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June 19, 2015

NEWS CLIPS

[Shell Buys Beaver County Property for \\$13.5 Million](#)

[Republican Pledges \\$175 Million to Push Party on Climate](#)

[EIA to Collect and Publish Data on Densified Biomass](#)

[Shell-BP Merger Passes First Hurdle](#)

[NJ to Begin Accepting Applications for Energy Resiliency Bank](#)

[SUNY Tomkins Courtland and NexEra Energy Resources Install Solar](#)

[GOP Bill Could Eliminate Ethanol From Fuel](#)

EVENTS

June 23-24, 2015

BioEnergy 2015

Washington Convention Center, Washington, D.C.

More [information](#)

July 19-21

2015 PFI Annual Conference

Williamsburg Lodge Williamsburg, VA

[More information](#)

July 20-24

Energypath Camp & Conference

State News

No Breakthroughs on Budget Talk

With less than two weeks remaining until the June 30 budget "deadline," and discussions continuing among House and Senate leaders and the Governor's Office, no breakthroughs appear imminent, and GOP leaders have signaled that without a significant change in negotiating positions, they may work together to pass a balanced budget and put it on the Governor's desk on June 30.

Gov. Wolf's budget negotiators continue to emphasize their three priorities: funding schools with a severance tax; eliminating the structural deficit with sustainable revenues; and reducing property taxes. And his spokesmen continue to maintain that "the status quo is unacceptable and we have to change the way state government operates."

Republicans say the governor's position is unworkable and unrealistic. The Governor's ongoing tour of schools to focus attention on education funding has raised the issue of need across the commonwealth, but generating support from affected audiences doesn't translate into votes in the General Assembly. [View full article](#)

[Regional News](#)

[Federal News](#)

More State News

PUC Posts Details on \$223.5 Million in 2014 Gas Drilling Impact Fee

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) today published information on the PUC website regarding the final approved distribution of \$223.5 million in disbursements under Act 13 of 2012 (Act 13), which imposed an Impact Fee on natural gas producers. Over the past four years, the PUC has collected and

University of Scranton
Scranton, PA
Compiled July 20-22
Conference July 23-24
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distributed more than \$855 million in impact fees.

[The PUC's Act 13 reporting](#)

[website](#) provides a detailed breakdown of the payments to county and municipal governments, along with specifics on how much money has been collected for each year, since 2011; how that money has been allocated, by category; and comparisons to previous years. The interactive website provides numerous reports regarding the collection and distribution of these funds, along with graphical data regarding the top paying producers, well count breakdowns and top receiving counties and local governments. ([MORE](#))

Meetings Held on Crude By Rail and Clean Power Plan

Last week the Senate Transportation and Energy and Environmental Resources committees held a joint informational meeting on the movement of crude oil by rail.

Industry professionals from Norfolk Southern, CSX, Philadelphia Energy Solutions and the Petroleum Institute of America joined state and local officials from Lancaster County, the PUC, PEMA and the Governor's Office. Testimony focused around what the railroads and the emergency responders have been doing to ensure that communities in the path of crude oil trains are safe as well as what the Commonwealth needs to do moving forward.

Dr. Allan Zarembski, special advisor to the Governor, testified that his role during the next three months will be to look at issues related to the shipment of crude by rail. His analysis will focus on three main areas of

safety - derailment risk, tank car breach/rupture risk, and regulatory oversight. ([MORE](#))

More legislative changes, announcements

Rep. Michelle Brownlee resigned last week after pleading guilty in a cash-for-votes corruption investigation, setting up perhaps a sixth special House election this year. Speaker Mike Turzai has already set special elections for August 4 for seats in Cumberland and Delaware County, and August 11 for three seats in Philadelphia County.

Meanwhile, Sen. Matt Smith (D, Allegheny) announced he would be resigning his 37th District seat to become president of the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce. Oddly, this is the second time in three years that the 37th district's Senator resigned to take a job in the private sector. GOP Sen. John Pippy resigned in 2012 to become CEO of the Pennsylvania Coal Alliance, which created an opening filled by Sen. Smith.

And on Tuesday, Sen. John Rafferty (R, Chester) announced that he is running for Attorney General because of what he called a "black cloud" hovering over state Attorney General Kathleen Kane.

Marcus Hook to Begin Exporting Marcellus and Utica Ethane to Europe

European petrochemical manufacturer, Ineos Olefins & Polymers just took possession of the first of eight Large Gas Carriers (LGC). LGCs are large ocean going vessels that are specially outfitted to haul not only ethane, but other hydrocarbon gas liquids and liquefied natural gas. Each ship is the length of two football fields.

