childhood lead poisoning is considered the most preventable environmental disease among young children," said Zahid Iqbal, MPH, CIH and Technical Director at Clark Seif Clark (CSC). "Preventing exposure is key, whether for children in the home or for adults on the job. At CSC our industrial hygiene, environmental and building science professionals provide lead consulting and testing services to identify lead hazards so they can be eliminated or mitigated to prevent new cases of lead poisoning."

CSC also recently sponsored an educational video about National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week that can be seen at: https://youtu.be/YfaJoRrOpI4

To learn more about lead or other industrial hygiene, building science, indoor air quality, environmental, health, and safety testing and consulting services, please visit www.csceng.com, email csc@csceng.com or call (800) 807-1118.

About Clark Seif Clark
CSC was established in 1989 to help clients in both public and private sectors address indoor air quality, occupational, environmental, and health and safety (EH&S) issues. CSC is a leading provider of these services with multiple offices along the western seaboard and southwest. The company believes in science-based protocols and has a strong background in engineering, making them the preferred environmental consultants to industrial clients, healthcare facilities, architects, schools, builders, contractors, developers and real estate professionals.

Officials: Retests show appropriate lead levels after four homes flagged in Trenton
https://www.journal-news.com/news/officials-retests-show-appropriate-lead-levels-after-four-homes-flagged-in-trenton/GYW4XZSDPBHPJPVKKMK3LUCZ3I/
By Denise G. Callahan, Ohio
7 Oct 2020

Trenton reported lead-tainted water tests recently, but officials said the result does not reflect system-wide problem and further tests showed results at appropriate levels.

The city sent out a notice last week that four out of 30 homes tested showed "apparent lead action level exceedance," according to Ohio Environmental Protection Agency standards. High lead levels in tap water can be dangerous for pregnant women and children.

Water Department Operator in Charge Dave Combs told the Journal-News "user error" caused the issue. He said levels were appropriate when the homes were retested later.

The EPA rules are stringent, and Trenton had to comply with notifications, education and other rules, officials said.

ExploreNew coronavirus test: Butler County offers to check wastewater to find COVID-19 outbreaks
"We did retest but the EPA doesn't recognize those results," Combs said. "Three of the four requested to be retested so we did that, they all came back well below the action level. It's the craziest thing and I hate that it's so dramatized but it is."

Combs said officials took an additional 10 samples and are awaiting those results. Because four of the 28 results they received constituted 10% of the sample, the EPA requires the city notify the public.

The city relies on the public to test their own taps because the testing requires that the kitchen or bathroom sink that is used for testing be out of commission for six hours. It is more convenient for the residents to pick when to test.

"It's terribly frustrating, that's why we collected 10 more samples," Combs said. "We told the people hey you have to follow these steps. As long as these samples come back OK then this exceedance will be rescinded. We just have to be very careful who we have taking these samples for us."

The main concern for copper and lead contamination are in homes built before 1986 when they stopped using lead solder for copper pipes. Combs said there is a simple way to lessen the contamination chance.

"If you don't get a good flush your water has just been sitting in there absorbing lead," Combs said noting residents should let water run 30 seconds to a minute before use.

The Ohio EPA did not respond to questions about the Trenton situation.

Single-application antiviral surface coating approved by the US EPA
https://www.rivieramm.com/news-content-hub/news-content-hub/single-application-antiviral-surface-coating-approved-by-the-us-environmental-protection-agency-61208
07 Oct 2020by Craig Jallal

RSC Bio Solutions has announced it is a preferred US national service provider for SurfaceWise2, the first antiviral surface coating approved for limited emergency use by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continuously protect against Covid-19 with a single application
RSC Bio Solutions is authorised by Allied BioScience to provide professional application of SurfaceWise2, inhouse application training and certification, surface coating monitoring and regulatory compliance support once the EPA use waiver is approved.

"We are excited about partnering with Allied BioScience, the creator of SurfaceWise2, to offer our customers a solution for continuous protection against SARS-COV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19," said RSC Bio Solutions' president and chief executive Mike Guggenheimer. "The EPA approval clears the way to begin effectively protecting consumers against Covid-19 as the only solution proven to provide long-term, non-hazardous surface protection from the virus."

