

MI. Clean-vehicle jobs expected to grow, study says, Detroit Free Press, 08/10/11. Peter Lehner, executive director of the Natural Resources Defense Council, said at a time of economic uncertainty, cleaner vehicles are a bright spot for American job creation. "This is not a question of what might happen. This is what's happening today," Lehner said.

OH. Business Briefs, Columbus Dispatch, 08/10/11. Ohio is ranked No. 2 nationally in the number of people employed making components for "clean" vehicles, according to a study. Ohio has 13,753 workers at 28 plants making fuel-efficient vehicles and components, behind Michigan's 38,000 workers at 97 plants. The report was issued yesterday by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Wildlife Federation and the United Auto Workers.

PA. Report: Fuel efficiency fosters jobs, Pittsburgh Tribune Review, 08/10/11. At least 155,000 auto industry jobs now exist in the United States devoted to fuel-efficient vehicle technologies, with that number likely to grow, according to a report Tuesday by the United Auto Workers union and two environmental groups, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Wildlife Federation.

MI. Study: Auto industry home to 151,000 'green' jobs, Detroit News, 08/09/11. The report, jointly produced by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Wildlife Federation and the United Auto Workers, said Michigan had the largest number of "green" auto jobs with 38,067 in 97 facilities - ahead of Ohio with 13,753 jobs in 28 facilities. President Barack Obama will tout green auto jobs when he visits an advanced battery facility operated by Johnson Controls Inc. in Holland, Mich., on Thursday. He also is expected to extol a deal to require a fleetwide average of 54.5 mpg by 2024 in all cars and trucks.

MI. Fuel-efficiency auto jobs reach 151,000, report says, Detroit Free Press, 08/09/11. At least 151,000 auto industry jobs now exist in the United States devoted to fuel-efficient vehicle technologies, with that number likely to grow, according to a joint report released today by the UAW and two environmental groups, the Natural Resources Defense Council National Wildlife Federation.

MI. Report: Michigan leads U.S. in 'clean' car jobs, Grand Rapids Press, 08/09/11. Of the more than 155,000 workers making products to increase fuel efficiency or lower emissions, 24 percent (some 38,000) are in Michigan, according to a report titled "Supplying Ingenuity: U.S. Suppliers of Clean, Fuel-Efficient Vehicle Technologies," released today by the National Resources Defense Council, United Auto Workers and the National Wildlife Federation.

MI. NRDC criticizes EPA attackers, Michigan Messenger, 08/09/11. John Walke, Clean Air Director for the Natural Resources Defense Council, writes an essay responding to legislators and industry representatives who have been attacking the EPA and seeking to weaken its authority to protect the nation's air and water resources. Walke points out that the EPA's enforcement of our environmental laws has already been weakened by 8 years of Bush administration intransigence.

MT. Clean air advocates to launch campaign, Billings Gazette, 08/09/11. Representatives of health, faith, sportsman and advocacy groups will launch a Montana effort for a national clean air campaign at 11 a.m. Wednesday at Swords Park. The groups will kick off the national Clean Air Promise campaign, an effort led by the National League of Women Voters to demonstrate support for strong protections for clean air. Speakers will include Nancy Detrick, from the League of Women Voters; Wade Hill, of Health Care Without Harm; Mark Donald, of First English Lutheran Church; and state Sen. Kendall Van Dyk.

OH. Ohio ranked No. 2 for 'clean car' jobs, Columbus Business First, 08/09/11. The state has 13,753 workers who make components or vehicles that increase fuel efficiency or cut emissions. Michigan, home to General Motors Co.(NYSE:GM), Ford Motor Co.(NYSE:F) and Chrysler Group LLC, has nearly three times that number at 38,067, the paper reported. The report, in conjunction with the National Resources Defense Council and National Wildlife Federation, pushes for tightened fuel economy and emissions standards.

OH. Water plant looks to avoid expensive upgrades to lower toxic emissions, (Lorain) Chronicle-Telegram, 08/08/11. The disparity between coal plants — responsible more than half of all overall mercury pollution — and wastewater treatment plants — which contribute a fraction of the pollution — is often raised at hearings on allowing wastewater plants to exceed federal mercury limits, said Ohio Environmental Protection Agency spokesman Mike Settles...While reducing mercury pollution may be complex, the dangers of it are clear. Mercury — a highly toxic metallic element — is one of the primary toxic emissions that annually kill 13,000 people, according to the American Lung Association. The Ohio Department of Health warns residents not to eat more than one meal of fish caught in Ohio water bodies per week due to high mercury contamination.

PA. EPA has a vital job to do -- so let it work, (Delaware County) Daily Times, (editorial), 08/08/11. Very few organizations, businesses, politicians or newspaper editors can claim never to make a mistake, so someone can always focus on a mistake or misunderstanding as a symptom of ineptness. Toomey uses a dairy measure under the Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure program as proof positive of EPA's wrongdoing. Wonder if the senator paid any attention to a new analysis of data by the Natural Resources Defense Council? According to its study, residents of the northeastern United States experienced health-harming air pollution levels from 2002 through 2006, and projected climate change will worsen this pollution and its associated health problems.

MA. Clean Air Promise comes to Holyoke, WWLP/Hampden, 08/04/11. The Clean Air Promise campaign is aimed at asking elected officials, business, faith, health and community leaders to protect the health of children, families and communities. The campaign is being supported by the League of Women Voters in a new ad they are running in Massachusetts and other states.

