Cross-State Air Pollution Rule Announcement Coverage
Day 2

NPR: EPA Issues New Standards For Coal-Burning Plants
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NPR: EPA Issues New Standards For Coal-Burning Plants

The Environmental Protection Agency sent a strong message Thursday to power plants that burn coal. It's time to clean up dirty exhausts that travel long distances, and 75 percent of Americans will breathe healthier air as a result. The new EPA transport rule is designed to clean up the pollution that blows from power plants into other states. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson says it's about fairness."This is EPA, the federal government, doing what the federal government should and has a responsibility to all Americans to do. And that's leveling the playing field, ensuring that one community doesn't put out smog and soot at the expense of the residents downwind," she says. The new rule replaces a similar Bush administration regulation that was struck down by a court that deemed it too lenient. The new rule will cut almost 2 million more tons of pollution per year than the Bush administration program. States from Texas to New York will have to slash 70 percent of sulfur dioxide emissions and 50 percent of nitrogen oxides from power plants, compared with 2005 pollution levels. Scientists say the fine particles and ozone from these plants contribute to deadly heart and lung failures. The agency estimates the rule will be so potent that within three years, it will prevent as many as 34,000 premature deaths each year. It's also expected to reduce hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks per year. That really resonates with Jackson, whose sons both had asthma when they were small. Her younger son still carries a rescue inhaler. Jackson says she wants every parent with an asthmatic child to have "as close to a normal experience in childhood as possible."She says less power plant pollution will mean fewer days when parents have to tell their kids they can't play outside because the air is bad."When you talk about asthma attacks, every single one can mean hours — if not days — of caring for a sick child or family member. It can mean hospitalization," she says. That adds up to lots of costs for families and society. Jackson says that's part of why the new rule is projected to provide billions of dollars in public health benefits. Some power companies complain the deadlines are too tough to allow them time to install pollution control equipment. So, they will have no choice but to shut down some older coal-fired power plants. Pat Hemlepp represents American Electric Power, which is one of the country's biggest power companies, with plants in 11 states from Texas to Michigan."Taking power plants out of service like this pulls tax dollars out of the communities, pulls jobs out of communities, in addition to increasing electricity costs," Hemlepp says. "This is a region of the country that's struggling to recover from the economic downturn, and doing this on such a short timeline is an economic hit that could be avoided."But overall, Harvard Economist Robert Stavins says, the new regulation is a real winner for the economy."It doesn't mean that there are no costs, but the benefits of the transport rule in terms of human health protection tremendously outweigh the costs of this," he says. Stavins says even in parts of the country where electricity costs will increase a little bit, health care savings in those same communities will more than compensate.

Charleston Gazette: EPA finalizes rules to cut smog

The Obama administration on Thursday finalized a rule that mandates more cuts in smog-causing pollution, adding to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's efforts to reduce the public health impacts from coal-fired power plants. EPA's new "Cross-State Air Pollution" rule will require cuts in sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions that can often travel long distances, creating smog far from their industrial sources."No community should have to bear the burden of another community's polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "These Clean Air Act safeguards will help protect the health of millions of Americans and save lives by preventing smog and soot pollution from traveling hundreds of miles and contaminating the air they breathe."EPA said the rule, along with other agency actions, reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 73 percent over 2005 levels by 2014. Nitrogen oxide emissions would be cut 54 percent over that same time period, EPA said. The rule will protect more than 240 Americans living in the eastern U.S., resulting in up to $280 billion in annual benefits, EPA said. Agency officials said the benefits far outweigh $800 million in projected annual compliance costs and the roughly $1.6 billion per year in capital investments already underway by the nation's utilities."The rule will level the playing field for power plants that are already controlling these emissions by requiring more facilities to do the same," the EPA said in a statement. The standards finalized Thursday replace the Clean Air Interstate Rule, originally proposed by the Bush administration in 2005. That rule was thrown out after a federal court concluded it didn't comply with the Clean Air Act.EPA is already under fire from coal industry groups, utilities and some members of Congress for various proposals -- from air pollution rules, greenhouse gas programs and a crackdown on mountaintop removal mining -- aimed at reducing negative impacts of the coal industry. Jeri Matheny, a Charleston-based spokeswoman for American Electric Power, said her company is still reviewing the final EPA rule issued Thursday."We don't know exactly how it will affect our company, but we had hoped the deadlines for this and other rules would be extended to allow us to act in a more deliberate way," Matheny said.

Northwest Indiana Times: EPA issues strict rules on power plant emissions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is clamping down on power plant pollution in 27 states including Indiana and Illinois that contributes to unhealthy air downwind.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced on Thursday a plan to reduce smokestack pollution causing smog and soot in downwind states - where it combines with local air contaminants, making it impossible for those states to meet air quality standards on their own. The new rules reflects a significant tightening of previous regulations but may have little effect on NIPSCO's plans for reducing pollution at its three operating coal-fired electric generating plants, according to NIPSCO spokesman Nick Meyer. That is because the utility entered into a $600 million settlement earlier this year with the EPA that anticipated the new rule and will further the utility's drive to dramatically reduce certain key pollutants, Meyer said. However, the utility was researching the new rules to see if there was any action it may have to take to comply. Much of the new pollution control equipment already being installed at NIPSCO power plants under the settlement will lower emissions of sulfur dioxide, one of the new pollutants the EPA moved to further restrict on Wednesday. The rules have already had a direct effect on one local power plant. Dominion Energy, owner of the State Line Energy electric generating plant in Hammond, announced earlier this year it would close the 55-year-old plant by the end of 2012, with an outside chance it could stay open until 2014.Dominion cited the expense of complying with expected new EPA regulations as part of the reason for closing the plant. In a conference call with reporters on Wednesday, EPA Jackson said the regulation would make sure no community has to bear the burden of polluters in another state. She said just because pollution drifts far

from a power plant "doesn't mean pollution is no longer that plant's responsibility."Critics called it another step by the Obama administration to crack down on coal-fired power plants. The regulation is one of several expected from the EPA that would target pollution from the nation's 594 coal-fired power plants, which provide nearly half of the country's electricity - but also a significant share of its pollution. While the EPA says the suite of regulations will not cause the power to go out, almost everyone agrees that it will help close down some of the oldest, and dirtiest, coal-fired facilities. At the remaining plants, operators would have to use existing pollution controls more frequently, use lower-sulfur coal, or install additional equipment. The rule, which will start going into effect next year, will cost power plant operators $800 million annually in 2014, according to EPA estimates. That's in addition to the $1.6 billion spent per year to comply with the Bush rule that was still in effect until the government drafted a new one. The agency said the investments would be far outweighed by the hundreds of billions of dollars in health care savings from cleaner air.

Environment News Service: U.S. EPA Curbs Air Pollution Blowing Across State Lines

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today finalized Clean Air Act regulations that will slash hundreds of thousands of tons of pollutants from coal-fired power plants that drift across state borders. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule is intended to protect over 240 million Americans living in the eastern half of the country once it takes effect on January 1, 2012.Environmental and public health groups and state air quality agencies praised the new rule, while the coal industry cried that economic damage would result. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule replaces and strengthens the 2005 Clean Air Interstate Rule, CAIR, which the U.S. Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit ordered the EPA to revise in 2008. The court allowed CAIR to remain in place temporarily while the environmental agency worked to finalize today's replacement rule. "No community should have to bear the burden of another community's polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses," said EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson. "These Clean Air Act safeguards will help protect the health of millions of Americans and save lives by preventing smog and soot pollution from traveling hundreds of miles and contaminating the air they breathe."Carried long distances by wind and weather, power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide, SO2, and nitrogen oxide, NOx, cross state lines. The pollutants react in the atmosphere and contribute to harmful levels of ground-level ozone, known as smog, and fine particles, usually called soot, which are linked to illnesses and premature deaths and prevent many cities and communities from enjoying healthy air quality. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will improve air quality by requiring power plants to cut SO2 and NOx emissions. By 2014, this rule and other state and EPA actions will reduce SO2 emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels, the EPA estimates. NOx emissions will drop by 54 percent. Pollution swirls throughout the eastern United States. Neil Donahue, a chemistry professor at Carnegie Mellon University, told the "Pittsburgh Post-Gazette" newspaper that smoke from a Pittsburgh-area power plant can ride the wind east and then south along the East Coast, then travel west to Baton Rouge where it blows north through the Midwest before prevailing winds may carry it right back to Pennsylvania. In this way, Pennsylvania receives air pollution from 15 states as distant as Missouri, Georgia and Michigan. American Lung Association's National Volunteer Chair Albert Rizzo, MD, who serves as a pulmonary and critical care physician in Newark, Delaware, said the new rule will save lives. "Inhaling smog and soot can worsen chronic health problems including lung disease and heart complications, result in premature death, and can spark asthma attacks," he said."States cannot protect their citizens from pollution that blows in from neighboring states without a strong Clean Air Act and vigorous enforcement of the law by EPA," Dr. Rizzo said. "Thanks to this step, coal-fired power plants will have to install new equipment that will reduce millions of tons of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide emissions. These noxious gases are harmful themselves, and also

