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Daily Environment Report

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Leading the News

Taxes

Bundle Clean Energy, Nuclear Tax Credit Proposals: Lawmakers

A diverse set of lawmakers is aiming to revive expired clean energy tax credits alongside an early extension of a nuclear production credit.

News

Air Pollution

Dust, Wildfire Air Exemption Too Broad, Environmentalists Argue

An EPA rule that allows states to discount wildfires and other natural events when trying to meet pollution targets is too broad and would weaken national air quality standards, according to environmentalists who are suing the agency in a federal appeals court.

Biotechnology

China Pushes Public to Accept Biotech Crops as Syngenta Takeover Nears

China will carry out a nationwide poll next month to test the public's acceptance of genetically modified food, a technology the government says would boost yields and sustainable agriculture in a country that's seen consumption soar.

Budget

EPA Gives to Toxics With One Hand What It Takes From Climate

Climate change's loss at the EPA has been a boon to its chemicals work, which has been the recipient of funds previously earmarked for greenhouse gases.

Climate Change

NATO Lawmakers Warn Global Warming Will Trigger Food Shortages

Lawmakers from nations in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are warning that global warming will lead to mass migration and conflict in the Middle East and Africa, another reason they say President Donald Trump should keep the U.S. in the Paris climate deal.

Coal Mining

Science Panel to Visit Mining Country in Study of Health Effects

Environmental advocates will tell a scientific advisory board in West Virginia May 23 that surface mining causes asthma, black lung disease and high stress levels in people who live nearby.

Drinking Water

Faulty Cost Analysis Sinks California's Chromium 6 Tap Water Limit

Is California's 10 parts per billion standard for chromium 6 in drinking water cost prohibitive? That's a question California regulators must revisit in adopting a new maximum contaminant level for the cancer-causing chemical now that a court has found the state failed to consider if meeting the standard is economically feasible—as required by California law.

Endangered Species

Court Clears Costly Path in Win for Washington Salmon, Tribes

Washington state may have to spend up to \$1.88 billion to modify hundreds of culverts that block migrating salmon after a federal appeals court agreed the structures violated treaties with Native Americans.

Energy

Move Over Tesla, Europe's Building Its Own Battery Gigafactories

Battery-making gigafactories are about to arrive in Europe, challenging a lead Tesla Inc. is building at a plant in Nevada and opening the way for a quicker shift toward green power for both cars and utilities.

Energy

New York AG Presses Search for Tillerson Lost Exxon Emails

New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman is pressing on with a search for U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson's lost emails that he wrote under the pseudonym of "Wayne Tracker" while he was the chief executive of Exxon Mobile Corp.

Enforcement

China Sends Out Environmental Inspectors, Starts Trials of Bureau Reforms

China has begun central oversight of some local and regional environmental protection bureaus hoping to end the practice of protectionism of local companies blamed for lax enforcement of some environmental laws.

Oil & Gas

Former Louisiana Regulator to Head Ocean Drilling Oversight

Scott Angelle, a former natural resources regulator in Louisiana, has been appointed to lead the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, which polices offshore drilling, starting May 23.

Pesticides

Farmworkers Sue EPA Over Pesticide Rule Delay

Farmworker associations are taking the EPA to court for delaying a rule to update requirements for pesticide applicators finalized in the last days of the Obama administration.

Renewable Energy

China May Idle Less Wind Power as Consumption Rises, Center Says

China may see the percentage of wind turbines sitting idle fall this year as the growth in power demand accelerates, the country's National Renewable Energy Information Management Center forecasts.

Renewable Energy

GE Said to Face Probe for Misleading EU Over \$1.7 Billion Deal

General Electric Co. is the latest U.S. company to be investigated by European Union for possibly turning in misleading information during a merger review, according to two people familiar with the GE case.

Renewable Energy

Washington State, Mexico Team Up on Battery Storage for Renewables

Mexico could tap into Washington state battery storage technology to extend the capacity of its renewable energy.

Superfund

Pruitt Calls for Streamlined Superfund Cleanup Program

EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt is seeking recommendations on how to optimize EPA oversight of the Superfund program and increase the roles played by tribes, states, regions and other federal departments in cleanup decisions.

Sustainability

First Green Bonds Sold by an Oil Giant Find Willing Investors

A major oil company is set to benefit from the sale of green bonds for the first time, raising concerns about standards in the quick-growing market for environmentally friendly finance.

Toxic Substances

Southwestern Energy Can't Shake Fracking Waste Suit

Southwestern Energy Co. will again face claims that fracking waste it disposed of in a defunct well contaminated a neighboring property, after the Eighth Circuit reinstated the claims (*Stroud v. Sw. Energy Co.*, 2017 BL 169447, 8th Cir., No. 15-3458, 5/22/17).

Trade

Chinese Solar Makers Shown \$55 Million Path to Avoid Tariffs

An investment firm that is financing a trade complaint against cheap imported solar cells said that case would disappear if Chinese companies bought \$55 million in manufacturing equipment.

Water Infrastructure

Podcast: Sink Local Money Into Drinking Water Systems: GOP Lawmaker

Politicians often say infrastructure shouldn't be a partisan issue, but the truth is Democrats and Republicans have different views on how to pay for upgrading roads, bridges and drinking water systems, Rep. John Shimkus (R-Ill.) told Bloomberg BNA.

Water Infrastructure

Video: See How Green Infrastructure Captures Polluted Stormwater

When it rains, it pours. And when it pours, stormwater flows, picking up debris, oil and toxic chemicals on roads, which ultimately pollute nearby waters.

CORRECTION

A story published in the May 19 report, "Pesticide Rule Delay Unusual, but Not Necessarily

Illegal” has been clarified to state that Former Labor Secretary Hilda Solis suspended a “midnight rule” from her predecessor. The online version has been corrected.

Regulatory Agenda

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