MN. Sierra Club: More Cities Should Imitate Duluth to Help Asthma Sufferers, KQDS/Duluth, 08/04/11. When it comes to air, Duluth has some of the cleanest in the nation. That's one reason why the Sierra Club is asking other cities, and even states, to imitate Duluth. The second reason is more than 400,000 Minnesotans suffer from asthma. Doctors say many attacks come on because of air pollution. "One of the scariest things we have to do in rural emergency rooms is put a child or an adult with asthma on a helicopter when because they can't breathe. It would be a heck of a lot cheaper and safer to prevent the asthma attack in the first place," said Dr. Ann Doberstein, an advocate for cleaner air in Duluth. As the EPA works to set new standards on coal burning and gas guzzling, Mayor Don Ness says the city and community can help breathe new air into their already good air.

MN. Sierra Club Protecting the Environment, KAAL/Rochester, 08/03/11. The Environmental Protection Agency was supposed to finalize this year's emission levels that companies have to meet on July 29th. Instead, the decision has been delayed. The problem is some of the current emission restrictions could expire if the EPA waits too long. Not surprisingly, groups like the Sierra Club are doing everything they can to prevent that from happening. "We're here today because pollution from burning coal and oil causes asthma and makes kids sick," said Mark O'Byrne.

MT. Congress must not deflate the Clean Air Act, Great Falls Tribune, (op-ed), 07/27/11. Nancy Detrick: The League of Women Voters of Montana has long supported legislation that protects the public health and safety. These new requirements won't be implemented and enforced without a strong Clean Air Act. Surely protecting the health of our children and elders is of greater priority than the agendas of politicians and special interests. Nancy Detrick, Billings, is president of the Montana League of Women Voters.

Clean-vehicle jobs expected to grow, study says, Detroit Free Press, 08/10/11. Peter Lehner, executive director of the Natural Resources Defense Council, said at a time of economic uncertainty, cleaner vehicles are a bright spot for American job creation. "This is not a question of what might happen. This is what's happening today," Lehner said.

Fuel-efficient cars creating jobs in US. The Money Times, 08/10/11. A report released jointly by the National Wildlife Fund and the National Resource Defense Council (NRDC) along with United Auto Workers (UAW) shows that around 151,000 workers in the U.S. auto sector are engaged in 'green jobs,' aimed at providing clean and fuel-efficient vehicle technologies. The report shows that the auto sector is adopting fuel-efficient technologies in cars and trucks, and the number of jobs involving these technologies is increasing.

Michigan Leads U.S. in 'Clean' Car Employment With Ohio No. 2, Study Says, Bloomberg, 08/09/11. The state where General Motors Co., Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Group LLC are based has 38,067 of the 151,168 U.S. workers who make products that increase fuel efficiency or reduce emissions, according to a study released by the UAW, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Wildlife Federation. Ohio is second with 13,753 such jobs.

Fuel-efficiency efforts foster 155,000 jobs, report finds, McClatchy, 08/09/11. At least 155,000 auto industry jobs now exist in the United States devoted to fuel-efficient vehicle technologies, with that number likely to grow, according to a joint report released Tuesday by the United Auto Workers union and two environmental groups, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Wildlife Federation. The new study found that more than 300 companies in 43 states and the District of Columbia are currently involved in manufacturing tied directly to clean and fuel efficient technologies. That number is likely to expand even more in the wake of recently announced fuel economy standards that would require a fleet average of 54.5 mpg by 2025.

Study: Auto industry home to 151,000 'green' jobs, Detroit News, 08/09/11. The report, jointly produced by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the National Wildlife Federation and the United Auto Workers, said Michigan had the largest number of "green" auto jobs with 38,067 in 97 facilities - ahead of Ohio with 13,753 jobs in 28 facilities. President Barack Obama will tout green auto jobs when he visits an advanced battery facility operated by Johnson Controls Inc. in Holland, Mich., on Thursday. He also is expected to extol a deal to require a fleetwide average of 54.5 mpg by 2024 in all cars and trucks.

Fuel-efficiency auto jobs reach 151,000, report says, Detroit Free Press, 08/09/11. At least 151,000 auto industry jobs now exist in the United States devoted to fuel-efficient vehicle technologies, with that number likely to grow, according to a joint report released today by the UAW and two environmental groups, the Natural Resources Defense Council National Wildlife Federation.

Indiana and Kentucky in top five of green auto jobs, Louisville Courier-Journal, 08/09/11. "The reality is that cleaner vehicles have already led to more jobs," said Peter Lehner, executive director of the Natural Resources Defense Council, in a written statement. "Our report shows how strong fuel efficiency standards have employed people nationwide, so stronger standards will certainly mean even more job growth in the future."

Bloom out - Energy wars - Rating agencies to take a hit - Bainwol Boon - DoD contract sparks online battle royale, Politico/Politico Influence, 08/09/11. ENERGY WARS: Enviro and energy advocates are going toe-to-toe this recess as they try to gain public momentum over EPA regulations and energy policy. The Sierra Club and League of Women Voters have activated their grass-roots network, are encouraging members to get in touch with their lawmakers and are holding events around the country. LWV members are organizing statewide events this week in Montana, Michigan and Ohio related to the clean air promise and supporting the EPA.

Campaigns for, against EPA fill recess void, Politico Pro, (see below), 08/09/11. As part of its Clean Air Promise campaign, LWV President Elisabeth MacNamara said, the nonprofit engaged in an ad buy inside the Beltway and on cable at the end of July to help kick start the initiative. The ads feature footage of asthmatic kids and urge citizens and elected officials to "promise to protect our children from dangerous pollution." So far, MacNamara said, organizers are aware of three statewide kickoff events this week in Montana, Michigan and Ohio.