contribute to the formation of ozone smog and fine particles, soot."The EPA estimates that the rule will protect communities that are home to 240 million Americans from smog and soot pollution, preventing up to 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks, 19,000 cases of acute bronchitis, 400,000 cases of aggravated asthma, and 1.8 million sick days a year beginning in 2014.EPA says the rule will achieve up to $280 billion in annual health benefits. "The benefits far outweigh the $800 million projected to be spent annually on this rule in 2014 and the roughly $1.6 billion per year in capital investments already underway as a result of CAIR," said the agency in a statement today. Twenty seven states in the eastern half of the country will work with power plants to cut air pollution under the rule, using what the EPA called "widely available, proven and cost-effective control technologies.""By maximizing flexibility and leveraging existing technology, the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will help ensure that American families aren't suffering the consequences of pollution generated far from home, while allowing states to decide how best to decrease dangerous air pollution in the most cost-effective way," Jackson said. The rule will help improve visibility in state and national parks while better protecting sensitive ecosystems, including Appalachian streams, Adirondack lakes, estuaries, coastal waters, and forests, the EPA said.EPA expects pollution reductions to occur quickly without large expenditures by the power industry, said Jackson. Many power plants covered by the rule have already made substantial investments in clean air technologies to reduce SO2 and NOx emissions. The rule will level the playing field for power plants that are already controlling these emissions by requiring more facilities to do the same. Industry groups say this and other new air quality regulations will cause economic damage."The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause," American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity President Steve Miller said in a statement. "America's coal-fueled electric industry has been doing its part for the environment and the economy, but our industry needs adequate time to install clean coal technologies to comply with new regulations. Unfortunately, EPA doesn't seem to care."Brian Houseal, executive director of the Adirondack Council, said the rule clears the way for the nation's most sensitive natural areas to recover from decades of chemical poisoning. "This is a historic day for the Adirondack Park, the Catskill Park and the neighboring Appalachian Mountain Range, from Maine to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park," he said. But Houseal warned that a lawsuit from affected power plants could delay or prevent the enforcement of the new rule. "That is exactly what happened to the EPA's most recent attempt to control power plant emissions via regulation with the Clean Air Interstate Rule in 2008," he said. "That's why we want Congress to reinforce EPA's authority to impose these rules by passing a law that instructs EPA to make deep cuts in sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from power plants, the two main causes of acid rain and smog," Houseal said. "That will curb any lawsuits from power companies challenging EPA's interpretation of Congressional intent. These new rules are an extension of EPA's authority under the existing Clean Air Act. Greedy power plant owners and coal companies have used armies of lawyers nit-pick every rule EPA has attempted to issue." States and the EPA also have filed legal actions. Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey and the federal agency alleged in May that prevailing winds carry air pollution far from Edison International's Homer City coal-burning power plant in Pennsylvania, causing environmental damage to streams and forests. State air quality agencies back the new rule but say it does not go far enough. William Becker, executive director of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies said, "We are pleased that the rule, which will take effect on January 1, 2012, is expected to reduce NOx and SO2 emissions by over 70 and 50 percent, respectively, and that a tighter, second-phase SO2 cap is included to garner even further reductions beginning in 2014.""As significant as today's action is, it represents only a step toward a greater goal with respect to transported air pollution," said Becker. "The NOx emissions cap is simply not sufficient to control the magnitude of emissions that come from power plants." "Not only does this cap fall short of where it should be if states and localities are to attain health-based air quality standards for ozone adopted in 1997 and fine particulate matter adopted in 2006, it will

be wholly inadequate for meeting a the final reconsidered and tighter ozone standard expected to be issued later this summer," Becker said."Because today's rule is so enormously cost effective, there is substantial opportunity for EPA to further tighten the NOx and SO2 caps while still maintaining a great margin of benefit over cost," he said."In addition, EPA should extend the scope of this program to cover transported pollution from other sources, such as industrial, commercial and institutional boilers and cement kilns," Becker urged. "EPA has promised a second rule to follow this rule to further address transported air pollution. NACAA urges EPA to make good on this promise and to do so quickly. States and localities are depending on this EPA action to fulfill their statutory clean air obligations."Kyle Ash, Greenpeace's senior legislative representative, said, "No method of harnessing energy is more expensive and damaging to American's health than burning coal, and yet coal polluters take every opportunity to outsource costs of up to $500 billion to American communities in the form of health care and environmental costs."Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune said, "This long overdue and much-needed action will help communities clean up their air and save lives by curbing millions of tons of air pollution that travel downwind and across state lines each year."The rule affects downwind states in the eastern half of the country and also some states in the West. Sierra Club, Public Citizen, and the Environmental Integrity Project said in a joint statement about cross-border air pollution in Texas, "EPA's new Cross State Clean Air rules will reduce the asthma, other respiratory illnesses, heart disease, and pre-mature deaths that people are experiencing as a result of air pollution from Texas' dirtiest coal plants - not only here in Texas, but in downwind states. Some of our coal plants, including TXU-Luminant's coal plants in north east Texas, rank at the top of U.S. pollution lists."In a supplemental rulemaking based on further review and analysis of air quality information, EPA also is proposing to require emissions sources in Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin to reduce NOX emissions during the summertime ozone season. The proposal would increase the total number of states covered by the rule from 27 to 28. Five of these six states are covered for other pollutants under the rule.

McClatchy: New EPA rule will clean the air for 240 million Americans

Pollution that blows hundreds of miles from coal-fired power plants into other states will be reduced under a final plan that the Environmental Protection Agency announced Thursday. The rule, a revision of a Bush administration plan, will require pollution reductions in 27 states from Texas and Minnesota on the west to the East Coast. Cleaner, healthier air is expected as a result in the eastern, central and southern parts of the country, home to 240 million people. The Clean Air Act requires under a "good neighbor" provision that power plants don't export pollution to other states. Some states, including North Carolina and Delaware, cleaned up their own plants but ended up with unhealthy air days anyway because of pollution from tall power plant smokestacks hundreds of miles away in other states."Just because wind and weather will carry pollution away from its source at a local power plant, it doesn't mean the pollution is no longer that plant's responsibility," EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson said. "Pollution that crosses state lines puts a greater burden on states and makes them responsible for cleaning up someone else's mess."Medical experts say that the fine particles and soot from power plants can be deadly, especially for people with heart and lung conditions. Bad air days also aggravate asthma and are even hazardous for healthy people who exercise outdoors. The EPA said the new rule would prevent up to 34,000 premature deaths a year when it's phased in by 2014. It also estimated that there would be15,000 fewer nonfatal heart attacks, 19,000 fewer cases of acute bronchitis and 400,000 fewer cases of worsened asthma each year. The numbers are compared to 2005, before the earlier rule went into effect. While many of the nation's power plants have installed the equipment needed to reduce the pollution, others have held off. The equipment was first required under a 2005 rule issued by the Bush administration EPA to solve

the interstate pollution problem. The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia struck it down in 2008, however, saying it was "fundamentally flawed" and didn't go far enough. The court left the old rule temporarily in place and gave the EPA a deadline to improve it. Jackson said the new plan puts firmer caps on pollution. She said that it also gives states flexibility on how to implement the requirements. The EPA estimated the pollution controls would cost $1.6 billion per year over 30 years. It projected health benefits of $280 billion per year. The agency also said that the money spent on pollution controls would create U.S. jobs. Critics, however, warned of higher electricity rates and lost jobs. Sen. Jon Cornyn, R-Texas, objected at a recent hearing that the rule would require Texas to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by almost half in just six months. He said he had concerns about "the projected harm it will do to electricity producers and consumers and job creators in my home state."Jackson told reporters at a briefing on Thursday that if Texas were not included it would contribute to air pollution affecting thousands of families outside the state. She also said that Texas had cost-effective means to reduce pollution and would be able to continue to burn coal to make electricity. House Republicans this year have argued that the EPA has gone too far with proposed regulations on air and water pollution. Their proposed appropriations bill for the agency would cut its budget by 18 percent and restrict its authority. Conservation and environmental groups applauded the new rule. Clean Air Watch, an advocacy group, reported this week that 38 states and Washington, D.C., had smoggy days this year, when pollution exceeded the government limit."This is a long overdue and much needed step towards protecting the health of people in states downwind of big coal burning power plants. It will prove to be a life saver," Clean Air Watch president Frank O'Donnel said in an email. The EPA said that the pollution reductions also would improve visibility in parks and reduce acid rain that harms plants and wildlife in forests, lakes and streams."This is a historic day for the Adirondack Park, the Catskill Park and the neighboring Appalachian Mountain Range, from Maine to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park," Brian L. Houseal, executive director of the Adirondack Council, said in a statement. The environmental group has been fighting acid rain since 1975.

Reuters: Texas fight with EPA grows with power-plant rule

Texas Governor Rick Perry and two top state regulators on Thursday blasted the U.S. environmental agency for including Texas in a rule to slash sulfur dioxide emissions from power plants, warning that the last-minute action could threaten the state's electric supply. The Environmental Protection Agency finalized a rule to reduce air pollution from coal-fired power plants in states east of the Rocky Mountains. "Today's EPA announcement is another example of heavy-handed and misguided action from Washington, D.C., that threatens Texas jobs and families and puts at risk the reliable and affordable electricity our state needs to succeed," said Perry, a potential Republican presidential contender, in a statement. The state's environmental agency and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson have been battling over air quality rules related to Texas refineries for more than a year. Thursday, the battle shifted to the electric sector. Owners of coal-fired power plants in Texas have invested billions to reduce emissions of nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide in recent years, said officials with Luminant and NRG Energy Inc (NRG.N), the two largest power producers in the state. The challenge from the new rule, known as the Cross State Air Pollution Rule, is that stricter limits take effect next year, giving power-plant owners little time to comply. Texas was not included in the EPA's draft rule related to sulfur dioxide cuts because EPA modeling had shown little downwind impact from Texas power plants on other states. On Thursday, however, the EPA said Texas would be required to meet lower SO2 limits to avoid allowing the state to increase emissions. Five states -- Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Massachusetts, along with the District of Columbia -- were dropped from the final EPA rule."The late decision to apply the rule to Texas and the modeling for the rule have resulted in wholly unreasonable mandates and unrealistic timelines," said

Luminant, owner of Texas' largest generating fleet including a dozen coal plants with a capacity of 8,000 megawatts. Dallas-based Luminant said it has cut SO2 emissions by 21 percent since 2005 while boosting electric output. Luminant said the rule would have a "highly disproportionate impact on Texas" which will account for one-quarter of the total SO2 emission reductions under the rule. Environmental groups hailed the EPA action as long overdue to protect the health of Texas residents and downplayed any possible threat to the state's electric grid."We are especially pleased with EPA's decision to include Texas in its proposal and to include SO2 as Texas coal plants are at the top of the list of worst polluters in the nation," said Neil Carman, director of the Sierra Club's clean-air program in Texas. Texas Public Utility Commission Chairman Barry Smitherman said power plants could be forced to add pollution control equipment, adjust their fuel supply to include more costly coal, reduce output or "worse case, prematurely shut down."Texas, which operates as an electric "island" with limited ability to import power from other states, is looking for ways to encourage power-plant construction given growing electric demand and shrinking power reserves. Bryan Shaw, chairman of the Texas Commission for Environmental Quality, said EPA's move to include Texas was "not based on sound science" and will result in regulations "that are not necessary for public health protection."Shaw said the federal agency also failed to give Texas adequate notice that it would be included in the final rule related to SO2 emissions.