The addition of RSC Bio Solutions as an Allied BioScience Preferred National Service Provider follows this week's announcement by the US EPA that it has approved a public health emergency exemption waiver for the use of SurfaceWise2 among certain Texas-based customers.

SurfaceWise2 requires professional application, and RSC Bio Solutions has the advanced capabilities to manage the process as a leading provider of products and services in multiple industry sectors including manufacturing and distribution, transportation, governments and municipalities, and healthcare, senior and childcare facilities.

RSC Bio Solutions' vice president of research and development Dr Larry Beaver said, "We are working closely with Allied BioScience on the ongoing EPA state-by-state and national approval process. We anticipate additional EPA state registrations will follow in the immediate future."

SurfaceWise2 will be added to RSC Bio Solutions' Clean-Safely platform which provides integrated solutions that meet the escalating challenge to safely eliminate viral threats in public, commercial and industrial spaces. As part of RSC Bio Solutions, the business brings 40 years of experience in the high-performance sustainable

space for both marine and land applications, and a successful history in the development and application of environmentally-friendly products for diverse industry applications.

Fifteen Flowers bakeries earn Energy Star certification
https://www.bakingbusiness.com/articles/52025-fifteen-flowers-bakeries-earn-energy-star-certification
10.07.2020
By Eric Schroeder

THOMASVILLE, GA. — Flowers Foods, Inc. on Oct. 6 announced 15 of its US baking plants have been granted Environmental Protection Agency Energy Star certification for 2020. In 2019, 13 of the company's 46 bakeries achieved Energy Star status.

Flowers baking plants that received Energy Star status are located in Batesville, Ark.; Baton Rouge, La.; El Paso, Texas; Henderson, Nev.; Houston; Lafayette, La.; Lynchburg, Va.; Modesto, Calif.; New Orleans; Norfolk, Va.; and Tyler, Texas. Also achieving certification were Alpine Valley Bread Co., Mesa, Ariz.; Dave's Killer Bread, Milwaukie, Ore.; Holsum Bakery of Tolleson, Ariz.; and Tuscaloosa Organic Baking Co., Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Thirteen of the 15 plants also were Energy Star certified in 2019. New to the 2020 list were the Houston and Modesto plants.

To gain Energy Star certification, a plant must perform in the top 25% of similar facilities across the United States for energy efficiency and meet energy efficiency standards established by the EPA.

"It is a testament to these bakeries' commitment to sustainable environmental practices that they were able to achieve the EPA's rigorous Energy Star standards, despite the challenges created by the pandemic," said Margaret Ann Marsh, vice president of environmental sustainability at Flowers. "I am pleased to report that Flowers Foods is on track to reach and surpass the greenhouse gas emissions target we've set for 2025."

As a part of the company's energy efficiency and conservation efforts, Flowers said it is pursuing its 2025 goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% per tonne of product produced. In 2017, the company exceeded its 2020 goal of a 10% reduction per tonne of produced product.

Energy Star was launched by the EPA in 1992 as a voluntary, market-based partnership to cut greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency.

Tribes slam EPA move to give Oklahoma control of environmental rules
https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSKBN26S1OS
By Valerie Volcovici
7 Oct 2020

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - Oklahoma tribal nations slammed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's recent granting of authority to the state over environmental issues on vast tracts of land recognized by the Supreme Court as "Indian country."

EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler on Oct. 1 approved Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt's request to give the state, not tribal nations, such authority even on lands inside historical tribal reservation boundaries. In a letter to Stitt, he said a 2005 federal law allows states to seek oversight of tribal lands from the agency.

The Supreme Court ruled in July that about half of Oklahoma was Native American reservation land. The oil industry had raised concerns here about new regulatory and tax implications from the decision.

"Multiple requests to the EPA for additional time to consider this important issue were denied without adequate explanation," Brad Mallett, senior executive officer of the Choctaw Nation's legal division, told Reuters in a statement. He said the EPA decision "disrespects tribal sovereignty."