Agencies Set First Fuel Efficiency Standards for Trucks, Buses, CQ Today, (see below), 08/09/11. Developed in coordination with truck and engine manufacturers and fleet owners, the Transportation Department/EPA standards will apply to trucks built in 2014 through 2018 and will set a range of targets for each vehicle type... "These standards mark an important starting point for progress beyond 2018, and by using existing technology — for example, by setting standards for heavy-duty truck trailers — we can do even more to cut our addiction to oil," said Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune.

Obama to Announce Fuel Efficiency Standards for Trucks, National Journal, (see below), 08/09/11. The standards, proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration last year, would require reductions of between 7 and 20 percent from current fuel consumption and greenhouse gas-emission levels for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles manufactured between 2014 and 2018... "By setting a stable signal to the market, the standards provide the certainty that industry needs to invest in cleaner, fuel-savings technologies. Adding more technology to trucks means more jobs to build and install the equipment," Natural Resources Defense Council vehicle analyst Luke Tonachel wrote in a blog post on Monday.

Obama unveils first efficiency standards for heavy-duty trucks, The Hill/E2 Wire, 08/09/11. Environmental and clean air groups have been eagerly anticipating the standards, which were set in motion last year after Obama signed a memo on the issue. Natural Resources Defense Council vehicles analyst Luke Tonachel said heavy-duty trucks are a major source of unchecked air pollution.

New NRDC Web Tool Analyzes Climate Change State by State, Environment Protection Magazine, 08/09/11. A new Web tool unveiled by NRDC lets users read how their state might be impacted by climate change. On the site, www.nrdc.org/climatemaps, users can see local data and maps detailing extreme weather patterns throughout the country, see local climate change vulnerabilities and learn about health problems in their own communities that are connected to climate change. Based on an analysis of data gathered from the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other resources, NRDC's new "Climate Change Threatens Health" webpage lets users see the effects of climate change at a regional and state level.

EPA set to miss deadline on ozone rules, Los Angeles Times, 08/09/11. On Monday, a group of environmentalists and public health associations signaled their lack of confidence that the administration would act soon. The groups, including the Environmental Defense Fund and the American Lung Assn., filed a motion in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to set an immediate deadline for the EPA to issue the ozone rules.

Legal action aims to force EPA to finalise smog rules, Business Green, 08/09/11. The latest legal action calls on the court to order the EPA to finalise the standards "immediately". The case, which is backed by a number of groups including the American Lung Association and the Environmental Defense Fund, is the latest in a long-running legal saga that saw previous smog standards proposed by the Bush administration in 2008 challenged by green groups that argued they were too weak.

Green groups to court: End EPA's 'inexcusable delay' on smog rule, The Hill/E2 Wire, 08/08/11. On Monday, Earthjustice filed a motion with the U.S. Court of Appeals asking the D.C. Circuit to require that EPA complete its reconsideration of the Bush-era rules now, alleging an "excessive and inexcusable delay" that "threatens the health and welfare of millions of Americans." Earthjustice is representing the American Lung Association, the Environmental Defense Fund and several other groups.

EPA Pressed for Ozone Standards, Wall Street Journal, 08/08/11. The agency has been sued by both the business community and the environmental groups who have challenged its existing ozone rules, and it will likely end up in court again no matter what action it takes. The groups that asked the court for the deadline include the American Lung Association, Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council, among others. Earthjustice, an environmental law firm, is representing the groups in court.

Enviros to court: Force EPA to act on smog, Politico Pro, (see below), 08/08/11. Greens and public health groups are asking a court to force the EPA to immediately revise a controversial smog rule, arguing that the Obama administration can't be trusted to take "timely" action on its own. Attorneys representing the American Lung Association, Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council and other groups filed a motion Monday with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, asking the court to order the EPA to immediately complete its reconsideration of the George W. Bush administration's 2008 ozone standard.

GOP attacks the EPA for doing its job, Grist, (op-ed), 08/08/11. John Walke: House Republicans insist on accusing the Obama administration of suffering from some kind of regulatory spasm. But they refuse to acknowledge that the Obama Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is following federal laws and court orders -- orders issued when the Bush administration failed to abide by the law. By following the law today we will save tens of thousands of lives and avoid hundreds of thousands of illnesses. John Walke is a senior attorney and the Director of NRDC's Clean Air Program.

Battle over coal for China highlights global economic change, McClatchy, 08/07/11. Hawkins, a former Environmental Protection Agency official, said that by increasing coal exports, the U.S. undermined its own stated goal of reducing carbon emissions. "It's simply inconsistent to say we're going to cut carbon pollution, but we're indifferent to whether it comes from the United States or somewhere else," he said...Millennium Bulk Terminals tried to get a permit to develop a facility that would give St. Louis-based Arch Coal an outlet to Asia. But the bid fell apart when documents revealed that Millennium was planning a much larger operation than it had disclosed. In March, the company withdrew its application. Kathleen Ridihalgh, of the Sierra Club's Washington state chapter, said Millennium and SSA "thought they were getting in quickly and quietly," but instead ran into resistance from communities near the proposed ports.

N.R.D.C. online tool shows states climate change vulnerabilities, EcoSeed, 08/05/11. The United States Natural Resources Defense Council developed an online web tool producing state-by-state data that point out to how climate change can lead to worsening environmental conditions and increased climate change-related health problems. The non-profit environmental action group's climate maps shows how each state might be impacted by climate change through five specific problem areas such as extreme heat, drought, flooding, air pollution, and infectious diseases.