WFPL: EPA Issues New Air Standards for Power Plants

The federal Environmental Protection Agency is finalizing a new air pollution rule that's meant to reduce power plant emissions. The rule will affect Kentucky, but not immediately. The EPA's new rule is meant to control sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, which are often blown across state lines. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson says regulating such interstate pollution is essential, because a state shouldn't be penalized for pollution it can't control."We all know that pollution generated in one state or one community does not stop at the border or the city lines. Just because wind and weather will carry air pollution away from its source at a local power plant, it doesn't mean that pollution is no longer that plant's responsibility."The rule will replace more lenient Bush-era regulations. And even though it will take effect in January, power plants in Kentucky won't have to reduce emissions until 2014.Louisville Gas and Electric spokeswoman Chris Whelan says the tighter regulations are among the reasons LG&E is seeking to raise rates."This rule is not the primary driver of our environmental cost recovery plan, it is a secondary cost that's in that plan. So we will be having to make reductions in our Nox and So2 by 2014."The EPA singled out 28 states that will be affected by the rule, saying they significantly contribute to air quality problems in downwind states. Twenty-one states, including Kentucky, will have to meet the standards for both sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions. Six others will only have to reduce one or the other, and one state will only have to reduce ozone during the summer months. Kentucky Congressman Ed Whitfield is drafting legislation to delay the implementation of this and upcoming EPA rules to regulate air pollution. The EPA has until the end of the month to introduce additional air regulations.

Pensacola News Journal: EPA cracks down on power plant pollution

The Environmental Protection Agency is clamping down on power plant pollution in 27 states, including Florida, that contributes to unhealthy air downwind.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced on Thursday a plan to reduce smokestack pollution-causing smog and soot that migrates across state lines, making it virtually impossible for affected states to meet air quality standards. In Pensacola, Gulf Power Co. executives spent all Thursday pouring over the 1,300-page EPA document, trying to determine what impact the new rule would have on the operation of its coal-fired Plant Crist located on the Escambia River. The Pensacola-based company

spent more than $500 million two years ago to install a state-of-the-art scrubber system to comply with EPA air quality standards. Gulf Power spokesman Jeff Rogers said the EPA edict was not entirely a surprise, and the company makes a practice of being prepared for federal environmental mandates."We just don't know yet what the impact on Gulf Power will be, but I'm sure there will be some impact," he said. The new rule announced by Jackson differs from one proposed by the Obama administration in July. Power plants in the District of Columbia and five states — Delaware, Connecticut, Florida, Louisiana and Massachusetts — no longer will have to control year-round emissions of two pollutants — sulfur dioxide, responsible for acid rain and soot, and nitrogen oxides, which contribute to both smog and soot. Sen. Tom Carper, D-Del., said the regulation will help protect Delaware and other "tail-pipe" states on the receiving end of another state's pollution. He said the fact that Delaware power plants will no longer be covered by the rule showed his state had done its part."Unfortunately, some of our neighbors haven't made the same progress in curbing air pollution," Carper said. "We have no control over this pollution, yet it endangers our health."

Boston Globe: New EPA air rules call for 28 states to reduce pollution

The Environmental Protection Agency said yesterday it finalized rules that compel 28 states and the District of Columbia to curb air pollution that travels across states by wind and weather, the first in a series of federal restrictions aimed at improving the air Americans breathe. The Cross State Air Pollution Rule, which replaces a President George W. Bush-era regulation thrown out by federal courts in 2008, targets coal-fired power plants mainly in the eastern United States. The measure, along with a proposal aimed at cutting summertime smog in the Midwest, will cost the utility industry roughly $2.4 billion in pollution control upgrades over several years.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson called the rule “another long overdue step to protect the air we breathe and that our children breathe.’’ Jackson predicted that the rule will prevent up to 34,000 premature deaths annually and result in fewer hospital visits and work sick days, she said, generating $280 billion in benefits “that far outweigh the cost of complying with the rule.’ ’A federal judge vacated the Bush administration’s Clean Air Interstate Rule for several reasons, questioning whether the emissions trading system it established would do enough to bring all states into compliance. Frank O’Donnell, who directs the advocacy group Clean Air Watch, said the measures are “a good first step in cleaning up the air’’ but are less significant than upcoming guidelines for acceptable smog and soot levels. The rules do not impose new requirements in Massachusetts or any other New England state, according to Conservation Law Foundation, because rules here are already robust. However, it levels “ the playing field so that obsolete and high polluting power plants in the Midwest and Southeast can no longer export their air pollution to states that have already reduced their emissions,’’ according to Jonathan Peress, director of Clean Energy and Climate Change at CLF, an advocacy group in Boston. Peress and other environmental groups said yesterday’s announcement has roots in the late 1990s, when Massachusetts and other Northeast states petitioned the government under the Clean Air Act “good neighbor rule,’’ which is designed to prevent states from polluting downwind.“We applaud the Environmental Protection Agency and the Obama administration for standing up for Massachusetts residents’ health and our environment by issuing this much-needed clean air standard,’’ said MacKenzie Clark, field associate with Environment Massachusetts, an advocacy group. The EPA estimates that the power sector has spent $1.6 billion to install pollution controls that helped bring emissions in line with the Bush measure. Some utility officials said new rules could force the retirement of several coal plants. That would raise electricity costs, said Pat Hemlepp of American Electric Power. “Our most significant concern remains the unrealistic compliance timetables of this and a series of other EPA rules that target coal-fueled generation,’’ he said. The rule might have its biggest impact on states such as Texas, which challenged stricter controls on coal-fired power plants.

Richmond Times-Dispatch: EPA announces crackdown on power plant pollution

The federal Environmental Protection Agency announced Thursday a crackdown on pollution from power plants in more than two dozen states that contribute to unhealthy air downwind.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson said the new rules would reduce smog, soot and acid rain in downwind states — where they combine with locally produced pollution, making it tough for those states to meet air-quality standards. The rules replace a 2005 Bush administration proposal that was rejected by a federal court. Jackson, in a call with reporters, said the regulations would make sure no community has to bear the burden of another region's polluters. The rules, which start going into effect next year, will cost power companies about $800 million annually in 2014, the EPA said. That's in addition to the $1.6 billion spent per year to comply with the Bush program that was still in effect until the government drafted a new one. The EPA said that cost would be far outweighed by the public health benefits. The program appears to require few, if any, pollution cuts from Virginia power plants, said Tom Ballou, an air-pollution official with the state Department of Environmental Quality. Dan Genest, a Dominion Virginia Power spokesman, said the company could not comment because it had not yet read the rules in detail. "We are evaluating the rules, and we will comply with them."Glen Besa, director of the Sierra Club's Virginia chapter, said, "Virginia gets pollution from coal-fired power plants from upwind states, and our coal plants pollute downwind states. This 'good-neighbor' rule benefits Virginians, providing us with healthier air."

Houston Chronicle: EPA air rule will affect Texas plants

A new federal rule will force coal-fired power plants in Texas to clamp down on pollution that fouls the air of other states. The Obama administration finalized the rule Thursday in an effort to reduce the amount of unhealthy smog and soot in areas around and downwind of the dirtiest power plants. The rule, which covers 27 states and the District of Columbia, will require aging plants to be upgraded with modern equipment to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide. Some companies might close their plants rather than install the pollution controls.Gov. Rick Perry criticized the rule as "heavy-handed and misguided," while U.S. Sen. John Cornyn said it is "another blow" to Texas by the Environmental Protection Agency that could threaten jobs and the affordability of electricity.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson said those fears were exaggerated, particularly in Texas, where some already have moved to clean up their coal-fired plants."Texas has an ample range of cost-effective emission reduction options for complying with the requirements of this rule without threatening reliability or the continued operation of coal-burning units," Jackson said. The cost of compliance to utilities and other operators of power plants would be $800 million a year, but the EPA said the rule promises greater health benefits from fewer emergency room visits and early deaths because of the lung-damaging pollution. The new rule, combined with other federal and state efforts, will reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide by 73 percent from 2005 levels by 2014, and nitrogen oxide by 54 percent, according to the EPA. Better air for Texans: The federal action means Texans should breathe easier — and not just because of the new limits on emissions from the state's coal plants, the EPA said. Texas also receives nitrogen oxide, which is an ingredient in smog, from 12 states covered by the rule."There is no reason Texas should not get the benefits of this extraordinary rule," Jackson said. Still, the rule drew the ire of Texas officials in part because when originally proposed last year the state was not included among those states regulated for sulfur dioxide, which forms the tiny particles known as soot. The initial plan only required Texas to cut nitrogen oxide emissions during the smog season. Al Armendariz, who leads the agency's Dallas office, said Texas was added to the sulfur dioxide list because data shows that the state's coal plants contributed to soot problems as far away as Illinois. But Bryan Shaw, who

chairs the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, found fault with the EPA's data, saying it did not show a harmful impact on downwind states and would "only result in negative consequences."U.S. Rep. Gene Green, a Houston Democrat, also said he is skeptical that Texas coal plants could achieve the required reductions for sulfur dioxide under the schedule in the rule, despite assurances from the EPA."I hope the EPA is not wrong in their assumption because Texans are the ones that are going to suffer," he said. 18 plants affected: The Texas Public Utility Commission estimated that the standard could force 18 plants - many of which were built in the 1970s - to install expensive equipment, change fuel or prematurely retire. Last month, San Antonio's city-owned utility pledged to shutter its coal-fired plant by 2018 rather than install a $550 million scrubber to cut pollution. CPS Energy said the money would be better used toward newer forms of energy, including natural gas and solar. Environmentalists said state officials and industry should not be surprised by the new standards. The Bush administration proposed a similar action, known as the Clean Air Interstate Rule. But the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ordered the EPA to revise the rule in 2008 after deciding the agency had overstepped its authority. Texas ranks second only to Ohio in emissions of sulfur dioxide from coal-fired power plants, and four of the state's plants are among the nation's 15 largest sources of the air pollutant, according to the most recent federal data."Requiring Texas plants to make the same reductions as others across the country is a no-brainer," said Ilan Levin, an Austin-based attorney for the Environmental Integrity Project.

