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Leading the News

Climate Change

Trump Vow to Keep Door Open to Climate Deal Convinces Few

President Donald Trump's vow to keep the door open to an international climate deal—even as he notifies the UN the U.S. is out—rings hollow given he has long derided it as bad for the economy.

General Policy

Week Ahead: Groundwater Group Hears EPA's Superfund Plans

The National Ground Water Association, Ecological Society of America, and other groups are taking advantage of August's legislative lull in Washington to hold large-scale environment and energy events during the week of Aug. 7.

Superfund

EPA Widens Superfund Cleanups Near Public Housing

The EPA's discovery of lead contamination near low-income public-housing units has expanded some investigations and broadened its collection of Superfund site location data.

News

Air Pollution

VW Executive Schmidt Pleads Guilty in Auto Emissions Scandal

Oliver Schmidt, a Volkswagen AG compliance executive charged in the company's emissions-cheating scandal, pleaded guilty Friday in federal court in Detroit to conspiracy and violating the U.S. Clean Air Act.

Air Pollution

Waste Industry to Save Millions Under EPA Monitoring Proposal

Waste storage and processing facilities would save \$28 million under an EPA proposal to ease air pollution monitoring requirements.

Climate Change

Brazil to Get \$10.6 Million in Climate Aid from Germany

Germany agreed to donate 9 million euros (US\$10.6 million) to Brazil, bolstering the South American country's efforts to reach Paris Climate Agreement targets it set in 2015.

Coal Mining

As Trump Sings Coal's Praises, Mine Fatalities Are on the Rise

Ray Hatfield Jr. was six months into his latest coal job when he was crushed to death in a Kentucky mine.

Coal-Fired Power Plants

Peabody Mine Survival May Rest on Navajo Coal Gasification Plan

The biggest coal-fired generating station west of the Mississippi could be replaced by a coal gasification plant, raising concerns among environmentalists as well as questions from financial analysts about the economic costs and risks.

Contribution

Henkel Must Defend Superfund Suit in Kansas, Despite Lack of Ties

Henkel Corp., a Delaware company, must defend a Superfund suit in Kansas because it registered to do business there, the District of Kansas ruled (*Henkel Corp. v. PAC Operating LP*, 2017 BL 271438, D. Kan., No. 15-CV-09260, 8/3/17).

Criminal Enforcement

VW Executive Schmidt Pleads Guilty in Auto Emissions Scandal

Oliver Schmidt, a Volkswagen AG compliance executive charged in the company's emissions-cheating scandal, pleaded guilty Aug. 4 in federal court in Detroit to conspiracy and violating the U.S. Clean Air Act.

Energy

Australian Prime Minister Calls Crisis Meeting with Power Bosses

Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has called a meeting with the nation's major power companies citing concerns over soaring electricity prices and a lack of transparency in the market.

Energy

Keystone XL Foes Avoid Climate in Red State Pipeline Battle

You won't hear much about climate change coming from Keystone XL foes as they argue against TransCanada Corp.'s push to get the final state approval needed to build the pipeline.

Enforcement

States Should Be Front Line of Enforcement, EPA Official Says

The Environmental Protection Agency will look to the states as the first line of environmental enforcement as part of Washington's cooperative federalism approach, a senior environment official said.

Environmental Reviews

Runway Expansion at Portland, Ore., Airport Upheld by Court

Federal aviation officials didn't act arbitrarily when they decided to forgo a full environmental

impact statement on a third runway at a Portland, Ore.-area airport, a federal appeals court ruled.

Mergers and Acquisitions

Dow, DuPont Set Aug. 31 for Closing of Historic Chemical Merger

Dow Chemical Co. and DuPont Co., the two largest U.S. chemical makers, have received all the regulatory approvals needed to close their historic merger.

Natural Resources

Interior to Kill Obama Rule Raising Coal, Oil Royalties

An Obama-era regulation governing how royalties are calculated for coal, natural gas and oil extracted on federal lands will be repealed by the Trump administration.

Renewable Energy

Equis Energy Building \$1.2 Billion Australian Solar Farm

Equis Pte Ltd., an investment company based in Singapore, is building a A\$1.5-billion (\$1.2 billion) solar farm in eastern Australia.

Renewable Energy

Green Power Still Tied Up with Red Tape in Macron's France

Some eighty days into Emmanuel Macron's new job, Europe's biggest renewable energy companies are still waiting for the French president to make good on campaign pledges to boost green power.

Renewable Energy

Long-Planned Cap Cod Wind Farm Gets Environmental OK

A long-stalled wind farm planned off the coast of Cape Cod, Mass., took a step closer to possible construction after federal energy regulators said the Cape Wind project won't harm the ocean environment.

Renewable Energy

U.K. Batteries for Residential Solar to Get Tax Discount

The U.K. government will offer a tax discount to homes installing batteries at the same time as solar panels, a move that could make renewable energy investments more attractive, according to an industry organization.

Shareholder Proposals

Church of England Rallies Investors in Exxon Fight, Returns 17%

President Donald Trump may have quit the Paris climate accord, but shareholders aren't going to let carbon-producing U.S. companies off the hook. Witness the investor victory over Exxon Mobil Corp. management on May 31, a day before the Trump decision.

Water Pollution

Duke Energy Ash Lawsuit Tossed Over 'Forum Shopping'

A federal district judge in Virginia tossed a Duke Energy coal ash lawsuit over what he said is "strategic forum shopping" by the utility.

Water Pollution

TVA Ordered to Dig Up, Move Coal Ash at Gallatin Plant

The Tennessee Valley Authority must excavate coal ash stored at its Gallatin, Tenn., plant near Nashville and dispose of it in a lined landfill, a remedy for water pollution estimated to cost some \$2 billion, a federal court ordered.

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