Interactive map of US shows how climate change will affect health, The Independent (UK), 08/05/11. On August 3 the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in America launched an interactive map showing US citizens how climate change could affect their health past on existing data. The NRDC is a not-for-profit organization based in the United States and describes itself as an 'environmental action group' it has an estimated 1.3 million supporters around the world and offices throughout the United States and in Beijing, China.

As Summer Temperatures Rise, So Does Deadly Coal Pollution, Huffington Post, (op-ed), 08/05/11. Mary Anne Hitt: Burning coal for electricity pollutes our air with toxins that cause asthma, heart disease and more. One of these pollutants is ozone, which is one of the key ingredients of smog. Yet many Americans still aren't connecting the dots between coal and the smog pollution it creates. So I took to the TV airwaves yesterday to spread the news and call for action. We need stronger air pollution standards from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Hitt is the Director, Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign.

Opposition to Natural Gas Fracking Heats Up, Sustainable Business, 08/05/11. In a separate action, more than 100 groups filed a petition this week demanding that full health and safety information be made available for all the chemicals used in oil and gas development, including fracking chemicals. Earthjustice filed the petition on behalf of Environmental Defense Fund, The League of Women Voters and more than 100 other groups who point to troubling reports of poisoned drinking water, polluted air, mysterious animal deaths, and sick families... "The more information we have about the chemicals used in fracking and drilling, the easier it will be to keep people safe and healthy," says Earthjustice Associate Attorney Megan Klein. "But EPA needs to move quickly – we learn of new problems related to this industry almost daily."

An Attempt at Clarity in the Who-Should-Pay-for-Transmission Debate, AOL Energy, (op-ed), 08/05/11. Allison Clements: First, the rule recognizes that transmission projects that help to facilitate public policies (like state renewable portfolio standards and energy efficiency programs, EPA clean air rules, and other existing and future laws as they are enacted) provide benefits worthy of cost allocation. When transmission projects facilitate existing rules and laws, beneficiaries of those rules and laws should contribute to the costs of the line. Allison Clements is Senior Attorney, Project for Sustainable FERC Energy Policy, a New York-based coalition of environmental groups focused on FERC, regional transmission and wholesale markets issues that is housed within NRDC.

Climate change affects each U.S. state, Web tool shows, USA Today/Greenhouse, 08/04/11. This tool, based in part on weather data gathered by the National Climatic Data Center and developed by the Natural Resources Defense Council, compares each state's temperatures from 2000 through 2009 with those from 1961 to 1990. Users can see, for example, that the western United States has recently had more days of extreme heat than in previous decades.

New tool maps how badly climate change affects you, Grist, 08/04/11. A new web tool from the Natural Resources Defense Council lets you map climate change threats -- excessive heat, disease risk, pollution, drought, and flooding -- anywhere in the United States. Above is the full U.S. map showing the average number of extreme heat days in 2000-2009, but you can also zoom in on your area. It's not just designed to depress you, either; each state's map includes information about how to address climate change impacts, and details the state's preparedness plan (if there is one).

New Maps from NRDC Show How Warming Will Affect Your Health, Treehugger, 08/04/11. Curious about how changing global temperatures will affect your area? The NRDC has released new maps that show how a shift in climate may impact health, from allergies to outbreaks of Dengue fever. NRDC writes, "Climate change is one of the most serious public health threats facing the nation, but few people are aware of how it can affect them. Children, the elderly, and communities living in poverty are among the most vulnerable."

Understand how climate change puts your area at risk, Your Green Path, 08/04/11. Climate change is expected to lead to worsening drought conditions and greater heat extremes, along with myriad health problems, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council.

US Faces Growing Health Threats From Climate Change, Journal of the American Medical Association, 08/04/11. The United States faces growing health threats from infectious disease, extreme weather, and air pollution as a result of climate change, according to an analysis by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) published online today. Such effects are likely to be most pronounced in the Southeastern states, according to these findings.

Climate Change Growing Threat to Health, Occupational Health and Safety, 08/04/11. A JAMA blog highlighted an analysis by the Natural Resources Defense Council showing that the United States faces increasing health threats from infectious disease, extreme weather, and air pollution due to climate change. The analysis, published online Aug. 3, said the effects will be felt most strongly in the Southeast.

How climate change threatens health in your state, Smart Planet, 08/04/11. The Natural Resources Defense Council has just launched a website called Climate Change Threatens Health -- www.nrdc.org/climatemaps -- which shows the local effects of changing climate. By zooming in to your state -- and in some cases, city -- on 5 different maps, you can see how your health is vulnerable (and learn about some steps to take to protect yourself and possibly combat the change).

New Map Shows Climate Change Health Threat In Your State, Care2, 08/04/11. Children, the elderly, and communities living in poverty are the populations that are most vulnerable to climate changes. To inform the public of the current climate change health threat in their area, the Natural Resources Defense Council recently released a series of interactive U.S. maps that provide more information on climate-health risks, actions being taken to prepare communities, and what individuals can do to reduce their impact.

Moving Beyond Oil and Stopping a Bad Bill, Huffington Post, (op-ed), 08/04/11. Michael Brune: Unfortunately, at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, Congress is considering a "slash and burn" 2012 spending bill for the Interior Department and the Environmental Protection Agency that is the most environmentally destructive legislation we've ever seen. This bill has nearly 40 riders tacked onto it that, unless defeated, will open the Grand Canyon to uranium mining, gut protections for our health and our water, endanger our wild places and wildlife, block protections against deadly mercury and other toxic pollution, and a host of other terrible policies. Brune is Executive Director, The Sierra Club.

