

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Bloomberg BNA Environment & Energy
Sent: Tue 10/17/2017 11:04:37 AM
Subject: First Move: Californians Choke Over Blazes • Pruitt Heads to the Hill • Energy Regulator Speaks Again

What you need to know to start your day.

Californians Choke Over Blazes • Pruitt Heads to the Hill • Energy Regulator Speaks Again

By [Chuck McCutcheon](#)

How badly are California's worst-in-history wildfires hurting air quality? Really badly.

More than 7 million people in the San Francisco area have been exposed to unhealthy levels of air pollution. Of those, 1 million are facing air quality the EPA would deem extremely unhealthy.

A fire burns near Kenwood, Calif.
Photo by David McNew/Getty Images

And the health effects could linger even after the fires are brought under control, [Jennifer Lu](#) and [Carolyn Whetzel](#) report. Once a fire has passed or been extinguished, rising smoke from smoldering embers could remain for as long as a week.

Neighboring states are assessing whether the pollution will blow their direction. One of them, Oregon, uses satellite and meteorological data to show how traveling smoke affects air quality.

Iowa Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley is well-known for his advocacy of ethanol. Today, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt will see that advocacy firsthand.

Grassley is expected to join several of his colleagues in a meeting with Pruitt to discuss the Renewable Fuel Standard and biofuels. The sit-down follows months of senators raising concerns that the Trump administration isn't living up to the president's 2016 campaign commitment to help their states' corn growers and processors of biofuels.

The lawmakers say the EPA's current proposed rule would mark a step backward for advanced biofuels by lowering how much should be blended into the nation's gasoline and diesel. The Renewable Fuel Standard adds to the cost of refining petroleum, oil and gas industry officials argue.

Grassley said last month on the Senate floor that Trump's policy "seems like a bait-and-switch. Big Oil and oil refineries are prevailing, despite assurances to the contrary." Abby Smith will monitor the meeting.

FERC's chairman is expected to speak today to an energy law conference. It will be the second time in less than a week that Neil Chatterjee publicly addresses a contentious Energy Department proposal asking FERC to help out the coal and nuclear industries.

That proposal has drawn lots of questions from other Federal Energy Regulatory Commission members and opposition from oil, natural gas, and other market sectors competing with coal and nuclear, along with environmental groups. Chatterjee said last week that he's "sympathetic" to Energy Secretary Rick Perry's proposal, which aims to prop up coal and nuclear plants in certain competitive energy markets, but is keen to explore a middle ground.

West Virginia Democrat Sen. Joe Manchin, one of Congress's biggest coal boosters, is among those encouraging Chatterjee and other members to back the department's proposal, while some energy company CEOs came out against it. Rebecca Kern is watching the developments.

Other Stories We're Covering

- Justice Department attorneys will seek to enforce subpoenas at a court hearing in Los Angeles seeking Exxon Mobil documents related to an explosion and another near-miss at the company's Torrance, Calif., refinery. Carolyn Whetzel will track.
- New York officials are objecting to the feds' approval of a proposed 7.8-mile natural gas line.
- Pruitt wants to curb EPA settlements with environmentalists.

Quote of the Day

"Dr. Strangelove is alive and lurking somewhere in the corridors of EPA."
— Jeff Ruch, executive director of a watchdog group of government workers and retirees, blasting new agency radiation guidelines that ease off on established safety levels.

Today's Events

- **9:30 a.m. • City Planning** • Wilson Center forum explores city planning to address air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in Los Angeles, Hong Kong, and Pearl River Delta.
- **10 a.m. • Local Regulation** • American University professor discusses local regulations to address climate change.
- **All Day • Blacks in Energy** • American Association of Blacks in Energy holds

- energy policy summit.
- **All Day • Water and Health** • University of North Carolina's Water Institute holds conference on drinking water supply, sanitation, hygiene, and water resources.
 - **All Day • Exposure Science** • International Society of Exposure Science continues a meeting that began Sunday in Research Triangle Park, N.C.

Around the Web

- Some Puerto Ricans are using car batteries for power while relying on quickly depleting propane tanks to boil water.
- A Swiss company has begun extracting carbon dioxide from Iceland's air and storing it underground, with the expectation that the carbon dioxide turns to stone.
- One of Yucca Mountain's biggest critics predicts the government will never find enough money to open the Nevada nuclear-waste burial ground.

Want to see more of today's news?

1801 South Bell Street, Arlington, VA 22202
Copyright 2017 The Bureau of National Affairs, Inc

Manage Your Subscriptions

Unsubscribe

Web Version

Contact Us

Privacy Policy

Terms of Service