RTT News: EPA Sets New Regulations For Power-Plant Emissions

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Thursday set new rules for emissions from power-plants in twenty-seven eastern and mid-western US states as part of broader efforts to improve air-quality across the country. The new set of rules, which takes effect in 2014, demands reduction in the emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide by 73% and 54% from the 2005 levels respectively. According to the EPA, the emissions of the two pollutants from power-plants are mainly responsible for the formation of smog and soot in the affected states. The new rules affect some 900 coal-fired, natural gas-fueled, and oil-burning power plants in the 27 US states, including Texas. The new regulations could lead to the shutdown of dozens of old and inefficient coal-fueled power-pants or force them to switch to natural gas. Under the new regulations, the coal-fueled power plants that continue to operate are required to clean up their emissions dramatically or shut down should they fail to do so, even after the new laws take effect in under three years. The EPA claims the pollutants in emissions from the plants in the areas covered by the new regulations were preventing states located downwind to maintain air quality standards on their own. Eastern states are expected to benefit most when the new laws are enforced. The new Cross-State Air Pollution Rule was initially known as the the Clean Air Transport Rule when it was proposed a year ago. It is much more tougher than the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) proposed by the Bush administration in 2005. The CAIR was rejected by the US Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia in 2008.While announcing the new Cross-State Air Pollution Rule for emissions, EPA administrator Lisa Jackson said in a statement that it is a "long overdue step" toward protecting public health across the country."We all know that pollution generated in one state or community does not stop at the state or the city lines," Jackson said, adding that movement of pollution from one place to another "puts a greater burden on states and makes them responsible for cleaning up someone else's mess.""These Clean Air Act safeguards will help protect the health of millions of Americans and save lives by preventing smog and soot pollution from traveling hundreds of miles and contaminating the air they breathe," she stressed. It will "help ensure that American families aren't suffering the consequences of pollution generated far from home, while allowing states to decide how best to decrease dangerous air pollution in the most cost-effective way," Jackson added. Although supporters of the new rules believe that economic and health benefits in

implementing them outweigh the incurring costs by a wide margin, law makers from states housing coal-fueled power plants and industry groups have complained about the high expenditure involved."The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause. Our industry needs adequate time to install clean coal technologies to comply with new regulations," Steve Miller, president and CEO of the industry lobby group American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, said in a statement.

United Press International: EPA rules on long-distance pollution

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says it has set limits to cut smokestack emissions that travel long distances through the air leading to soot and smog. The finalized Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will protect communities that are home to 240 million Americans from smog and soot pollution, the agency said in a release Wednesday."No community should have to bear the burden of another community's polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses," EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson said. The rule will improve air quality by reducing power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO2) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) that travel across state lines, carried long distances across the country by wind and weather, the EPA said. By 2014, the new limits and other state and EPA actions will reduce SO2 emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels and NOx emissions will drop by 54 percent, the agency said. The regulations will help states that are struggling to protect air quality from pollution emitted outside their borders, it said.

Ocala.com: E.P.A. Issues Tougher Rules for Power Plants

The Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday issued new standards for power plants in 28 states that would sharply cut emissions of chemicals that have polluted forests, farms, lakes and streams across the Eastern United States for decades. The agency said the regulations, which will take effect in 2012, would reduce emissions of compounds that cause soot, smog and acid rain from hundreds of power plants by millions of tons at an additional cost to utilities of less than $1 billion a year. The E.P.A. said the cleaner air would prevent as many as 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks and hundreds of thousands of cases of asthma and other respiratory ailments every year. Lisa P. Jackson, the E.P.A. administrator, said the new rule would improve air quality for 240 million Americans living in states where the pollution is produced or where it travels downwind. “No community should have to bear the burden of another community’s polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses,” Ms. Jackson said. “This is a long-overdue step to protect the air we breathe.” The rule, which governs emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide from fossil-fuel-burning power plants, does not explicitly aim at carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. Those are covered by other, far more controversial, proposed regulations. But most actions to cut emissions of conventional pollutants also have the indirect effect of reducing global warming gases. The new regulation, known as the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, is essentially a rewrite of one issued by the George W. Bush administration in 2005 but invalidated by a federal judge in 2008. The regulation, known popularly as the transport rule because it is directed at emissions that are carried eastward by prevailing winds, is a significant toughening of the acid rain program that was part of amendments to the Clean Air Act in 1990.The new rule applies to all the states east of the Rockies except the Dakotas, Delaware and the six New England states. The agency said that utilities could meet the new standards at modest cost by using readily available technology like catalytic converters and smokestack scrubbers. Under some E.P.A. projections, the new rule will create thousands of jobs in pollution-control businesses and significantly increase labor productivity by reducing workdays lost to respiratory and other illnesses. The utility industry and

many Republicans in Congress contend that the new rule, along with other pending E.P.A. air quality regulations, will require the premature closing of dozens of aging coal plants and impose heavy financial burdens on power companies and their customers. They had asked for a more gradual phase-in of the new rules. “The E.P.A. is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause,” said Steve Miller, president of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, a group of coal-burning utilities. “America’s coal-fueled electric industry has been doing its part for the environment and the economy, but our industry needs adequate time to install clean coal technologies to comply with new regulations. Unfortunately, E.P.A. doesn’t seem to care.”An industry-financed study found that new air pollution rules would cost tens of thousands of jobs and cause electricity rates to rise by more than 20 percent in some parts of the country. Michael J. Bradley, executive director of the Clean Energy Group, a coalition of power companies, said that most utilities had already installed the equipment needed to meet the new standards and that the small number of plants that would be closed were among the oldest and dirtiest in the nation. Mr. Bradley said that electricity markets had already factored in the price of compliance and that recent auctions had shown there would be adequate supplies of electricity in 2015 at reasonable prices. “The bottom line is, the industry is well positioned to comply with this, has been anticipating this for three to four years now,” he said. Supporters of the new rule said any costs would be more than offset by health and other benefits. The E.P.A. estimates the annual benefits of the Cross-State Pollution Rule at $120 billion to $280 billion a year by 2014.John F. Sheehan of the Adirondack Council, a nonprofit advocacy group, said the new air quality rule would help the Adirondack Park in upstate New York, the nation’s largest outside of Alaska, to recover from decades of pollution produced far from its borders.“This is the biggest leap forward in our long history of dealing with this problem,” Mr. Sheehan said. “This is a very deep cut on a very aggressive schedule and essentially enough to end chronic acidification of lakes and ponds in the Adirondacks.”He said it would allow the regeneration of spruce and fir forests in the six-million-acre park while improving the habitat of dozens of species, from the Bicknell’s thrush at high elevations to brook trout in streams.

Sunshine State News: State Pushing Back Against Proposed EPA Air Standards

Pointing to potentially higher electric rates, the Florida Public Service Commission is expected this month to raise concerns with the federal government about new air-pollution standards. Utilities such as Florida Power & Light and Progress Energy Florida and the state’s municipal electric industry also are wary of the proposed standards, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is expected to finalize in November. The proposed standards, released in March, target coal- and oil-fired power plants and are designed to curb emissions of mercury and other pollutants that cause human health problems. Public Service Commission members last week reviewed drafts of documents that the agency will send to the EPA and members of Congress. The documents cited utility estimates that to comply with the standards could cost hundreds of millions of dollars -- a cost that would be passed on to utility customers. “The FPSC is concerned about the impact of these substantial compliance costs on Florida’s consumers, particularly in this time of economic distress and high unemployment,’’ one of the draft documents said. But the EPA and other supporters say the standards have been years in the making and will boost public health. Mercury, for example, gets into fish and other types of food and can cause neurological damage if eaten. Josh Galperin, a policy analyst and research attorney for the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, said utilities should have already started preparing for the standards. He said many have made technological upgrades that will help coal-fired plants comply.“The utilities are acting as if we’re starting from scratch,’’ Galperin said. The EPA is moving forward with the proposed standards at the same time it is taking other steps to reduce pollution from power plants. For instance, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson on Thursday announced finalizing a rule aimed at reducing sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide, which

are substances that can travel long distances and cause problems such as smog. The proposed mercury-reduction standards stem, in part, from a 2000 EPA decision that dealt with the regulation of hazardous pollutants from power plants. The EPA's stance changed in 2005, but a court case led to an agreement that the standards would be finalized by Nov. 16, 2011.Along with mercury, the standards also would reduce other potentially dangerous pollutants such as arsenic, chromium and nickel, according to the EPA. Utilities would have three years to make upgrades to comply with the new standards, though they could receive a fourth year in at least some circumstances. A large part of the PSC's argument is that federal officials should allow a longer period of time and more flexibility for utilities to comply with the standards. Mayco Villafana, a Florida Power & Light spokesman, said his company supports that stance."It allows us adequate time to look at all the options and choose the most-efficient, least-cost compliance options,'' Villafana said. Barry Moline, executive director of the Florida Municipal Electric Association, said his group wants to reduce toxic air emissions, but he also described the situation as a "balancing act" that involves looking at the available technology and potential costs. Moline said the municipal-electric group plans to submit its concerns to the EPA. Moline and other industry officials also said many power plants have been upgraded in recent years to reduce emissions. As an example, Tim Leljedal, a spokesman for Progress Energy Florida, said his company has installed pollution control devices known as "scrubbers" at its Crystal River coal plant. Also, it converted a St. Petersburg plant from burning oil to cleaner natural gas. In a news release last month, Jackson, the EPA administrator, acknowledged that many coal plants have received upgrades. But she also stressed that the more stringent standards will lead to fewer deaths and reduce other health problems, such as childhood asthma and bronchitis."These standards are critically important to the health of the American people and will leverage technology already in use at over half of the nation's coal power plants to slash emissions of mercury and other hazardous pollutants,'' Jackson said.