Is the American Lung Association EPA's chief lobbyist?, Washington Examiner, (op-ed), 08/04/11. Columnist Ron Arnold: The press release accompanying the ad said the American Lung Association produced it to "thwart congressional attacks on the Clean Air Act." ALA's website says, "We are fighting to ensure EPA has the legal authority and necessary funding to continue to protect public health." You have to concede that this ad is a masterpiece of lobbying. It made me want to grab that poor baby and rush to the nearest medical help. Too bad it's nothing but cunning propaganda.

Griffith's EPA claim ironic, Bristol Herald Courier, (letter to the editor), 08/04/11. A very large cost applies to our nation's health from the lead, mercury, arsenic, acid gases and other pollutants power plants spew into the air. The American Lung Association reports that the "EPA's proposed mercury and air toxics reduction rule will prevent 17,000 premature deaths and 120,000 asthma attacks each year." Why would Griffith not favor measures that reduce cancer causing air pollutants? Heavy metal emissions from coal-fired electric plants are known to cause developmental disabilities, increase the likelihood of heart failure, and result in blindness and deafness in infants.

EPA Should Require Disclosure of Fracking Chemicals, Groups Say, Bloomberg, 08/04/11. The EPA needs to take stronger action now because of the uncertainty about the safety of fracking, according to Klein. "We think there's information out there showing that these chemicals pose an unreasonable risk of harm, but there's not enough information out there to know for sure," Klein said. The "fracking-fueled gas rush" in the U.S. has led to reports of tainted drinking water, polluted air, animal deaths and sick humans, according to Earthjustice. The Natural Resources Defense Council, a New York-based environmental group, has said the chemicals used are often toxic, citing cases in Wyoming and Pennsylvania where residents were told not to drink well water.

Greens not friendless among House GOP, Politico Pro, (see below), 08/04/11. Still, greens look at the list of occasional allies as a reminder that lawmakers fear being penalized if they venture too far out against their districts' interests on wildlife conservation and air, water and land pollution. "Votes for the environment are good for the country, good for their reelection and ultimately good for their party," said Scott Slesinger, legislative director at the Natural Resources Defense Council... Freshman Rep. Nan Hayworth of New York, for example, was one of two Republicans to support the EPA earlier this year on an appropriations bill amendment that would have barred the agency from writing climate rules. She also bucked her leadership in support of NOAA establishing a climate change service.

Climate change and health: How vulnerable is your city?, Los Angeles Times/Greenspace, 08/03/11. Los Angeles has smog and ragweed pollen problems and is at risk for at least one unhealthy air quality day per summer, meaning the air does not meet the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's standard for ground-level ozone. Smog intermixed with pollen poses a dual threat to the health of people with allergies and asthma. California's strategy to prepare for worsened air quality includes measures to identify, track and address climate related vulnerabilities, according to NRDC.

Shell Gambles U.S. Rules on Drilling Before Arctic Freezes, Bloomberg, 08/03/11. Shell may win approval within days from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement of an exploration plan for drilling as many as two wells a year in the Beaufort Sea in 2012 and 2013. The company says that after investing more than \$3.5 billion in the Arctic, it still awaits permits from the drilling regulator, the Coast Guard and the Environmental Protection Agency. Some are unlikely to come before its October deadline to make plans for next year... The Natural Resources Defense Council, which challenged air permits the company obtained last year, said "we do not know how to clean up oil in broken ice."

Alexandria's GenOn coal-fired plant not needed, report finds, Washington Post, 08/03/11.

The national environmental advocacy group Sierra Club has worked to shut down coal-fired plants across the country, including the Alexandria plant. The local chapter reports that harmful emissions, including sulfur dioxide and mercury, are being spewed over Alexandria and the District and absorbed by fish in local waterways. Concerned over the emissions, D.C. Mayor Vincent C. Gray (D) and D.C. Department of the Environment chief Christophe A.G. Tuluare considering petitioning the Environmental Protection Agency to shutter the plant.

Politico Pro

Campaigns for, against EPA fill recess void

By [ANNA PALMER](#) | 8/9/11 2:27 PM EDT

Environmental and energy advocates are going toe to toe this recess as they fight to gain power in the battle over energy policy and EPA regulations.

It's not just the typical environmental organizations making the pitch. The League of Women Voters has activated its grass-roots network, encouraging members to get in touch with their lawmakers and holding events around the country.

As part of its Clean Air Promise campaign, LWV President Elisabeth MacNamara said, the nonprofit engaged in an ad buy inside the Beltway and on cable at the end of July to help kick start the initiative. The ads feature footage of asthmatic kids and urge citizens and elected officials to "promise to protect our children from dangerous pollution."

So far, MacNamara said, organizers are aware of three statewide kickoff events this week in Montana, Michigan and Ohio. She said she expects more events to come.

While the group isn't in the weeds on supporting specific provisions, LWV has taken a strong stance of supporting the Clean Air Act and the EPA.

The Sierra Club is also getting in on the action.

The group, which recently got a \$50 million, four-year cash infusion from Bloomberg Philanthropies to aid its campaign against coal, has been traveling around the country with an inflatable 18-foot-tall inhaler to make its point about bad air quality. Spokesman Oliver Bernstein said the giant inhaler, recently seen in Minnesota, will be in Virginia next week. He said Sierra Club activists also recently delivered inhalers to Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.) while wearing breathing masks that said, "Brought to you by big coal."

The coal industry isn't sitting on the sidelines. The American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity is once again hitting the road during recess with an 18-wheel mobile classroom as part of the trade group's \$35 million annual campaign. The effort, running through Labor Day, will hit important 2012 election states such as Ohio, Pennsylvania and Missouri.