Casey Camp-Horinek, environmental ambassador of the Ponca Nation of Oklahoma, also said EPA attempts to consult with the tribe on the issue were insufficient, and that the tribe was considering filing a lawsuit.

EPA spokesman James Hewitt responded by email on Tuesday that "if any tribe wants to apply for regulatory oversight of these environmental programs, then they can apply through EPA's Treatment as a State process."

The Supreme Court's ruling stemmed from a rape case, in which it overturned a tribe member's conviction because his lawyers proved the crime took place outside state jurisdiction.

Stitt, an ally of the state's oil and gas industry, wrote to the EPA days afterward to request authority over environmental programs.

ALDI wins EPA award for green power
https://www.supermarketperimeter.com/articles/5730-aldi-wins-epa-award-for-green-power
10.07.2020
By Emily Park

BATAVIA, ILL. - ALDI has earned the 2020 Green Power Leadership Award from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) because of the company's ongoing commitment to reduce its environmental footprint.

"We are proud to receive these honorable recognitions from the US Environmental Protection Agency," said Aaron Sumida, vice president of ALDI. "As one of America's largest retailers, it's important for ALDI to prioritize our adoption of green power usage across our operations, showing others that it's an affordable, accessible choice that can help reduce air pollution and other emissions. We look forward to continuing our sustainability journey by taking intentional and strategic steps to make our stores and warehouses more environmentally friendly."

ALDI was one of only four companies or organizations nationwide to receive an Excellence in Green Power Use Award for demonstrating exemplary action and dedication to significantly advance the US renewable energy market.

The company ranks 16th on EPA's National Top 100 list of participating companies, third on the Top 30 Retail list and 15th on the Top 30 on-site rewewables list. ALDI is currently purchasing more than 980 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of green power annually, which is enough green power for more than 100% of the retailer's electricity use.

The grocer also earned 2019 GreenChill Store Certification and a re-certification excellence award for select ALDI stores. The EPA's GreenChill Partnership helps supermarkets make the shift to environmentally friendlier refrigerants, reduce harmful refrigerant emissions and adopt greener refrigeration technologies and environmental best practices.

County's emergency declaration paves way for no-cost hazardous Holiday Farm Fire-related cleanup
https://www.registerguard.com/story/news/2020/10/07/fema-epa-can-help-hazardous-holiday-farm-fire-cleanup/3632326001/
By Tatiana Parafiniuk-Talesnick
7 Oct 2020, 5:00 a.m.

The Lane County Board of Commissioners approved a local public emergency Tuesday, which will allow FEMA to assist with cleanup of hazardous waste and materials created by the Holiday Farm Fire.

Lane County officials are encouraging residents who are cleaning up burnt structures to wait so that they can be assisted by the government.

FEMA and the State of Oregon reached an agreement that will allow property owners to have Environmental Protection Agency crews remove household hazardous waste from fire-affected properties at no cost to the property owner.

Property owners need to sign an access agreement, called a Right of Entry form, by Oct. 16 to allow crews to clean up debris on their property. The form can be filled out online on Lane County's website or hard copies are available at the McKenzie Fire Station, Upper McKenzie Fire Station, McKenzie Bridge Transfer Station and Vide-Leaburg Transfer Station.

Insurance advocates also are available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at 888-877-4894.

Health and Human Services brought a resolution to declare the local public emergency before the commissioners at their Tuesday morning meeting.

"The order and resolution simply declares that a local public health emergency exists, which is what FEMA needs in order to be able to assist the county," Jocelyn Warren, division manager at Lane County Public Health, said at the meeting.

The motion was unanimously passed.

Contact reporter Tatiana Parafiniuk-Talesnick at Tatiana@registerguard.com or 541-338-2454, and follow her on Twitter @TatianaSophiaPT. Want more stories like this? Subscribe to get unlimited access and support local journalism.