Wineweb: New EPA Cross-State Air Regulation will hurt U.S. coal

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency new Cross-State Air Pollution Rule announced Thursday mandates reductions in some 900 coal-fired, natural gas-fueled, and oil-burning power plant emissions that will force the closure of scores of older, inefficient power plants. The EPA hopes the new rule and other measures will improve air quality in 27 states by cutting off pollution that spreads across borders. The American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity says the rule "would be among the most expensive ever imposed by the agency on coal-fuelled power plants, dramatically increasing electricity rates for American families and businesses and causing substantial job losses.""The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause," said Steve Miller, CEO of the coalition. "America's coal-fuelled electric industry has been doing its part for the environment and the economy, but our industry needs adequate time to install clean coal technologies to comply with new regulations.""Unfortunately, the EPA doesn't seem to care," Miller added.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced on Thursday a plan to reduce smokestack pollution causing smog and soot in downwind states, making it impossible for those states to meet air quality standards. The regulation is one of several expected from the EPA that will target pollution from the 594 U.S. coal-fired power plants, which produce almost half of the nation's electricity. The rule will impact a total of 1,000 power plants in more than two dozen states, requiring them to cut sulfur dioxide emissions by 73% to 2.4 million tons per year and reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by 54% to 1.2 million tons annually, which will require an estimated $2.4 billion in pollution-related upgrades. Some of the emissions targets will take effect in January. To comply with the rule, coal-fired power plants would have to use existing pollution controls more often, burn low-sulfur coal, or install additional emissions scrubbing equipment. The EPA estimates it will cost power plant operators $800 million annually. Kevin Book, senior analyst with ClearView Energy Partners, an energy

market research firm, told the Christian Science Monitor that Congress could attach legislative riders, to ease the impact of the regulation by slashing budgets for enforcement. The agency says the cleaner air would prevent as many as 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks, 19,000 cases of acute bronchitis, and 400,000 cases of aggravated asthma, while delivering up to $280 billion in annual health benefits. The states subject to rule are: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Wisconsin. Texas Gov. Rick Perry called the rule "heavy-handed and misguided," while U.S. Sen. John Coryn, R-Texas, and Rep. Gene Green, D-Texas, expressed skepticism that Texas coal-fired power plants could achieve the required emissions reduction under EPA's proposed schedule."The late decision to apply the rule to Texas and the modeling for the rule have resulted in wholly unreasonable mandates and unrealistic timelines for Texas," said Luminant, a unit of the biggest power producer in Texas, Energy Future Holdings. U.S. House Energy and Commerce Chairman Fred Upton said, "The goal for these rules should be reasonable regulation that protects public health and the environment while also preserving economic growth. Unfortunately, the unprecedented pace at which the administration is issuing major new rules that impose new costs and regulatory requirements on states, employer, and consumers fail that basic test."However, a study by Credit Suisse predicts a positive long-term outcome for investments as utility companies close old, inefficient plants.

Baltimore Sun: EPA rule seeks to curb long-distance air pollution

In a sweeping move aimed at curbing long-distance air pollution that afflicts the health of 240 million Americans — including Marylanders — the Environmental Protection Agency is ordering power plants across much of the eastern United States to sharply curtail emissions. The rule, announced Thursday, gives coal-fired plants in Maryland and 26 other states until 2014 to make steep reductions in emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide, pollutants that contribute to serious health problems such as asthma, bronchitis and heart attacks. Maryland also would benefit because much of its air pollution comes from other states. Some power companies warn that the requirement would force them to close their oldest plants. But others, including Baltimore-based Constellation Energy Group, say the reductions are warranted and manageable. Officials and environmental advocates say the new federal rule should make Maryland's air more healthful, which is particularly urgent in Baltimore, where the average annual mortality rate for asthma is more than twice the state rate."No community should have to bear the burden of another community's polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson in a statement. Power plants would have to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions 73 percent from 2005 levels and nitrogen oxide 54 percent under the new rule. Dawn Stoltzfus, spokeswoman for the Maryland Department of the Environment, called the federal action "a good first step." She said state officials had urged the EPA to set an even lower limit on smog-forming nitrogen oxide emissions, but they hope regulators will tighten the limit further. Half or more of the pollutants that form ozone or smog in Maryland in the summertime come from out-of-state sources, Stoltzfus said. An air sample taken June 9 over Cumberland, for instance, found ozone concentrations of 94 parts per billion, roughly three-quarters of the current health threshold set by the EPA.EPA data show that ozone pollution in Maryland comes from as far away as Michigan and Indiana in the west, North Carolina in the south and New York in the north. They are also among the 27 states that are covered by the rule. Maryland's ozone blows downwind to Connecticut. Maryland also is covered by the EPA rule, but the state's power plants have likely reduced their nitrogen oxide emissions enough to meet the EPA limit under state air pollution limits, the MDE said. The state adopted its own Healthy Air Act in 2006, which

required power plants to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions almost 70 percent by last year, and emissions of sulfur dioxide and toxic mercury by 80 percent. Stoltzfus said state regulators are looking at the EPA rule to see if additional reductions might be required in sulfur dioxide emissions, which are tied to acid rain and soot, or fine particle pollution. John Quinn, director of environmental management for Constellation Energy, said the company has spent more than $1 billion on pollution controls at its coal-fired power plants in the Baltimore area, and officials believe those plants are in "real good shape." He said the state's Healthy Air Act that required many of those controls were widely believed to be the most stringent in the country. Constellation welcomes the federal action, he said, because it requires power plants in other states to meet the same environmental standards. "It levels the playing field commercially," Quinn said, "and our air should be cleaner in Maryland, where we all work and live."Costs to power plants to meet the goals are estimated by the EPA at $800 million annually in 2014."The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause," said Steve Miller, president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, a pro-coal industry association. Along with other pending regulations, Miller said they "are among the most expensive ever imposed by the agency."But the EPA projects up to $280 billion in annual health benefits from the new rule, which is a revision of a 2005 regulation ordered reworked by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit in 2008.The EPA estimates that pollution controls required by the new rule could reduce premature deaths from particulate pollution in Maryland by anywhere from 160 to 1,500 by 2014. Reductions in nitrogen oxide called for under the federal rule would have only a slight impact on deaths from ozone pollution, which can aggravate asthma and other respiratory illnesses. The rule could have an impact in Baltimore, where city health officials have identified asthma as one of their health targets to improve by 2015. The average annual mortality rate in Baltimore City from asthma is more than twice the state's rate, 34 deaths per 1 million people, compared with 14 per 1 million people statewide. City Health Department estimates from 2007-2009 show 64,002 adults ages 18 and older and 19,411 children have been diagnosed with asthma at some point in their lifetime. The emission limits should also help clean up the Chesapeake Bay, officials said. As much as half the nitrogen contributing to algae blooms and dead zones in the bay comes from air pollution, and about half of that drifts long distances on air currents from outside the six-state watershed of the bay, according to Richard Batiuk, associate director of the EPA's Chesapeake Bay office. "You will see a reduction in emissions that assail the Chesapeake Bay and assail breathers in Maryland," predicted Frank O'Donnell, president of Clean Air Watch, a Washington lobbying group.

Philadelphia Inquirer: EPA looks at crackdown on smokestack emissions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency took a broad swipe Thursday at emissions from power plants that waft downwind and cause pollution linked to costly and life-threatening health problems. The rule, a political flash point for much of the last decade, will reduce smokestack emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide in Eastern states by thousands of tons a year, starting in 2012. The EPA gave it final approval Thursday. By 2014, it will prevent 34,000 premature deaths and result in up to $280 billion a year in health benefits, far outweighing expected costs to the industry of about $2.4 billion annually, EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson said."As the mother of a son with asthma, I know that these numbers and the fights we wage for clean air are not just abstract concepts," Jackson said at a news conference. "Behind these numbers are people's lives and livelihoods."The rule was praised by environmental advocates as long overdue and criticized by industry as too expensive. Either way, it is expected to have a significant effect on the air quality in this region. Pennsylvania hosts one of the nation's largest fleets of coal-fired power plants. And the state's southeast and New Jersey, along with regions both to the north and the south, bear much of the brunt of the pollution from them and other

plants to the west, due to the prevailing winds. On some days, the region is unable to meet minimum federal air-quality standards for ozone, a.k.a. smog, and fine particles."For the Delaware Valley, it does mean good things," said David Arnold, deputy director of the air protection division for the Mid-Atlantic region. By 2014, he expects the greater Philadelphia area to meet air-quality standards. Paying a price: But Pennsylvania also will pay a price because its many coal-fired power plants - about three dozen - contribute heavily to national emissions and will have to reduce them. A recent analysis of federal data by the national nonprofit Environment America found that Pennsylvania was fourth in the nation in nitrogen oxide emissions. A similar analysis shows Pennsylvania has the highest amount of sulfur dioxide emissions. Some plants will have to invest in expensive upgrades. Opponents and supporters of the rule alike predict some plants will be unable to meet the new limits while remaining profitable, so they will close. New Jersey's plants already have controls in place or in the pipeline that would exceed the new EPA standards, said Larry Ragonese, a spokesman for the state Department of Environmental Protection. But the state will benefit in a reduction of the emissions that blow in. The EPA "still doesn't go as far as New Jersey, but we're glad to see them take some positive steps," Ragonese said. Among all the states affected by the new rule, Pennsylvania will reap the second-highest number of benefits, after Ohio, according to an EPA analysis. 'Monetized benefits': Each year, the rule will result in 1,200 to 2,900 fewer premature deaths in Pennsylvania and $9.7 billion to $24 billion in "monetized benefits" - mostly avoided health-care costs. New Jersey will see 450 to 1,200 fewer deaths and see $3.8 billion to $9.4 billion in benefits, the agency said. The rule - with the unwieldy designation of Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, or C-SAP - replaces a weaker Bush administration rule that was ultimately struck down by a federal court. Basically, both states and individual plants will have emissions ceilings, but the rule allows for some degree of trading. It is projected to reduce overall emissions of sulfur dioxide by 73 percent and nitrogen oxide by 54 percent from 2005 levels. In addition to being harmful themselves, both substances react chemically in the air to produce smog, or ground-level ozone, and soot, or fine particulate matter. This pollution can cause or exacerbate lung problems and respiratory illnesses, resulting in lost productivity, school absences, hospitalizations, and premature deaths. The EPA has said that in addition to saving lives, the rule will prevent more than 400,000 asthma attacks, 19,000 admissions to the hospital or emergency department, and 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks. The American Lung Association, the American Thoracic Society, and the American Public Health Association all praised the rule."For the first time in my memory, operators of coal-burning power plants are going to have to internalize the cost of their pollution and the impact that has, and that's really good news," said Joseph O. Minott, executive director of the Clean Air Council, based in Philadelphia."Put plainly, every dollar of benefit we will derive comes at a cost of less than one penny," said Bill Becker, executive director of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies, which represents state air-pollution control departments. Although some energy companies such as PSEG in New Jersey that have already upgraded their plants have supported the rule, industry generally criticized it as too expensive and said that it could be a death knell for older plants that will not be able to meet the regulations. Steve Miller, president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, said that the regulation, combined with another EPA rule, would increase electric rates by 23 percent in some areas that rely on coal and would cause "substantial" job losses. Other limits: Douglas L. Biden, president of the Electric Power Generation Association, a Pennsylvania industry group, said the new rule came amid three other costly power-plant proposals from the EPA - limits on mercury and other toxic air emissions, new rules governing water intakes, and a rule governing solid waste from plants. Greenhouse-gas regulations and other measures are on the horizon. It is all happening while demand for power has stalled, natural gas prices are low, and many states have enacted standards to encourage the construction of renewable-energy projects."You have all these forces coming together at once," Biden said, so it's a tough time for coal plants. Another EPA action due by the end of the month

