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Leading the News

Climate Regulation

EPA Slashes Social Cost of Methane in Bid to Delay Oil and Gas Limits

The EPA slashed by 90 percent its estimate of the costs methane emissions impose on society and the climate as part of its bid to justify delaying Obama-era pollution standards for oil and gas drilling operations.

Climate Science

Climate Science Review May Not Find Its Home in EPA

Mainstream climate scientists and skeptics don't see eye-to-eye on much, but they appear to agree on one thing: The EPA should not run a climate science debate touted by Administrator Scott Pruitt.

Energy

Fossil-Fuel Friendly Tax Plan Spares Oil, Not Solar or Tesla

The tax overhaul proposed in the U.S. House is a better bet for oil and gas companies than solar developers or electric car buyers, keeping with President Donald Trump's decidedly fossil-fuel friendly views.

Energy

Senate Confirms Nominees for Energy, Pipeline Regulator

The Senate confirmed two members of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and three nominees to the Energy Department only hours after Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) released the hold he had put on the Democratic FERC nominee.

News

Air Pollution

\$14B Plan to Clean Up California Ports Gets Green Light

A \$14 billion plan to clean up the air at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, Calif., got the approval of harbor commissioners Nov. 2. The twin ports—the largest single source of the diesel particulates and nitrogen oxides in the Los Angeles area—must be fully serviced by zero-emission trucks and cargo-handling equipment by 2035, according to the plan approved unanimously. “No port in the world, no port complex in the world is doing what we're doing, and what ...

Asbestos

Georgia-Pacific Affiliate Files Bankruptcy on Asbestos Woes

A sister company of Georgia-Pacific LLC filed for bankruptcy to help the paper and building materials company shed 62,000 claims for asbestos poisoning.

Aviation

FAA Looking for Cities, States, Companies That Want to Test Drones

States, localities and companies itching to test drone technology for flights over populated areas can now apply to be part of a Transportation Department pilot program, the agency announced Nov. 2.

Biofuels

DowDuPont to Exit Biofuel Operations It Once Championed

DowDuPont Inc. plans to divest a business that turns corn waste into motor fuel as part of a drive to cut annual costs by \$3 billion a year.

Chemicals

Chemical Firms' Advice Sought by EPA on Test Animal Reductions

The advice of chemical makers and testing laboratories is being sought by EPA so fewer test animals are used in collecting safety information to inform chemical regulations, an EPA scientist said Nov. 2.

Chemicals

Price Gouging Alleged of Makers of Water Treatment Chemical

Many municipally owned utilities find themselves in a tough spot as they sue major chemical manufacturers for allegedly fixing the price of an ingredient used for treating drinking water and wastewater.

Citizen Suits

PG&E Can't Shake Hazardous Waste Suit Over Leaching Utility Poles

Pacific Gas & Electric Co. will once again face a federal hazardous waste suit over discharges from chemically-treated utility poles stored in Northern California service yards.

Climate Policy

Carbon Tax Gains Steam as New York Marks Sandy Anniversary

Carbon tax backers hope the recent hurricanes and fifth anniversary of Sandy are the perfect storm to force New York to put a price on carbon dioxide.

Coal Mining

Correction

In the Nov. 1 story “Arch Coal's Emissions Unenforced as Colorado Cites Uncertainty,” the source of information about the volatile organic compounds in the West Elk mine's vented gas stream has been corrected to WildEarth Guardians, citing a report on sampling of gases from the mine.

Cybersecurity

The Next Big Hack Could Turn America's Lights Off

When a serious cyberattack against the U.S. begins, at first you'll blame the weather, or an accident, or corporate incompetence. It'll be a power outage that lasts a few hours at most. But things will start to get more unsettling when reports trickle out that the blackout is the work of hackers, most likely connected to the Russian government.

Energy

Puerto Rico Recovery Delays Making Congress Impatient

Puerto Rico's hurricane recovery efforts are being hampered by logistical problems and bureaucratic infighting six weeks after Maria made landfall, frustrating lawmakers.