EPA finalizes change to cleanup plan for Imperial Oil Superfund site in Marlboro
https://centraljersey.com/2020/10/07/epa-finalizes-change-to-cleanup-plan-for-imperial-oil-superfund-site-in-marlboro/
By MARK ROSMAN, Managing Editor
October 7, 2020

MARLBORO – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has finalized a change to its September 1992 plan to address groundwater contamination at the Imperial Oil Co. Inc./Champion Chemical federal Superfund site off Tennent Road near Route 79 in the Morganville section of Marlboro.

Groundwater data collected since the remedy for site soils was completed at the end of 2011 indicates that natural processes are effectively reducing the levels of contaminants and that active treatment of the groundwater is not needed, according to a press release from the EPA.

As a result, the agency has decided to rely on natural processes to address the groundwater rather than extract and treat it as the original decision stated, according to the press release.

"Based on our analysis of groundwater data, previous cleanup actions have led to a decrease of contaminant levels and these are continuing to decrease," EPA Regional Administrator Pete Lopez was quoted as saying in the press release.

"As part of EPA's ongoing efforts, monitoring and further studies will be conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the remedy," Lopez said.

EPA is requiring periodic collection and analysis of groundwater samples to verify that the levels and extent of contaminants are declining, and that human health and the environment are protected. The EPA will conduct a review within five years to ensure the effectiveness of the cleanup, according to the press release.

The Imperial Oil facility operated from the 1950s until 2007. Improper work practices and piles of waste from oil reclamation activities contaminated soil on the plant property, adjacent wetlands, the nearby Birch Swamp Brook, and several adjacent residential properties. Groundwater underlying the site was also contaminated, according to the EPA.

Beginning in the early 1980s during the administration of Marlboro Mayor Saul Hornik, the Burnt Fly Bog-Imperial Oil Citizens Advisory Committee began meeting, studying the issues and lobbying New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and EPA administrators to remediate the Burnt Fly Bog and Imperial Oil federal Superfund sites in Marlboro.

The committee's efforts eventually came to fruition as both sites were remediated after decades of pressure by Marlboro officials and residents.

In 2008, EPA completed the demolition of structures on the Imperial Oil site, including all production, storage and maintenance buildings, and above-ground tanks.

In 2011, EPA completed the excavation of the soil and the restoration of the Imperial Oil property. The excavated property areas were seeded and restored along with the restoration of the wetlands.

In 2013, EPA completed the cleanup of the remaining wetlands and contaminated sediments in Birch Swamp Brook, according to the press release.

A representative of the New Jersey Sierra Club took issue with the EPA's recent decision to amend the 1992 Imperial Oil cleanup plan.

In a press release, Jeff Tittel, director of the New Jersey Sierra Club, said, "EPA's cleanup plan for the Imperial Oil Superfund site is not a real cleanup plan. This is a cynical and troubling plan that calls for natural attenuation.

"This means you leave the toxic chemicals in the ground until they keep spreading and go to a lower level. This method will not work and hazardous chemicals at the site like arsenic, TCE, benzene and volatile organic compounds will discharge into Birch Swamp Brook and the Raritan Bay.

"Natural attenuation is not only ineffective, but inefficient and will impact more people. It will take five or more years than the original plan to remove contaminated groundwater. … It seems like (EPA is) just checking off the easiest and cheapest way to cover up a polluter's mess without any enforcement," Tittel said.

"We need to have a full cleanup plan or at least a pump and treat system. EPA cannot rely on letting the toxic chemicals just sit underneath groundwater. There is nothing natural about it. This type of method is not quick enough or complete enough.

"Instead, EPA must remove all of the contaminated groundwater. If not, streams, wetlands, an underlying aquifer and the Raritan Bay will continue to be contaminated by hazardous materials … What's even worse is that the failure to properly clean up these harmful chemicals will jeopardize public health and safety," Tittel said.

