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Daily Environment Report

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Leading the News

Coal-Fired Power Plants

EPA Seeks to Take Coal Ash Decisions Out of Court's Hands

Utilities unhappy with EPA's coal ash regulations are pleased the agency wants to consider some rule changes and take the matter out of court.

EPA

Senate Tees Up Confirmation Vote for EPA Air Office Pick

The Senate could vote as early as Nov. 9 on the Trump administration's pick to head the EPA's air pollution office after he cleared a procedural hurdle Nov. 8.

Elections

Election 2017: Offshore Drilling Opponent Wins Virginia Governor Race

Opponents of offshore oil and gas drilling scored a victory with the election Nov. 7 of Democrat Ralph Northam to be Virginia's next governor.

Energy

High-Voltage Transmission Lines Coming, Mexico's Energy Ministry Says

A much-awaited bidding process for Mexico's first private auction on a \$1.2 billion high-voltage line will take place in the first quarter of 2018, after a year of delays, according to a senior energy minister.

Energy

House Passes Bill to Boost Energy Regulator Role in Hydro Reviews

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission would take the lead role in coordinating the interagency licensing process for hydropower projects in a bill passed by the House Nov. 8.

News

Air Pollution

Beijing Beaten as Pollution in Indian Capital Goes Off the Chart

Thick toxic smog enveloped New Delhi for a second straight day on Nov. 8, forcing schools to shut down, halting traffic on highways, and sending residents scurrying to buy air purifiers and filtration masks.

Biofuels

Icahn Subpoenaed by U.S. Over Biofuel Policy While Trump Adviser

Federal investigators have issued subpoenas for information on Carl Icahn's efforts to change biofuel policy while serving as an informal adviser to President Donald Trump, according to regulatory filings.

Biotechnology

Russia Seeks Technology as Condition for Bayer-Monsanto Deal

Russia delayed the approval of Bayer AG's takeover of Monsanto Co. until the merged company agrees to share technology and data with the country, the first time authorities have demanded corporate secrets in exchange for access to the local market.

Chemicals

Chlorine's Deadly Hazards Fuel Stock Rally as Supply Tightens

Armies used chlorine as a weapon in World War I. Thousands of lives are put at risk every time a railroad tank car rolls through a city carrying the chemical. It's among the biggest fears of safety regulators.

Climate Policy

EU Climate Chief Calls for Carbon-Market Reform Deal This Week

The European Union should reach an agreement on an overhaul of the world's biggest carbon market this week to prove leadership in combating emissions at the United Nations climate talks, according to EU Climate and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Canete.

Climate Policy

Trump Nominee Drops Paganism Claim, Says Climate Change Is Real

An environmental nominee of President Donald Trump who had dismissed the threat of climate change and labeled carbon dioxide plant food, abandoned those positions Nov. 8 under questioning from Senate Democrats.

Climate Regulation

As Trump Steps Back from UN Climate Talks, Coke and HP Move In

On the fringes of the ongoing global climate summit in Bonn, U.S. leaders will once again demonstrate their commitment to the issue, with a packed agenda of film screenings, panel discussions and cocktail parties where they will highlight the country's carbon dioxide cuts.

Coal Mining

How Coal Giant Peabody's Ideas Ended Up in Trump's Coal Study

Days after Energy Secretary Rick Perry requested a study on how to help coal-fired power plants, a lobbyist for the largest U.S. coal producer contacted the department to offer his advice. Many of those ideas became part of the department's efforts to help companies who provide the fuel source.

Energy

A Year After Trump's Election, Coal's Still Losing to Renewables

It's been a year since President Donald Trump's election and his pledges to transform the

energy markets haven't exactly come to pass.

Energy

France Says Cutting Nuclear Reliance Could Take Extra 10 Years

France may delay its goal of reducing nuclear power to half of electricity output by five to 10 years because it needs more time to develop renewable energy, Ecology Minister Nicolas Hulot said.

Energy

Microgrid Industry Seeks Regulations in Order to Grow

The business of building microgrids is ready to grow but is being held back by a lack of state rules and guidance about how utilities should relate to microgrids, business sources said.

Energy

No Sales Growth? No Problem! Utilities See Money in Grid Repairs

Faced with stagnant sales, big power companies say they can still grow in the U.S. by investing billions in upgrading their grids to accommodate renewables and protect against extreme weather events.

Lead Paint

Lead Paint Nuisance Ruling Could Have Big Impact

Sherwin-Williams Co., NL Industries Inc. and ConAgra Grocery Products Co. are expected to learn before Thanksgiving whether a California trial court validly ordered the manufacturers to pay \$1.15 billion to remove or abate lead paint hazards from hundreds of thousands of California homes.

Mining

Wisconsin's 'Prove it First' Mining Ban Headed for Repeal

Highland Copper Co. Inc., Komatsu Mining Corp. and other global mining equipment and development firms could benefit from the Wisconsin Legislature's approval of a bill repealing a 20-year mining moratorium.

Motor Vehicles

EU Seeks to Cut Cars' Carbon Dioxide Emissions 30 Percent By 2030

BMW Group, Daimler, and other carmakers in the European Union would be required to improve the fuel economy of their vehicles or increase the proportion of electric cars they produce to meet 2030 carbon dioxide reduction targets proposed by the European Commission Nov. 8. The commission, the EU's executive arm, said the average private car or light van sold in the EU in 2030 should emit 30 percent less carbon dioxide than a car or van sold in 2021—a level that European automakers ...

Motor Vehicles

Ford Seals Big Deal for Chinese Electric Cars in Time for Trump

Ford Motor Co. is going all-in on electric cars in China, the world's largest market for battery-powered vehicles, and it wants President Donald Trump to know about it.

Natural Resources

California to Tackle Shrinking Salton Sea With \$383M Plan

California has signed off on a \$383 million plan to build wetlands and control dust along the Salton Sea's shrinking shoreline over the next 10 years.

Oil & Gas

Bill to Boost Federal Oil and Gas Production Advances

A bill that would promote wider offshore oil and gas drilling and a greater state role in onshore oil and gas permitting advanced out of the House Natural Resources Committee Nov. 8 on a mostly party-line vote of 19-14.

PFOA

Pollution Claims Against Rug Makers Batted to State Court

Water pollution claims against many of the nation's carpet manufacturers belong in Alabama state court, a federal court in Alabama ruled Nov. 7.

Pesticides

California Limits Farmers' Pesticide Use Near Schools

California farmers can't spray pesticides near schools and daycare centers during weekdays under new restrictions the state adopted Nov. 7.

Pesticides

In-Season Dicamba Ban Gets Arkansas Plant Board Approval

The Arkansas State Plant Board voted Nov. 8 to institute a seasonal ban on dicamba, an herbicide linked to nearly 1,000 complaints of crop damage in the state.

Proxy Voting

Passive Investing Giants Get More Active on Climate, Diversity

State Street Corp., Vanguard Group, and other big passive investment managers' increasingly vocal stance on issues such as climate change and diversity shows in the way they vote.

Vehicle Fuels

Copper Consumption to Get Boost as World Wagers on Electric Cars

Demand for copper globally is set to jump 22 percent in as soon as five years on increasing usage of the metal in electric vehicles, solar and wind power sectors, according to Indian billionaire Kumar Mangalam Birla's Hindalco Industries Ltd.

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