Ineos Olefins & Polymers has entered into a 15 year contract with Evergas to export Marcellus and Utica ethane from the Mariner East Project 1 and Mariner East Project 2 via the Marcus Hook Industrial Complex to its cracker facilities in Scotland and Norway. ([MORE](#))

DEP Assesses \$8.9 million Civil Penalty against Range Resources for Failure to Repair Leaking Gas Well

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has notified Range Resources-Appalachia, LLC, of Fort Worth, TX that it intends to assess an \$8.9 million civil penalty against the company, and has directed Range Resources to prevent methane and other substances from escaping from a leaking gas well and polluting groundwater and a stream in Lycoming County.

On May 11, 2015, DEP ordered Range Resources to submit a plan to remediate the defectively cemented gas well. However, the company failed to submit a satisfactory plan that made necessary repairs to prevent further leaks and pollution. ([MORE](#))

Regional news

New Jersey BPU Seeks Public Impact on Energy Master Plan

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities last week announced plans for three public hearings in August, seeking comments on updates to the plan, a blueprint aimed at ensuring that the state has reliable, safe, clean, and sufficient energy for businesses and residents.

The current state plan, adopted by the Christie administration in 2011, lays out ambitious targets for replacing conventional ways of producing electricity with cleaner technologies, such as solar and wind, by 2020. But critics say the state is lagging behind many of those goals, particularly developing offshore wind farms along the coast of New Jersey and reducing energy consumption.

Link: <http://www.njspotlight.com/stories/15/06/14/bpu-wants-to-know-what-public-thinks-of-updated-energy-master-plan-for-nj/>

OH Will Not See Utica Shale Severance Tax This Fiscal Year

The latest round in Ohio Governor Kasich's attempt to implement a severance tax on Utica Shale failed again. Tuesday, leaders of both the House and Senate announced that a severance tax will not be part of this year's state budget.

However, they are creating a task force, which will be comprised of two Republicans and one Democrat from each chamber and Kasich's budget director. This group will be tasked with reviewing the tax issue and

presenting a report by October 1.

Kasich's proposed tax has increased since it was originally proposed. It has grown from 2.75% to 6.5%, with the threat of a 10% tax when he was met with resistance back in March.

[Back to top](#)

Federal News articles

EPA Setting Standards for Truck

Emissions in Push for Climate Change Following on the heels of it's announcement to set standards on airplane emissions, today the EPA announced new standards for heavy-duty trucks.

The proposal would require heavy-duty trucks to be more fuel-efficient beginning with model year 2019. This would force tractor trailers to reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions by 24 percent. Vocational vehicles, pick up trucks and light vans would be required to become 16 percent more efficient.

The EPA and US DOT say the proposed rule would save 1 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide and 1.8 billion barrels of oil over the life of vehicles and engines sold during the program.

Joint Subcommittee Hearing Held on EPA Ozone Rule

This week, the House Energy and Power and Commerce, and Manufacturing and Trade subcommittees held a joint hearing on the impacts EPA's proposed Ozone Rule would have on the manufacturing industry.

The EPA is considering revising the 2008

National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground level ozone even though the most recent standard, set in 2008, has yet to be fully implemented.

Energy and Commerce Chairman Ed Whitfield (R, Kentucky) said, "We have watched the Obama EPA propose and finalize rules for more than six years now, and a familiar pattern has emerged. The agency is inclined to overstate both the extent and the certainty of the benefits, while downplaying the costs. At the same time, the concerns of state and local governments tend to be ignored, as do the issues raised by affected manufacturers. ([MORE](#))

Private Investors Chip in \$4B For Clean Energy

A collection of investment firms, foundations, universities and other private institutions have pledged \$4 billion to invest in new clean energy technology, the White House announced on Monday. The funding comes in response to an Obama administration call for more private sector research into low-carbon energy technology. The government will also launch a new Department of Energy program to provide technical assistance for investors.

The "Clean Energy Investment Initiative" was announced in February, in hopes of securing \$2 billion from the private sector to fund new energy research. The White House doubled that goal, receiving major pledges from the University of California system, Goldman Sachs and other investors.

"A growing number of mission-driven investors have committed to investing in clean energy innovation and solutions for our climate change challenges, and they do so in pursuit of both financial returns and mission-aligned impact," Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz said Monday. "I think this is a tremendously important development."

DOE's new program, dubbed the "Clean Energy Impact Investment Center," will provide government information and technical assistance to those investing in new energy technology." Moniz didn't provide specifics Monday about the types of projects the DOE program would support, but he said he expects technology investors to begin coordinating with the department as soon as the effort formally launches.

"I can't give you an example yet, but check back in a year and I certainly hope I'll have a bunch, he said."

At Tuesday's summit, Vice President Joe Biden said, "Banks only lend you money when you don't need it," calling for investors to step up at a crucial moment for the commercialization of renewable energy technologies. "It's a smart economic play," he said. "Fundamentally, it has to do with how reality has a way of intruding."

EPA's Recent Victory in Court May be Win in the End For Energy Industry

Last week, a three-judge panel in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, threw out all challenges to the EPA's Clean Power Plan, citing all filings as being "premature."