"These states stand to be disproportionately impacted by the EPA rules," ACCCE's Lisa Miller said.

So far, Miller says, ACCCE has gotten good reception. During the first three days of the tour, more than 2,500 attendees of the Ohio State Fair walked through the classroom and signed up to contact their federal and state legislators about the EPA's final Cross-State Air Pollution Rule.

CQ TODAY

Agencies Set First Fuel Efficiency Standards for Trucks, Buses

By Margaret Kriz Hobson, CQ Staff

Aug. 9, 2011 – 12:16 p.m.

The Obama administration on Tuesday announced the first national fuel efficiency standards and greenhouse gas emission requirements for work trucks, buses and other heavy-duty vehicles, touting the new standards as an initiative that could save businesses \$50 billion in fuel costs.

Developed in coordination with truck and engine manufacturers and fleet owners, the Transportation Department/EPA standards will apply to trucks built in 2014 through 2018 and will set a range of targets for each vehicle type.

"While we were working to improve the efficiency of cars and light-duty trucks, something interesting happened," President Obama said in remarks prepared for an event today at which the new standards were to be announced. "We started getting letters asking that we do the same for medium- and heavy-duty trucks. They were from the people who build, buy and drive these trucks. And today, I'm proud to have the support of these companies as we announce the first-ever national policy to increase fuel efficiency and decrease greenhouse gas pollution from medium- and heavy-duty trucks."

Allen Schaeffer, executive director of the Diesel Technology Forum, said the truck standards are the result of "billions of dollars in research and development by engine and truck manufacturers over the last decade."

Noting that U.S. truck fleets consume 22 billion gallons of diesel each year, Schaeffer said that "because of the sheer magnitude of commercial vehicles operating in the United States, this regulation has the potential to result in significant environmental and energy efficiency gains."

Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said the savings a truck operator would realize within the first year of driving one of the new trucks would more than offset the added cost of installing the technology.

According to the Transportation Department, by 2018 big rigs and semi trucks would have to reduce emissions by as much as 20 percent, heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans would reduce emissions by about 15 percent and delivery trucks, buses and garbage trucks would reduce emissions by about 10 percent.

The new truck standards followed last month's White House-brokered deal to increase the fuel economy standards for new cars and light-duty trucks beginning in 2017.

Under that plan, car manufacturers must meet fleetwide standards of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025 — a significant boost from the current target of a fleetwide average of 34.1 miles per gallon for model year 2016.

The car standards were developed through administration negotiations with the auto industry, environmental groups and the state of California. According to the White House, the car standards could save American drivers \$1.7 trillion.

The car efficiency requirements received mixed reviews from Congress.

Lawmakers from auto manufacturing states praised the cooperative deal with the car industry. But House Oversight and Government Reform Chairman Darrell Issa, R-Calif., announced plans to investigate the standards.

Issa said the industry-government negotiations violated federal rule-making procedures and warned that the tougher fuel economy standards will hurt the U.S. economy. He also asserted that the administration lacks the authority to set fuel economy standards beyond 2016.

The 2007 energy law (PL 110-140) requires the Transportation Department to establish fleetwide fuel economy standards of at least 35 miles per gallon by 2020 as well as new standards for light trucks. The EPA role in setting fuel economy standards stems from a 2007 Supreme Court finding that greenhouse gas emissions are pollutants under the Clean Air Act (PL 101-549) and are subject to regulation if the agency found the emissions harmful to public health.

Independent Truckers' Complaints

While the new heavy truck standards drew support from manufacturers, fleet owners and organized labor, the organization representing independent truckers complained it was a one-size-fits-all rule that "ignores input from small-business trucking, overlooks less expensive options to achieve EPA goals of reduced emissions and will ultimately increase new truck costs."

"By totally ignoring the impact on small-business trucking, the EPA has demonstrated yet another example of our wretchedly broken regulatory process," said Joe Rajkovicz, director of regulatory affairs for the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association. "Congress should take action when they return in September to rein in the bureaucracy and push forward regulatory reform legislation that has already been introduced."

Rajkovicz said in a release that improved driver training can result in fuel savings rivaling expensive new technology.

The office of House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, R-Va., picked up on the theme, complaining that the new regulations "further tie the hands of job creators and add yet another hurdle to getting the economy up and running."

"The result of these regulations means increased costs for businesses and families, and fewer jobs for workers," the written statement said.

Unions representing the affected workers, however, joined truck manufacturers in praising the new standards.

"With these new fuel efficiency standards — and the light duty standards announced recently — we truly are moving forward to a more efficient fleet of vehicles across the board," said United Auto Workers President Bob King. "And, with this new fleet comes good jobs, a reduced dependence on foreign oil, and less pollution harming our communities and the environment. UAW is pleased to support these common-sense proposals that illustrate what we can achieve when business, labor, and the public sector work together to achieve consensus."

Teamsters President James P. Hoffa called the new rules "vital to our efforts to clean up our nation's ports and ensure we all can breathe cleaner air."

Hoffa did caution that in implementing the new standards, “we must ensure that the cost of doing business and cleaning up our environment by moving to more-efficient vehicles is not passed on to hardworking truckers and we instead hold the industry responsible to labor and environmental standards.”

Environmental groups also were quick to praise the heavy-truck standards.

“These standards mark an important starting point for progress beyond 2018, and by using existing technology — for example, by setting standards for heavy-duty truck trailers — we can do even more to cut our addiction to oil,” said Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune.

Plans for the president to announce the new standards Tuesday at a trucking company in Virginia were postponed. Instead, Obama planned to meet privately with industry officials at the White House.