is a stricter limit on ozone pollution. This may put some communities in the odd position of having cleaner air but still unable to meet federal standards. Kevin Greene, a Philadelphia mental-health therapist and avid cyclist, is simply glad to look forward to any improvement he can get. Now 51, he's been racing since 1993. But a few years ago, he was diagnosed with asthma. So when he rides, he brings an inhaler. Before he starts, he goes through a series of breathing exercises. And if the air is bad, later in the day, "you cough and you hack.""I know this state and this city could use cleaner air, that's for sure," he said.

SouthCarolinaSC.com: Tighter rules target soot, smog from S.C., other states

Nationally, a air wickedness order will help prevent up to 34,000 premature deaths as well as stop hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks each year, according to a EPA. South Carolina also will see benefits for its residents, regulators say. In South Carolina, a order could reduce a little 900 premature deaths annually, a EPA says. The order limits sulfur dioxide as well as nitrogen oxide wickedness from coal plants. These pollutants help form smog as well as soot particles which not only affect health, but reduce visibility, particularly on hot summer days. The rule, to take effect next year, will cut sulfur dioxide emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels, while nitrogen oxides will be cut by more than half, a EPA estimates. Lisa Jackson, a EPAs administrator, pronounced her agencys action follows years of complaints by a little states which energy plants in alternative states were contaminating their air as well as making it hard to imitate with wickedness laws. She pronounced its only fair to level a playing field. Many states complaining were in a Northeast. We all know which wickedness generated in one state or one community does not stop during a border or a city line, Jackson said. Just because wind as well as weather will carry air wickedness away from its source during a local energy plant, it doesnt mean which wickedness is no longer which plants responsibility. It also doesnt mean which cross-state wickedness is any less harmful to a communities it settles in, causing smog as well as leaving soot in a air people are breathing. A map on a EPAs website shows which South Carolina energy plants have contributed to reduce air quality in a Atlanta area as well as in parts of Texas. The Palmetto State had previously been accused by North Carolina of polluting air in a Tarheel State. South Carolina is one of 27 eastern states contributing to reduce air quality in alternative states. SCE&G as well as Santee Cooper, which operate most of a coal-fired energy p! lants in South Carolina as well as produce much of a pollution, have installed scrubbers as well as alternative apparatus to limit releases of sulfur dioxide as well as nitrogen oxide, which contribute to smog as well as soot pollution. Mollie Gore, a spokeswoman for state-owned Santee Cooper, pronounced a recent rate increase reflected a higher costs of installing wickedness carry out apparatus during a companys largest energy plants. Gore pronounced Santee Cooper has spent more than $300 million on scrubbers as well as alternative wickedness carry out apparatus during a two most recently built units during its Cross generating station. We dont think its going to have any impact on us now because weve been preparing for this for quite a while, Gore said. Everything weve brought on line in terms of era over a past decade or more has scrubbers as well as alternative environmental carry out record which residence sulfur dioxide as well as nitrogen oxide. Gore pronounced a new order means Santee Cooper will have an allowance, or limit, on a amount of those pollutants it can release each year. The association expects to meet which allowance, she said. About 75 percent of a energy generated by Santee Cooper comes from coal plants. SCE&G spokesman Robert Yanity pronounced his association also has made improvements, although utility executives were still examining a full impacts of a regulation. The association has spent a little $750 million in recent years on scrubbers as well as alternative wickedness carry out apparatus during its major energy plants, including one in reduce Richland County, he said. The association has spent $73 million during its reduce Richland plant on apparatus to cut nitrogen oxide as well as $283 million during a plant on apparatus to reduce sulfur dioxide. Gore as well as Yanity a little of

their companies older, smaller plants do not have a wickedness carry out record installed. The rule, to begin taking effect next year, will cost ener! gy plant operators $800 million annually in 2014, according to EPA estimates. Thats in addition to a $1.6 billion spent per year to imitate with a Bush order which was still in effect until a government drafted a new one, according to The Associated Press. The agency pronounced a cost to utilities pales when compared to a billions of dollars in health care savings. Critics pronounced a EPAs action this week is another attempt by a Obama administration to crack down on coal-fired energy plants. The law is among several expected to target wickedness from a 594 coal-fired energy plants across a country. These plants provide nearly half of a countrys electricity, according to The Associated Press. The EPA is ignoring a accumulative economic damage new regulations will cause, pronounced Steve Miller, president as well as CEO of a American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, a coal industry association. Along with alternative pending regulations, Miller pronounced they are among a most expensive ever imposed by a agency. Many agree which a new order could tighten down a little of a oldest, as well as dirtiest, coal-fired facilities, The Associated Press reported. The remaining plants would have to use existing wickedness controls more often, use lower-sulfur coal, or install additional equipment, a news service said. The law replaces a 2005 Bush administration proposal which was rejected by a federal court. In addition to South Carolina, states subject to a order include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Texas, Iowa as well as Wisconsin.

Examiner.com: Texas Governor Bashes New Federal Environmental Regulations

The same day the Environmental Protection Agency added a new regulation, the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, July 7, Gov. Rick Perry of Texas alleged the EPA – and the Obama administration – were out to take away jobs and increase costs paid by American consumers. Though the new rule is expected to prevent over a hundred-thousand tons of smokestack emissions traveling across state line annually and protect 240 million American citizens from pollution-related illnesses, some, including Perry, allege the regulations would cost jobs and raise costs for electricity."Today's EPA announcement is another example of heavy-handed and misguided action from Washington, D.C., that threatens Texas jobs and families and puts at risk the reliable and affordable electricity our state needs to succeed," said Perry in a press release. "The Obama Administration seems intent on increasing energy costs for American consumers and making us even more dependent on foreign energy."Regardless of Perry's allegations, the actual economic costs and benefits of the new rule are up for debate, as there are two conflicting reports as to affects of protections on the nation's economy. One report, by the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, stated that the rule would increase electricity costs as much as $17.8 billion per year, and cost as many as 200,000 jobs per year, on average. A separate report, by Economic Policy Institute, shows that these new EPA rules would save 850,000 work days annually and save as much as $142 billion a year, mostly in medical expenses. As far as jobs, the report states that the new regulations would only shrink the economy as little as 0.1 percent, which is a relatively small amount for the amount of money it would save. As Perry puts emphasis on the economic costs to Texas families put forth by these new regulations, EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson emphasizes the health benefits to American families these regulations provide.“The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will help ensure that American families aren’t suffering the consequences of pollution generated far from home, while allowing states to decide how best to decrease dangerous air pollution in the most cost effective way,” she said. “No community should have to bear the burden of another community's polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses.”The rule is expected to prevent 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 heart-attack, 419,000 cases of lung-related sicknesses, and leading to $280 billion in annual health benefits, according to a news release by the EPA.

WSAU: Tougher Pollution Rules For Wisconsin

The federal E-P-A has announced tougher air pollution limits for Wisconsin and 26 other states. But some utilities in the Badger State say they're ahead of the game – and they're already working on major projects to reduce emissions. Utilities must start cutting sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide pollution next year – and the full impact will take effect in 2014. By then, the E-P-A says utilities will spend 800-million-dollars that year to make the air cleaner. Scott Manley of the Wisconsin Manufacturers-and-Commerce says we'll see higher electric bills because of the mandate. But the E-P-A figures the increase will only be one-percent in 2014. We Energies, the state's largest utility, has raised rates several times in recent years due to power plant improvements. The company settled earlier claims that it violated the Clean Air Act in recent years – and it's spending one-point-two billion dollars on new pollution controls at plants in Oak Creek and Pleasant Prairie. As a result, Brian Manthey of We Energies says the future impact on electric customers won't be as bad as what others will face. Also, three utilities from Madison and Green Bay will spend 627-million-dollars to cut pollution at the state's largest source of sulfur dioxide, the Columbia power plant near Portage. E-P-A Administrator Lisa Jackson says the extra cost will be worth it. She says states will see less pollution drifting in from other states – and Americans will save up to 280-billion dollars a year in air-related health costs.