The panel, made up of three Republican judges, will have the authority to decide if it wants to hear future related cases. According to the D.C. Circuit's Handbook of Practice and Internal Procedure, if it is in "the interest of judicial economy", future cases should be assigned to the same panel of judges.

Two of the three judges, Kavanaugh and Griffith, have regularly sided against the EPA. In 2012, the two stayed and then ultimately overturned the EPA's Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, and that same year, Judge Kavanaugh filed a dissent in a separate case arguing that greenhouse gases are not air pollutants.

While it may have been "premature" for states and industries to challenge the EPA's proposed plan, dissenters may have ultimately received a panel that will be sympathetic to its appeals in the months to come.

The proposed Clean Power Plan is currently under review by the Office of Management and Budget.

USDA Opens Comment Period on Proposed Changes to BCAP

According to a notice posted in the Federal Register, the USDA's Farm Service Agency will prepare a

programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corp. and seek public comment on potential changes being considered for BCAP and on environmental concerns related to the proposed changes.

USDA indicated the input it receives as part of the notice will enable the development of alternatives for implementing the proposed changes to the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) and begin to evaluate the impacts of those alternatives, as required by NEPA.

The notice explains that the purpose of the PEIS process is to provide FSA decision makers, other agencies, tribes and the public with an analysis of the potential beneficial, adverse, and cumulative environmental impacts associated with proposed discretionary changes to BCAP.

The 2014 Farm Bill amended and reauthorized BCAP through 2018. According to the notice, the 2014 Farm Bill included a number of non-discretionary changes to the program. Those changes are primarily administrative in nature, do not alter the general scope of the program, and have already been implemented through rulemaking.

Comments on the proposed discretionary changes are due July 13. An additional opportunities for public comment will be available on the PEIS when it is developed. Additional information is available in the [Federal Register notice](#). ([MORE](#))

Pope Francis Calls for Swift Action on Climate Change

Pope Francis on Thursday called for a radical transformation of politics, economics and individual lifestyles to confront environmental degradation. In his encyclical, titled "Laudato Si," he said, "Humanity is called to take note of the need for changes in lifestyle and changes in methods of production and consumption to combat this warming, or at least the human causes that produce and accentuate it." His remarks are available on the Holy See's homepage at <http://bit.ly/1i9vkTR>.

Proposed POWER Act Would Help CHP and Waste Heat to Power

A group of federal legislators recently introduced a bill that would treat combined heat to power (CHP) and waste heat to power the same as other energy related industries.

Sponsored by a bipartisan group including Pennsylvania Senator Bob Casey the Power Efficiency and Resiliency Act (POWER Act) would amend Section 48 of the Internal Revenue, giving CHP and waste heat to power tax credit incentives that would help to offset the initial capital cost of deploying these types of power.

Key points of the bill include:

- (1) allows for a 30% energy tax credit for combined heat and power system property and increase the capacity limitations for such property,
- (2) extends until December 31, 2018, the placed-in-service deadline for such property, and
- (3) allows for a 30% energy tax credit for waste heat to power property (property comprising a system generating electricity through the recovery of a qualified waste heat resource) placed in service before January 1, 2019.

CHP produces heat and power from a single fuel source and has double the efficiency of central station power generation. Waste heat to power captures heat that is typically vented from industrial facilities and uses it to make electricity. Both technologies lower energy use, costs and emissions. More information available here

(<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/about/newsroom/news/2015/06/10/american-businesses-support-industrial-energy-efficiency>)

EERE Offers Numerous Funding Opportunities for Solar Energy

The Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy (EERE) is offering three funding opportunities through its SunShot initiative to be used for education and training, data accessibility and technology.

SunShot's new Solar Training and Education for Professionals (STEP) funding opportunity seeks projects that address gaps in solar training and energy education, both within the solar workforce and in professions that play a crucial role in solar deployment. The funding program will also establish new credentials in solar operations and maintenance, and will enable solar training and education for professionals in indirect and related fields such as real estate, finance, insurance, fire and code enforcement, and state regulations. Concept papers are due June 26. [Click here to learn more.](#)

The Solar Bankability Data to Advance Transactions and Access (SB-DATA) funding opportunity targets soft cost reduction by increasing data accessibility and quality. It will facilitate the growth and expansion of the solar industry by creating a standardized data landscape for distributed solar. The goal of SB-DATA is to support the creation and adoption of industry-led open data standards for rapid and seamless data exchange across the value chain from origination to decommissioning. Concept papers are due June 22. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Finally, the EERE announced the CSP: Concentrating Optics for Lower Levelized Energy Costs (COLLECTS) funding opportunity which seeks to further concentrating solar power (CSP) system technologies by soliciting disruptive, transformative projects for the concentrating solar collectors in the CSP plant. These projects should lead to subsequent system integration, engineering scale-up, and eventual commercial production for electricity generation applications by 2020. Concept papers are due June 25. [Click here to learn more.](#)

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