EPA Finalizes Cleanup Plan to Address Creosote Contamination at the GCL Tie and Treating Superfund
https://www.binghamtonhomepage.com/news/up-to-the-minute/epa-finalizes-cleanup-plan-to-address-creosote-contamination-at-the-gcl-tie-and-treating-superfund/
Posted: Oct 7, 2020 / 10:14 AM GMT-0400 / Updated: Oct 7, 2020 / 10:14 AM GMT-0400

From The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:
NEW YORK – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has finalized its cleanup plan to address creosote contamination at the GCL Tie and Treating Superfund Site located in the Village of Sidney, New York, along the Susquehanna River. Creosote is an oily contaminant obtained from extracting coal tar at a high temperature and is commonly used as a wood preservative. The final cleanup plan, contained in a document called a Record of Decision, addresses the portion of the site where creosote contamination, in the form of non-aqueous phase liquid (NAPL), is impacting groundwater and includes heating the subsurface soil to reduce the thickness of the NAPL to the point that it can be better extracted through specialized extraction wells.

"EPA's previous actions under the Superfund program, including the removal of about 20,000 gallons of readily accessible creosote and the treatment of about 80,000 cubic yards of soil, significantly reduced the extensive creosote contamination impacting the soil and groundwater at the GCL Tie and Treating site," said EPA Regional Administrator Pete Lopez. "Through this cleanup plan, we are upholding our commitment to protect the environment for future generations by addressing the remaining creosote contamination in soil and bedrock at the site."

The GCL Tie and Treating property comprises 26 acres of the 60-acre Superfund site in an industrial area of Sidney. The property formerly contained a sawmill, a wood-treating facility, and a light manufacturing company and is bordered by commercial and industrial properties, a railroad line, and undeveloped federal- and state-regulated wetlands. The non-GCL property is the remaining 34 acres and includes properties affected by creosote releases from the GCL Tie and Treating operations.

Under the selected cleanup plan announced today, EPA will address the remaining source area NAPL contamination at the site that is continuing to contaminate groundwater by using in-situ (in place) thermal treatment. Thermal treatment works by applying very high temperatures directly underground to the contaminated area, which makes the creosote less viscous and enables it to move more easily through soil toward extraction wells where it is collected and piped to the surface to be treated. The heat can make the contaminated area hot enough to destroy some chemicals.

The estimated cost of this remedy is $25 million. EPA expects to address an ongoing source of groundwater contamination and help the aquifer to recover with this selected plan. A final action for the groundwater will be determined after this remedy is implemented.

EPA held a virtual public meeting on September 3, 2020 to explain its cleanup plan, discuss the other cleanup options that were considered and solicit public comments.

EPA's selected cleanup plan for the site, outlined in the Record of Decision, can be found at:
www.epa.gov/superfund/gcl-tie
Follow EPA Region 2 on Twitter at http://twitter.com/eparegion2 and visit our Facebook page, http://facebook.com/eparegion2

EPA administrator visits Cleveland announcing delisting of Ashtabula River AOC
https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/oh-cuyahoga/epa-administrator-visits-cleveland-announcing-delisting-of-ashtabula-river-aoc
By: Tancisha Cordell
Posted at 11:12 AM, Oct 07, 2020
and last updated 11:12 AM, Oct 07, 2020

CLEVELAND — The Ashtabula River is one step closer to become healthy again.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials came to Cleveland Wednesday announcing they will start the process to delist the Ashtabula River as an Area of Concern (AOC) "as final beneficial use impairment is removed."

"I'm proud – both as EPA Administrator and as an Ohioan – to announce that the Ashtabula River is the first AOC in the state to begin the delisting process," said EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler. "We are within sight of the finish line in terms of returning Ohio's rivers to health again – so they can again become a place where people can swim, play, catch fish, and generally enjoy what this great state has to offer."

EPA, along with state and federal partners, and industries have spent over $67.5 million to clean up contaminated sediment and restore habitat in the Ashtabula River AOC, according to a press release. The final beneficial use impairment, which restricted dredging activities, was removed last month, allowing Ohio to initiate the delisting of this AOC. It is anticipated that this AOC may be delisted by the end of FY2021, which would make it the sixth AOC delisted out the 31 original U.S. AOCs.