Energy

U.S. to Exit Global Anti-Corruption Effort Aimed at Oil Cash

The Trump administration said it will exit a global anti-corruption effort that compels oil, gas and mining companies to disclose the payments they give governments worldwide.

Lead Paint

\$1.3M Jury Award Upheld in Baltimore Lead Paint Case

A Maryland landlord will remain on the hook for a \$1.3 million jury award to a man exposed to lead paint in a Baltimore rental property as a child, a Maryland appeals court ruled.

Motor Vehicles

Audi Recalls Flagship A8 Sedans in Europe Over Emissions Woes

Audi is recalling its top-of-the-line A8 sedan in Europe after detecting suspicious software, as the luxury-car brand struggles to get to grips with emissions issues more than two years after the diesel-cheating scandal erupted.

Motor Vehicles

Tax Credit for Tesla, Other Electric Cars Axed in GOP Bill

The push by Tesla Inc., General Motors Co. and other carmakers to boost sales of electric vehicles was dealt a blow by House Republicans Nov. 2 when they proposed eliminating a \$7,500 per vehicle tax credit that has helped stoke early demand.

Motor Vehicles

Tesla, GM Electric Cars May Start Losing Their Tax Credits

Electric vehicles have caught the eye of many American consumers. But it's not only the cars' green cred that seals the deal. Another big lure: a federal tax credit of up to \$7,500 per vehicle. Now that lucrative incentive may be fading away for two reasons. First, buyers of vehicles from leading EV makers such as Tesla Inc. and General Motors Co. could soon use up the maximum value of tax credits for their brands. (They're capped for each manufacturer.) But worse for the ...

Motor Vehicles

Too Few Charging Stations May Slow California Electric Car Goals

In 2012, Gov. Jerry Brown (D) set a goal of putting 1.5 million electric vehicles on California roads by 2025. As of September, the state had 334,393 EVs. To get to 1.5 million, it needs to give drivers a lot more places to charge up. The state, however, wants utilities to play a big role in the buildout of charging stations. The power companies are eager to invest, seeing a growth opportunity, but before that can happen, officials need to sort out who will pay for it.

New Jersey

Ruling Nixes Exxon's Bid for Early Exit in MTBE Cases

ExxonMobil Corp. and ExxonMobil Oil Corp. must face a trial on claims brought by New Jersey over natural resource damages at five gas stations, a federal court in New Jersey ruled Nov. 1.

Pesticides

EPA Farmworker Rule in Limbo, Debate on Pesticide Info Lives On

A delay in implementing new farmworker safety standards is reviving debate on a sensitive provision in the EPA rule: Who gets access to information on pesticides when a farm laborer becomes ill from exposure?

Renewable Energy

Renewables Are Starting to Crush Aging U.S. Nukes, Coal Plants

Building solar and wind farms has started to become a cheaper proposition than running aging coal and nuclear generators in parts of the U.S., according to financial adviser Lazard Ltd.

Renewable Energy

Wind Tax Credit Trimmed in House Bill; Nuclear Breaks Extended

Tax credits cherished by the wind and solar industry would remain in place under a rewrite of the tax code revealed by House Republicans Nov. 2, but the measure would trim the wind energy's production tax credit by more than a third.

Solid Waste

Brazil Threatens Fines for Lagging Industrial Recyclers

Brazil is threatening to fine companies that haven't set up mandatory recycling systems seven years after being required to do so by a solid waste management law.

Toxic Substances

EPA Studying New Lead Cleanup Standards For Cities

The EPA's cautious steps toward a new guideline for cleaning up lead-contaminated soil in American cities could open up disputes between the agency and companies that would foot the cleanup bills.

Water Infrastructure

Financing Costs for Water Utilities May Rise Under GOP Tax Plan

Financing costs of public water and wastewater infrastructure projects could escalate for the private sector under the new Republican plan to ax the tax-exempt status of bonds used for the projects.

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