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From: Bloomberg BNA
Sent: Fri 9/29/2017 12:25:30 AM
Subject: Sep. 29 -- Daily Environment Report



Daily Environment Report

September 29, 2017 - Number 188

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Leading the News

Air Pollution

New Head of State Air Pollution Group Seeks Common Ground

The newest advocate for state air pollution officials wants to mend fences with a splinter group that objected to his association's often cozy relationship with the Obama-era EPA.

Coal Mining

Perry Talks Up Rare Earth Minerals at Pennsylvania Coal Mine

Extracting rare earth minerals from coal could revive the flagging sector and wean the U.S. off Chinese mineral providers, Energy Secretary Rick Perry said.

Drinking Water

Private Water Firms Tap Profit From Struggling Public Utilities

A cash crunch for public water utilities is creating an opportunity for the growing for-profit water companies—but it's one that might drain customers' wallets.

EPA

Maria Response Awaits New EPA Regional Office Head

Pete Lopez, the EPA's newly appointed Region 2 administrator, has experience dealing with hurricane recovery, but he will still face a steep learning curve when he joins the agency Oct. 1.

News

Air Pollution

Illinois Floats Emissions Rule Changes for Dynegy Coal Plants

Emissions from eight coal-fired power plants owned by Dynegy Inc. would be capped under

a proposal from the Illinois EPA, but critics say the changes could actually increase air pollution.

Climate Policy

Merkel May Have Promised Too Much in Carbon Pollution Fight

As German Chancellor Angela Merkel embarks on coalition talks to bed down her fourth term in office, a promise made shortly before her re-election may come back to haunt her.

Energy

Entergy Gives Michigan Nuclear Plant a Few Extra Years to Run

Entergy Corp. will keep Michigan's Palisades nuclear plant open until spring 2022, citing the state's refusal to allow consumer rate increases necessary to buy out a power agreement on one of Michigan's three nuclear facilities.

Energy

Modi's \$2.5 Billion Power Plan May Stumble on Ailing Buyers

The success of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious plan to electrify all households in India by December 2018 faces a familiar hurdle: the money-losing state power retailers.

Environmental Reviews

State Air Plans' Conflict of Interest Rules Draw Lawsuit

Alabama and Mississippi have taken too long to file proper plans to ensure air pollutant regulators don't have financial conflicts of interest, and the EPA has failed to force the issue, environmental groups state in a lawsuit filed Sept. 28.

Motor Vehicles

Chile Aims to Boost Lithium Output as Electric Cars Rise

The country holding the world's largest reserves of lithium is drafting regulations that would allow companies to set up new mines amid soaring demand for the mineral used in electric-car batteries.

Motor Vehicles

China Gives Carmakers More Time in Biggest Electric-Vehicle Plan

China unveiled a comprehensive set of emission rules and delayed a credit-score program tied to the production of electric cars, giving automakers more time to prepare for the phasing out of fossil-fuel powered vehicles.

Natural Resources

U.S. Seen Having Long Way to Go to Market Energy Department Land

The U.S. Department of Energy needs to develop a more accurate inventory of federal lands it manages to promote energy projects by private companies.

Renewable Energy

Battery Boom Spurs One Bank's Pivot from Iron Ore to Lithium

Westpac Banking Corp., Australia's second-largest lender, is targeting deals linked to China that finance renewable energy minerals such as lithium and cobalt as a decade of unprecedented iron ore mining expansion in its home market has largely run its course.

Renewable Energy

Interior Expects Hot Bidding for Offshore Wind Energy Leases

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is betting on heightened interest in offshore wind to drive up the price of the Atlantic Ocean leases that it will auction next year—parcels that just two years ago had no takers.

Renewable Energy

Puerto Rico's Solar Rooftops Isolated, Useless Without Storage

Puerto Rico's largest rooftop solar-power supplier has no idea whether its 10,000 systems survived back-to-back hurricanes this month.

Renewable Energy

Storm-Ravaged Caribbean Eyes Solar, But It Won't Be Cheap

For Caribbean islands plunged into darkness after hurricanes Irma and Maria, small-scale electric systems powered by the sun may be the key to energy resilience. Transforming the grid, though, won't come cheap.

Superfund

Fighting the Toxic Nightmare Next Door

It was practical considerations that led Dawn and Brian Chapman to Maryland Heights, a modest suburb of St. Louis bound by two interstate highways, several strip malls, an international airport, and the Missouri River.

Superfund

Superfund Bribery Case Ensnarers Alabama Lawyers, Coal Exec

An Alabama coal company's vice president and two lawyers have been indicted in a bribery case involving a Birmingham Superfund site.

Toxic Substances

DuPont, ARCO Win Dismissal of Tenants' Contamination Claims

DuPont and ARCO won dismissal of civil rights claims alleging failure to clean up contamination at an Indiana public housing complex (*Mabry v. City of E. Chicago*, 2017 BL 342506, N.D. Ind., No. 16-CV-402, 9/27/17).

Water Pollution

Mexican Sewage, Toxic Waste Draw Lawsuit Threat From Cities

Toxic waste and sewage continue to flow from the Tijuana River to the Pacific Ocean, and California cities along the U.S.-Mexican border are ready to bring a lawsuit to halt it.

Practitioner Insights

Chemicals

Practitioner Insights: Hurricanes and the Need for Safer Chemical Facilities

Across the nation, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates over 134 million Americans live in imminent risk of being impacted by a catastrophic explosion or the release of poisonous gas from a nearby industrial or commercial facility. In fact, the Associated Press has reported that up to 1.5 million people were evacuated in Texas because of the threat of a chemical plant explosion after Hurricane Harvey.

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