"Through a combination of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding and strong partnerships with our local, state and federal partners, more than $24 million has been spent on completing habitat restoration projects in the Black River AOC," said EPA Region 5 Administrator/Great Lakes National Program Manager Kurt A. Thiede.

The delisting is all a part of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The GLRI was launched in 2010 to accelerate efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes. Federal agencies have funded more than 5,400 projects totaling over $2.7 billion to address the most important Great Lakes priorities such as addressing agricultural nutrients and stormwater runoff, cleaning up highly-contaminated "Areas of Concern," combating invasive species and restoring habitat.

EPA Celebrates Progress Of Northeast Ohio Waterways
https://patch.com/ohio/cleveland/epa-celebrates-progress-northeast-ohio-waterways
By Chris Mosby, Patch Staff
Oct 7, 2020 10:52 am ET

CLEVELAND — EPA's top official celebrated environmental accomplishments in Ohio on Wednesday.

Administrator Andrew Wheeler announced that the final beneficial use impairment at the Ashtabula River Area of Concern had been lifted, and all management actions at the Black River have been completed.

"I'm proud – both as EPA Administrator and as an Ohioan – to announce that the Ashtabula River is the first AOC in the state to begin the delisting process," Wheeler said. "We are within sight of the finish line in terms of returning Ohio's rivers to health again – so they can again become a place where people can swim, play, catch fish, and generally enjoy what this great state has to offer."

In the mid-2000s, EPA and state and federal agencies began cleaning up contaminated sediment in the Ashtabula River. The groups have spent more than $67 million on restoring the river. In September, the EPA removed the final beneficial use impairment for the river, which restricted dredging activities.

More than 35 acres of slag piles along Lorain-owned property will be graded to restore the Black River's habitat for birds and wildlife.

Northeast Ohio's most renowned river — the Cuyahoga — still have seven beneficial use impairments restricting use of the river. There are currently 16 projects in motion to clean contaminated sediment and restore degraded fish and wildlife habitat in the river.

"Through a combination of Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding and strong partnerships with our local, state and federal partners, more than $24 million has been spent on completing habitat restoration projects in the Black River AOC," said EPA Region 5 Administrator/Great Lakes National Program Manager Kurt A. Thiede.

In late August, a fuel tanker crashed and spilled its cargo into the Cuyahoga River in Akron. The river soon caught fire, the 14th time the river has been set ablaze since 1969, Cleveland Scene reported. However, the river's quality has been steadily improving with focused environmental projects.

Two companies in Iowa escape enforcement action despite dozens of clean water violations, environmental group finds
https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/money/business/2020/10/07/water-pollution-laws-unenforced-iowa-environmental-group-clinton-sergeant-bluff-clean-water-act/3636534001/
By Donnelle Eller
7 Oct 2020, 8:42 a.m.

Over the past three years, two Iowa companies have repeatedly told the state and federal government they've exceeded the amount of pollution they can discharge into the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, yet environmental agencies have taken no action against them.

In a report released Wednesday, the Environmental Law & Policy Center blames the lack of enforcement on President Donald Trump, who has slashed the spending and staffing needed to enforce the federal Clean Water Act.

Instead, Trump has shifted the responsibility to states, which also have cut their budgets for enforcement of laws that protect lakes and rivers, the report shows.

That's left companies such as ADM Bioprocessing in Clinton and Gelita USA in Sergeant Bluff to rack up dozens of violations since 2017 without facing any formal enforcement action, the Chicago-based group's report says.

The companies did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Josh Mandelbaum, an Environmental Law & Policy Center staff attorney in Des Moines, said other Iowa companies likely have escaped enforcement for excessive pollution discharges, but the report focuses on ADM and Gelita because they have the largest number of violations.

The group analyzed publicly available U.S. Environmental Protection Agency data, as well as enforcement data for the EPA's Region 7 office, which oversees Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska and nine tribal nations. The group also examined federal and state government spending to enforce the Clean Water Act.