Bluefield Daily telegraph: Coal Group Fires Backs at EPA Rule

Coal-fired utilities in a 23-state region of the eastern United States will have to ramp up their emissions control efforts by Jan. 1, 2012 in order to comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's "Cross-state Air Pollution Rule" that was issued on Thursday. According to information posted on the EPA's web site, the Cross-state Air Pollution Rule "will help avoid tens of thousands of premature deaths and illnesses, achieving billions in public health benefits." According to EPA web site, the new rule will reduce between 13,000 to 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks, 19,000 hospital and emergency room visits and 400,000 aggravated asthma deaths.EPA presented a similar rule — the Clean Air Interstate Rule of 2005 — that was sent back to EPA following a ruling by a federal judge in 2008. Both rules require power plants in the 23-state region that includes West Virginia and Virginia to dramatically reduce ozone and fine particulate pollution from power plants. However, the timeline for the new regulation sets an implementation date less than six months away."We appealed the last one," David M. Flannery said. Flannery is an attorney with Jackson Kelly PLLC, of Charleston who serves as counsel for Midwest Ozone Group said. "We believed they (the EPA) could have fixed the previous rule, but they just threw it out."Flannery said that his clients, a consortium of electric utilities in the area targeted by the Cross-state Pollution Rule, are concerned that the new rule is "largely unnecessary," and added that the existing control programs were "more than enough" to reduce the emissions that the EPA was seeking to control. "They apparently ignored those comments," Flannery said. According to Flannery, the EPA used data collected in 2005 to establish the requirements for its new rule, while the Midwest Ozone Group used data collected in 2008. He said that the 2008 data shows a dramatic decline in the emissions EPA is seeking to control due to scrubbers put in place on coal-fired plants as well as a general decline in emissions "after the economy went into the tank," and production declined in U.S. industries. Flannery said that "most EPA rules are challenged," but added that he didn't know if the group he represents plans to challenge this one. He said the EPA "can't automatically decide that burning coal is bad," and expressed appreciation for West Virginia's represents in congress as well as acting Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin's support for coal."The continued jobs-destroying overreach of the EPA is outrageous, and it's incomprehensible that in these difficult times, the Administration would be so callous as to arbitrarily impose onerous rules that they know will cost

countless American jobs and raise the daily costs of life for so many struggling families," U.S. Senator Joe Manchin III, D-W.Va., stated in a press release in response to EPA's new rule. "Once again, the EPA is taking aim at the coal industry, small businesses and hardworking families who help power and build this nation."U.S. Rep. Morgan Griffith, R-Va., stated in a press release that Appalachian Power has already announced that it will close a coal-fired plant in Giles County, Va. "These rules will cause electric rates to increase significantly, thus making it harder to do business and create jobs," according to a press release. The EPA stated that the "rule requires significant reductions in sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions that cross state lines," according to the EPA web site.

Tulsa World: EPA targets 26 power plants

Oklahoma would be forced to cut summertime emissions that contribute to ozone pollution under a proposal outlined Thursday by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The EPA included the proposal as part of its announcement on a final Cross-State Air Pollution Rule designed to slash hundreds of thousands of tons of smokestack emissions that travel long distances. Oklahoma did not end up covered by that rule as expected in recent months. Instead, the EPA revealed supplemental rulemaking based on additional review and analysis of air-quality information that covered Oklahoma, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri and Wisconsin. The agency said the proposal will be open for public comment for 45 days after publication in the Federal Register."It is little consolation that Oklahoma is not included in today's final rule," U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe said, referring to the EPA's newest proposal to include the state in the near future A leading voice on environmental issues for his party, the Oklahoma Republican questioned why the state's air-quality issues were being linked with Michigan. Inhofe plans to be "very active" during the upcoming comment period and holds out hope that the EPA can at least be persuaded to slow down its latest proposal targeting nitrogen oxide."I don't know the level of harm it will do in Oklahoma," he said. Inhofe described the EPA's announcement on its transport rule as the latest major impediment to economic growth put forth by the Obama administration. The EPA describes its record on clean air as a common-sense approach and pointed out that its latest action followed a 2008 federal court order."No community should have to bear the burden of another community's polluters or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses," EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson said. According to the EPA, the rule will protect more than 240 million Americans from soot and smog in the eastern half of the country and will result in as much as $280 billion in annual benefits. The rules attempt to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide, which creates soot, also called fine particles, and nitrogen oxide, which reacts in the atmosphere and creates smog or ozone.EPA Regional Administrator Al Armendariz, based in Dallas, said most utilities already have installed emission-reducing scrubbers and catalysts to meet the requirement of the rule. But he said some of the coal-fired plants may have to further reduce emissions."The good news about coal plants is about 75 percent of them either have scrubbers or are getting them," Armendariz said. American Electric Power-Public Service Company of Oklahoma already has prepared for meeting what the EPA previously called the Clean Air Transport Rule, company environmental affairs manager Bud Ground said. The utility was making plans for adding scrubbers to its Oologah coal-fired units."I don't see this being any different than what we've already planned," Ground said. Last month, parent company AEP announced that it would shut down the two Oologah units for as long as two years if the EPA's regional haze rules go forward unchanged. The down time was needed for installing scrubbers and making other improvements statewide at an anticipated cost of about $780 million, according to reports. AEP-PSO provides electricity to more than 525,000 customers statewide. Along with Oklahoma Gas & Electric, the state's largest utility, AEP-PSO would work with the state Department of Environmental Quality to craft a response plan meeting the EPA budget for emissions. As for the Michigan air-quality

connection, Ground was still trying to figure out the formula."Air moves in all directions at certain times of the day," he said. "I don't see how we can have a significant impact on Michigan."The EPA released a list of the 25 power plants in Oklahoma that would be affected by the new rule. Records show that nearly all the facilities had lower emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide in 2010 compared with 2005. Coal-fired plants by far had the highest emissions. OG&E's Muskogee plant had the highest emissions for both sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide in 2010, followed by AEP-PSO's Northeastern plant in Oologah. Armendariz said natural gas-fired plants are not large producers of sulfur dioxide but can have large nitrogen oxide emissions.

NJ Courier Post: Environmentalists back new power plant rules

Regulators say some of New Jersey's coal-fired power plants will have to get makeovers quickly to comply with a new set of federal rules designed to cut down on air pollution crossing state lines that was finalized Thursday. But the big change could come from what happens elsewhere. Pennsylvania and Ohio, coal-dependent states that are upwind of New Jersey, both have requirements to make major cuts to emissions of the chemicals that cause smog and acid rain, starting next year."It's great news for New Jersey. It's great news for anyone who wants to breathe clean air," Judith Enck, the administrator for the federal Environmental Protection Agency region that includes New Jersey and New York. "We know that air pollution does not respect state boundaries."The EPA estimates that the changes could avert 450 to 1,200 premature deaths per year in New Jersey and between 13,000 and 34,000 a year in the 27 states affected by the rules. The rules replace ones from 2005 that was struck down by a federal court. Enck said the new version should withstand any court challenges. Critics, including some who speak for the coal industry, see the rules as an expensive attack on the industry by the Obama administration. Mike Jennings, a spokesman for Public Service Enterprise Group, New Jersey's largest utility and the operator of several coal-fired plants in New Jersey and elsewhere, could not say Thursday what the regulations could mean for the company. The company generally has supported measures to control pollutants that cross state lines.

KUHF Houston: EPA Tightens Restrictions on Power Plants

The Cross-State Air Pollution rule changes the standards for how much pollution power plants can emit. The rule is primarily targeted at coal-fired power plants in 28 states, including Texas, which will now have to monitor sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson says by the year 2014 the rule could prevent as many as 1,700 premature deaths in Texas per year."Without this rule, Texas power plants will contribute significantly to air pollution in downwind states, tribes and local communities. In some cases, that would force the consideration of more costly local reductions in those downwind communities. And in all cases, unfairly deprive all families of the health benefits associated with breathing clean air."The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality has been at odds with the EPA over concerns the stricter rule will cost power plants millions of dollars to comply. Jackson says the rule will help the Houston-Galveston region in its ongoing effort to attain air quality and ozone standards."EPA modeling shows that Texas has an ample range of cost-effective emission reductions options for complying with the requirements of this rule without threatening reliability or the continued operation of coal-burning units, including those that burn lignite from local mining operations. I guess, in short, there's no reason that Texas shouldn't get the benefits of this extraordinary rule."Texas power plants are among the largest emitters of air pollutants in the nation.

Pittsburgh Live: EPA rule to curtail drifting pollution

Pollution that blows hundreds of miles from coal-fired power plants into other states will be reduced under a final plan that the Environmental Protection Agency announced on Thursday. The rule, a revision of a Bush administration plan, will require pollution reductions in 27 states from Texas and Minnesota in the west to Pennsylvania and the East Coast. Cleaner, healthier air is expected as a result in the eastern, central and southern parts of the country, home to 240 million people. The Clean Air Act requires under a "good neighbor" provision that power plants don't export pollution to other states. Some states, including North Carolina and Delaware, cleaned up their own plants but ended up with unhealthy air days anyway because of pollution from tall power plant smokestacks hundreds of miles away in other states."Just because wind and weather will carry pollution away from its source at a local power plant, it doesn't mean the pollution is no longer that plant's responsibility," EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson said. "Pollution that crosses state lines puts a greater burden on states and makes them responsible for cleaning up someone else's mess."The Pittsburgh area is probably one of the areas that benefits the most in this country from the plan, said Jim Thompson, Air Quality Program manager at the Allegheny County Health Department. "That's just because we're surrounded by so many coal-fired power plants."About 70 percent of the air pollution in the county drifts in from somewhere else, mostly Ohio, West Virginia and Beaver County. The new EPA rules should lower that to about 50 percent, Thompson said. That will help bring the Monongahela Valley's Liberty-Clairton area -- which has some of the most polluted air in the country -- in line to meet federal mandates, Thompson said. But that will likely only be temporary: The EPA will strengthen its standards again later this summer, and the region will need more help reducing other states' pollution to meet those standards, he said. About 25 power plants in the tri-state area affect Pittsburgh and will be in the program. GenOn Energy's Cheswick power plant in Springdale is the closest to Pittsburgh, but it already has scrubbers to remove pollution. Greensburg-based West Penn Power operates coal-fired plants near Kittanning in Armstrong County, the Hatfield's Ferry plant in Greene County and the Mitchell power station in Washington County. GenOn Energy also operates coal-fired plants in Elrama, Washington County, and in Indiana County, across the Conemaugh River from Seward. The Edison Mission Group in Chicago operates the power plant near Homer City, Indiana County. The EPA's rules for reducing emissions from coal-burning sources are important in Western Pennsylvania because the region takes a "double hit" from polluters, said Myron Arnowitt, state director of Pennsylvania Clean Water Action, an environmental group. "We've got a lot of local pollution sources, and we get it from other states," Arnowitt said. Medical experts say that the fine particles and soot from power plants can be deadly, especially for people with heart and lung conditions. Bad air days aggravate asthma and are hazardous for healthy people who exercise outdoors. While many of the nation's power plants have installed equipment to reduce pollution, others have held off. The equipment was first required under a 2005 rule issued by the Bush administration EPA to solve the interstate pollution problem. The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia struck it down in 2008, however, saying it was "fundamentally flawed" and didn't go far enough. The court left the old rule temporarily in place and gave the EPA a deadline to improve it. The EPA estimated the pollution controls would cost $1.6 billion per year over 30 years. It projected health benefits of $280 billion per year. The agency said that the money spent on pollution controls would create American jobs.