National Journal

Obama to Announce Fuel Efficiency Standards for Trucks

By [Olga Belogolova](#)

August 9, 2011 | 6:00 a.m.

President Obama on Tuesday is set to announce the first-ever fuel efficiency standards for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles.

The standards, proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration last year, would require reductions of between 7 and 20 percent from current fuel consumption and greenhouse gas-emission levels for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles manufactured between 2014 and 2018.

Late last month, Obama [announced a deal](#) between the White House and automakers to dramatically ramp up fuel-economy standards for cars and light trucks from the current goal of 35.5 miles per gallon by 2016 to 54.5 mpg by 2025. The White House, automakers, and environmentalists touted those standards as “historic” for their ability to reduce U.S. oil dependence and emissions.

Tuesday’s announcement in Springfield, Va., where Obama is expected to be flanked by truck industry executives, will finalize draft rules issued last year and apply to any so-called work truck weighing more than 8,500 pounds, as well as buses, delivery vehicles, 18-wheelers, and garbage trucks. The standards will require up to a 20 percent reduction in fuel efficiency for tractor-trailers; up to a 10 percent reduction for buses, delivery trucks, and fire engines; and up to a 10 percent reduction for heavy-duty pickups and vans.

Obama is expected to tout the increased efficiency standards as a means of slashing the nation’s oil consumption and carbon emissions. Heavy-duty vehicles consume nearly 20 percent of the oil used by the transportation sector, according to [data from the Energy Information Administration](#). And medium- and heavy-duty trucks emit 20 percent of the transportation sector’s carbon pollution, [according to EPA](#).

When EPA and NHTSA proposed the draft standards last year, the two agencies estimated that the cuts could potentially reduce greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 250 million metric tons and save approximately 500 million barrels of oil over the life of the vehicles sold between 2014 and 2018. Until now, the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards, which were established in 1975 following the 1973 Arab oil embargo, have only been applied to passenger cars and light trucks.

Representatives from eight truck companies, Cummins, Navistar, Daimler, Eaton, Volvo/Mack, Chrysler, GM, and Conway, will attend Tuesday's announcement, senior administration officials said.

Some industry representatives expressed support for the new standards.

"Our industry has totally embraced it," Glen Kedzie, vice president of environmental affairs at the American Trucking Association, the largest national trade association for the trucking industry, told *National Journal* on Monday.

"From the economic side, this makes a lot of sense," Kedzie said, explaining that fuel is one of the biggest operating expenses for the industry. He said the added cost of building more fuel-efficient trucks would be offset by lower fuel prices within two years of purchase for a typical vehicle. "Everything beyond the initial payback period is going to be profit," he said.

Kedzie said many in the industry have voluntarily been adopting the new technologies that allow more fuel-efficient vehicles, and that he expects Obama to tie the rulemaking to a boost in clean-energy jobs and innovation in the United States. Environmentalists agree that the rules could result in more jobs in the clean-energy sector.

"By setting a stable signal to the market, the standards provide the certainty that industry needs to invest in cleaner, fuel-savings technologies. Adding more technology to trucks means more jobs to build and install the equipment," Natural Resources Defense Council vehicle analyst Luke Tonachel wrote in a blog post on Monday.

"And just like in the automobile industry, strong U.S. standards can help make U.S. manufacturers world leaders in innovation," he added.

Politico Pro

Enviros to court: Force EPA to act on smog

By ROBIN BRAVENDER | 8/8/11 2:35 PM EDT

Greens and public health groups are asking a court to force the EPA to immediately revise a controversial smog rule, arguing that the Obama administration can't be trusted to take "timely" action on its own.

Attorneys representing the American Lung Association, Environmental Defense Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council and other groups filed a motion Monday with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, asking the court to order the EPA to immediately complete its reconsideration of the George W. Bush administration's 2008 ozone standard.

“The agency’s excessive and inexcusable delay in reconsidering the standard threatens the health and welfare of millions of Americans,” the groups wrote in the sharply worded motion to the court.

Administration attorneys in February told the court they were confident the EPA would complete its national ambient air quality standard for ozone by July 29, but the agency has missed that deadline. EPA officials sent the final standard to the White House Office of Management and Budget for review on July 11, and administration officials say that review can take up to 90 days with possible extensions.

The court agreed to put litigation challenging the 2008 rule on hold while the EPA reconsidered the rule. Parties to that lawsuit, including the EPA as well as greens and industry groups challenging the rule, are required to send briefs to the court by Friday recommending how the case should proceed.

The EPA has delayed the final reconsideration of the standard four times since August 2010, and greens and public health groups say they’ve lost patience.

“An order setting a deadline for EPA action is warranted because the agency simply cannot otherwise be relied upon to take timely final action,” their motion says. “EPA has shown as much by its repeated failures to adhere to its own stated timetables for finishing the reconsideration at issue here.”

EPA spokesman Brendan Gilfillan said the agency remains committed to finalizing the rule after it clears the White House review process.

“Administrator Jackson is fully committed to finalizing EPA’s reconsideration of the Clean Air Act health standard for ground level ozone,” he said. “That reconsideration is currently going through interagency review led by OMB. Following completion of this final step, EPA will finalize its reconsideration. We look forward to finalizing this standard shortly.”

But greens say the White House review isn’t necessary.

“EPA has finished its reconsideration rule package,” says the motion to the court. “That package has been sitting at OMB since July 11. Further delay of the rule at OMB is neither warranted nor consistent with the act, which grants exclusive authority to the EPA administrator to set clean air standards and provides no authority to OMB whatsoever to delay or interfere with the administrator’s action thereon.”