The act requires the EPA to protect rivers and lakes by ensuring water that is safe for both swimming and fishing. The lack of enforcement "sends a signal to companies that should be following the law that it doesn't matter," Mandelbaum said. "They don't think there's going to be penalties for polluting, and it creates a lot of bad behavior."

ADM Bioprocessing, located on the Mississippi River, and Gelita USA, near the Missouri River, had the most violations in Iowa over the past three years, based on the companies' reporting, said Jeff Hammons, an ELPC staff attorney in Washington. He wrote the report with Mandelbaum and another staff attorney.

There is no record of the EPA's Midwest office nor the Iowa Department of Natural Resources taking formal action against the companies, Hammons said. The group searched for both administrative and court complaints.

Iowa had both the smallest budget for environmental enforcement among the four states under EPA Region 7 oversight, and the largest proportionate funding decline over the past decade, the report showed.

Iowa's funding for pollution control dropped 19% to $38.3 million in 2018, the report said, compared with an 11% decline in Kansas to $73 million; a 9% decline in Nebraska to $60.3 million; and a 35% increase in Missouri to $224.1 million. The spending comparisons were adjusted for inflation.

Staffing over the decade also declined: Enforcement employment in Missouri declined 19%; in Iowa, 10%; and in Kansas, 9%. In Nebraska, employment was flat.

The report says the EPA since 2017 has initiated fewer cases against companies in Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska and sought fewer civil penalties and requirements for improvements to come into compliance with the federal law. At the same time, the rates of non-compliance have increased.

For example, the number of cases EPA initiated in the four Midwestern states averaged 199 annually from 2012 to 2016, but the average dropped to 149 per year from 2017 to 2019, the report said.

"At every step of the enforcement process, from case initiations to fines and fees for violations, we are seeing less action to protect public health and Midwest waterways," Mandelbaum said.

The report said staffing since 2012 has fallen 21% at the EPA and 22% at the agency's Region 7 office.

With reduced funding and staffing, Region 7 is "enforcing the Clean Water Act with one arm tied behind their back," Hammons said.

The group looked at the proposed EPA enforcement budgets from the Trump administration and former President Barack Obama's administration. Trump proposed a budget of $319 million for next fiscal year, and Obama proposed $415.3 million in 2016.

"Although Congress often modifies or ignores these proposals, presidential budgets nonetheless provide insight into an administration's priorities, which can be implemented through funding or actions," the group said.

ADM Bioprocessing, a feed manufacturing facility in Clinton, said in monthly reports that its discharges into the Mississippi River exceeded permit limits for temperature 51 times since 2017. It was in violation a total of 689 days, the Environmental Law & Policy Center said.

High water temperatures can harm fish, insects, zooplankton and other aquatic species. It also can reduce the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water that is available to support aquatic life.

About 18 million people use the Mississippi River as a drinking water source, including in the Quad Cities and St. Louis, which are downstream from Clinton.

In western Iowa, Gelita USA produces gelatin, edible greases and other products from pork skin and cattle bones. The company reported exceeding permit limits for releases of nitrogen as ammonia, and biochemical oxygen demand.

The company exceeded limits 43 times and was in violation a total of 478 days.

Too much nitrogen in surface water causes algal blooms, which can severely reduce oxygen in water and lead to fish kills and growth of toxic cyanobacteria that can harm humans and animals. Ammonia is corrosive and can hurt people if they come into direct contact with it, the report says.

Biochemical oxygen demand represents the amount of oxygen consumed by bacteria and other microorganisms that decompose organic waste in water. A sufficient concentration of dissolved oxygen is critical to maintaining aquatic life and water quality in rivers and lakes, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

Mandelbaum said toxic cyanobacteria blooms causes problems for public water systems, including the Des Moines Water Works, which this summer had to temporarily stop using the Des Moines River as a source of drinking water because of toxins associated with algae blooms.

About 10 million people use the Missouri River as a source of drinking water, including Omaha and Kansas City downstream from Sergeant Bluff, the group said.

"These laws are foundational and critical," Mandelbaum said. "People expect that they're being enforced. And right now, they're simply not."