Politico Pro

Greens not friendless among House GOP

By [DARREN SAMUELSON](#) | 8/4/11 5:41 AM EDT

No, Theodore Roosevelt hasn't been reincarnated.

But environmentalists playing defense all year against the House GOP legislative agenda have found a few helpful friends among a 240-member conference steeped in tea party influence.

Dozens of purple-state Republicans have broken ranks with their party leadership to take the pro-green position during floor and committee votes spanning more than 100 bills and amendments.

Granted, the defections seldom come all at the same time, meaning the number of actual environmental victories can be counted on one hand.

Still, greens look at the list of occasional allies as a reminder that lawmakers fear being penalized if they venture too far out against their districts' interests on wildlife conservation and air, water and land pollution.

"Votes for the environment are good for the country, good for their reelection and ultimately good for their party," said Scott Slesinger, legislative director at the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Republicans have a variety of reasons for taking their pro-green stands in 2011. Many sit atop the list of potential Democratic pickups because they represent districts and states that went for Barack Obama or John Kerry in the last two presidential campaigns, including Florida, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Several also said they're not under the same kind of GOP leadership demands that forced floor unity in past sessions of Congress, where votes across the aisle could mean losing out on a cherished committee assignment or draw an officially sanctioned primary challenge.

"The leadership to their great credit understand that we all come from diverse backgrounds and divergent districts and have been very gracious and understanding that we've got a job to do and they let us do it," said Pennsylvania Rep. Mike Fitzpatrick, one of 37 Republicans to vote with Democrats last month to pass an amendment that allows the Interior Department to continue new listings under the Endangered Species Act.

Republican veterans of past environmental battles say the number of green allies this year really isn't all that big, something they attribute foremost to the fear of getting a tea party primary challenger.

"It should be an embarrassment for the party," said former Rep. Sherwood Boehlert of New York, now a vice chairman of the League of Conservation Voters's board and an honorary board member of Republicans for Environmental Protection. "There are several more, in magnitudes of 10, who'd like to do it but find it politically inconvenient or feel it'd create too much angst in certain segments of their constituency."

"I still think there's a hangover of the ability of the tea party last cycle, the willingness to field primary challengers against people they viewed as moderate, people who weren't 100 percent with their orthodoxy," said David Jenkins, government affairs director at Republicans for Environmental Protection.

Several House Republicans brushed off concern about the tea party in 2012 challenging them because of their pro-environment votes, or for that matter, the votes they've taken on any issues that can be seen as too liberal.

Freshman Rep. Nan Hayworth of New York, for example, was one of two Republicans to support the EPA earlier this year on an appropriations bill amendment that would have barred the agency from writing climate rules. She also bucked her leadership in support of NOAA establishing a climate change service.

"I have a very good relationship with our local tea party members," Hayworth said. "We share a veneration of the Constitution and many of them, in fact all of them, have known that I have treated the science objectively from the start."

Rep. Steve LaTourette of Ohio this year clashed with Speaker John Boehner over a union-related provision on Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization. He's also voted in favor of funding National Public Radio and allowing the Interior Department to put a moratorium on uranium mining around the Grand Canyon.

"I can't be guided by that," he said of a possible tea party primary challenge. "I've got to vote. I've done it for 18 years. I'm going to continue to do it. People like the way I vote. People don't like the way I vote. That's just the way it is."

Republican pro-environment votes are coming in all shapes and sizes.

Rep. Fred Upton, once known as a moderate on green issues, has taken the party line since his successful run for the chairmanship of the Energy and Commerce Committee. But the Michigan Republican surprised many when he voted with Democrats to preserve the Endangered Species Act. Also voting with Democrats was Rep. Ed Whitfield of Kentucky, the chairman of the Energy and Power Subcommittee and the shepherd for many of the anti-EPA bills that have environmentalists on high alert.

Democratic leaders aren't giving the Republican defectors that much credit. Reps. Henry Waxman of California and Ed Markey of Massachusetts last month dubbed their colleagues "the most anti-environment House in the history of Congress."

"So far this year, the House has voted 110 times to undermine the protection of the environment," the Democratic lawmakers said in a report that found 97 percent of Republicans took an anti-environment position compared with 84 percent of Democrats who voted in the other direction.

On the biggest of bills, Republicans have stuck together. There were no defectors when they voted in January to repeal the health care law. Also, stand-alone legislation removing the EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases won support from every GOP member present, though an aide to Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen of New Jersey later said he would have voted against the bill if he had not been on leave recovering from hip surgery.

"I could find a reason to vote against every single bill that comes through here," said Rep. Mike Simpson (R-Idaho), the chairman of the Interior and environment appropriations subcommittee. "What you have to do is look at it in balance and say is it good for the country or is it bad for the country. And every bill is a compromise. Some people, their compromising standards are way low. They're unwilling to do it at all."

Jenkins said he's been baffled by the randomness of the roll calls. For example, he counted 20 to 30 more Republicans who wanted to vote against killing tougher efficiency standards for incandescent light bulbs. Ten GOP lawmakers did vote against the repeal.

"There's not a lot of consistency," Jenkins said. "They're feeling tugged in so many different directions, trying to give every constituency a little something they should like. But it produces an incoherent policy when it comes to energy and the environment that you can't make heads or tails of."

Rep. Jason Chaffetz frequently votes against his party leadership, though not on environmental issues. But the Utah Republican said he doesn't agree with Boehlert's complaint that there are too few GOP greens. "It sounds like we're making some improvements around here," he said.