The State (SC): Tighter rules target soot, smog from S.C., other states

Like 26 other states, South Carolina will have to curb air pollution that has for years blown across the state line from power plants and contaminated air in other parts of the country. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency finalized a rule this week that is intended to stop smog- and soot-forming pollutants in one state from lowering air quality in neighboring states. The rule has been on the table for much of the past decade, so many coal-fired power plants affected by

the new regulations already have taken steps to limit pollution. But the final rule developed under President Obama, ensures all plants will follow through on reducing smog and soot pollution. And it is tougher than one put together by former President Bush about six years ago. Scrubber under construction at SCE&G Wateree plant/SCE&GNationally, the air pollution rule will help prevent up to 34,000 premature deaths and stop hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks each year, according to the EPA. South Carolina also will see benefits for its residents, regulators say. In South Carolina, the rule could reduce some 900 premature deaths annually, the EPA says. The rule limits sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide pollution from coal plants. These pollutants help form smog and soot particles that not only affect health, but lower visibility, particularly on hot summer days. The rule, to take effect next year, will cut sulfur dioxide emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels, while nitrogen oxides will be cut by more than half, the EPA estimates. Lisa Jackson, the EPA's administrator, said her agency's action follows years of complaints by some states that power plants in other states were contaminating their air and making it hard to comply with pollution laws. She said it's only fair to level the playing field. Many states complaining were in the Northeast."We all know that pollution generated in one state or one community does not stop at the border or the city line,'' Jackson said. "Just because wind and weather will carry air pollution away from its source at a local power plant, it doesn't mean that pollution is no longer that plant's responsibility. It also doesn't mean that cross-state pollution is any less harmful to the communities it settles in, causing smog and leaving soot in the air people are breathing.'' A map on the EPA's website shows that South Carolina power plants have contributed to lower air quality in the Atlanta area and in parts of Texas. The Palmetto State had previously been accused by North Carolina of polluting air in the Tarheel State. South Carolina is one of 27 eastern states contributing to lower air quality in other states. SCE&G and Santee Cooper, which operate most of the coal-fired power plants in South Carolina and produce much of the pollution, have installed scrubbers and other equipment to limit releases of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide, which contribute to smog and soot pollution. Mollie Gore, a spokeswoman for state-owned Santee Cooper, said a recent rate increase reflected the higher costs of installing pollution control equipment at the company's largest power plants. Gore said Santee Cooper has spent more than $300 million on scrubbers and other pollution control equipment at the two most recently built units at its Cross generating station."We don't think it's going to have any impact on us now because we've been preparing for this for quite a while,'' Gore said. "Everything we've brought on line in terms of generation over the past decade or more has scrubbers and other environmental control technology that address sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide.'' Gore said the new rule means Santee Cooper will have an allowance, or limit, on the amount of those pollutants it can release each year. The company expects to meet that allowance, she said. About 75 percent of the power generated by Santee Cooper comes from coal plants. SCE&G spokesman Robert Yanity said his company also has made improvements, although utility executives were still examining the full impacts of the regulation. The company has spent some $750 million in recent years on scrubbers and other pollution control equipment at its major power plants, including one in lower Richland County, he said. The company has spent $73 million at its lower Richland plant on equipment to cut nitrogen oxide and $283 million at the plant on equipment to reduce sulfur dioxide. Gore and Yanity some of their companies' older, smaller plants do not have the pollution control technology installed. The rule, to begin taking effect next year, will cost power plant operators $800 million annually in 2014, according to EPA estimates. That's in addition to the $1.6 billion spent per year to comply with the Bush rule that was still in effect until the government drafted a new one, according to The Associated Press. The agency said the cost to utilities pales when compared to the billions of dollars in health care savings. Critics said the EPA's action this week is another attempt by the Obama administration to crack down on coal-fired power plants. The regulation is among several expected to target pollution from the 594 coal-fired power plants across the country. These plants provide nearly half of the country's electricity, according to The

Associated Press.“The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause,” said Steve Miller, president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, a coal industry association. Along with other pending regulations, Miller said they “are among the most expensive ever imposed by the agency.’’ Many agree that the new rule could close down some of the oldest, and dirtiest, coal-fired facilities, The Associated Press reported. The remaining plants would have to use existing pollution controls more often, use lower-sulfur coal, or install additional equipment, the news service said. The regulation replaces a 2005 Bush administration proposal that was rejected by a federal court. In addition to South Carolina, states subject to the rule include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Texas, Iowa and Wisconsin.

Bloomberg: EPA sets new air rules for 27 states as industry balks

The Environmental Protection Agency set new air-pollution standards for 27 states, from New York to Texas, in rules the regulator says will save lives and utilities say will cost jobs and boost electricity bills. The agency is directing states to reduce power-plant emissions that lead to ground-level ozone and soot crossing state lines, the EPA said Thursday. The EPA said it also plans to require six states to decrease nitrogen oxide during summer months. The pollution standards are among EPA actions under attack by companies and lawmakers who say stringent regulations will cost the industry billions of dollars and set back the economy. The EPA and environmentalists say the restrictions will protect the public from the health hazards of smog and soot from nearby states better than rules issued by the Bush administration six years ago."Just because wind and weather carry air pollution away from its source at a local power plant, it doesn't mean that pollution is no longer that plant's responsibility," EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson told reporters on a conference call Thursday. "It also doesn't mean that cross-state pollution is any less harmful to the communities it settles in."The new rules applying to states in the eastern half of the U.S. mandate the reduction of sulfur dioxide, which can lead to acid rain and soot emissions harmful to humans and ecosystems, and nitrogen oxide, a component of ground-level ozone, a main ingredient of smog. Power plants fired by fossil fuels such as coal are the largest source of U.S. sulfur-dioxide emissions, accounting for 73 percent, according to the EPA. Texas government officials, companies and labor unions had argued against including the state in the rules limiting sulfur-dioxide pollution. The EPA hadn't included Texas in its proposal last year. The agency later decided to add the state because "without this rule Texas power plants would contribute significantly to air pollution" elsewhere, Jackson said. Texas power plants emit the most nitrogen-oxide pollution in the U.S. and the second-largest amount of U.S. sulfur-dioxide emissions after Ohio. Sen. John Cornyn, a Texas Republican, has said the rules may result in $1 billion in compliance costs in his state and lost jobs due to plant closings. The EPA standards also may damage the power grid's reliability, he said."If we have unplanned outages, many in Texas could end up without air conditioning on some of the hottest days of the year," Cornyn told a Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing in Washington last week. The EPA said the regulation, called the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, will help lead to as much as $280 billion in annual health benefits. It will cut sulfur-dioxide emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels and nitrogen-oxide emissions by 54 percent, according to the agency. The American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity has said the rule, along with a pending regulation to cut air toxics from power plants, will cost electricity providers $17.8 billion a year from 2011 through 2030 and increase rates 11.5 percent on average in 2016.The EPA rule issued Thursday calls for emissions to be reduced through a limited "cap-and-trade" system among states that lets companies exceeding their pollution limits buy credits from those that pollute less."This is a real milestone," Frank O'Donnell, president of Clean Air Watch, a Washington-based environmental group, said Thursday in a statement. "This is a

much-needed step toward protecting the health of people in states downwind of big coal burning power plants. It will prove to be a life- saver.

GreenAnswers.com: Obama Administration Targets Cross-State Pollution

What do you do when your hometown has been polluted by an upwind power plant, if that plant is located across the state line and regulated largely be elected officials over whom you have no influence? For millions of Americans this is more than a theoretical question. In fact an estimated 240 million US residents live in cities seriously polluted by smokestacks from power plants in other states. Thanks to a rule announced by the US Environmental Protection Agency Thursday, relief may be coming to communities impacted by pollution sources over which they have no immediate control. The new regulation is the first in a series of major pollution rules to be rolled out by the agency this summer and fall. On Thursday morning the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced its long-awaited Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, which will require states to reduce smog and soot pollution that causes sickness and death in other states located downwind. The regulation will fulfill the EPA's responsibility to enforce the so-called "Good Neighbor" provision of the Clean Air Act, meant to limit pollution that crosses state lines. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will also replace a weaker rule developed by the Bush administration EPA in 2005, which the US Circuit Court for Washington, DC deemed did not fulfill requirements of the Clean Air Act. The new rule represents the Obama administration's attempt to comply with Clean Air Act mandates. According to the EPA, it will also prevent as many as 34,000 premature deaths and 400,000 cases of aggravated asthma per year."No community should have to bear the burden of another community's polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "These Clean Air Act safeguards will help protect the health of millions of Americans and save lives by preventing smog and soot pollution from traveling hundreds of miles and contaminating the air they breathe."The rule targets sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxides, two pollutants that contribute to formation of soot and smog. The two compounds also cause heart disease, asthma, and other breathing problems in hundreds of thousands of people who live downwind of power plants. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule requires these plants to begin cutting emissions in 2012. By 2014, sulfur dioxide will be reduced by 73% and nitrous oxides by 54%.The new rule will affect mainly states in the eastern US, where the bulk of the country's dirty power plants are located and where wind currents easily carry pollution from one state to another. Many states will receive relief from upwind pollution sources even as they are required to clean up their own dirty power plants to alleviate communities downwind from them. For example, air quality in Pennsylvania is currently affected by nineteen out-of-state pollution sources that will be reduced by the new rule, including major power plants in Ohio that pollute the Pittsburgh area. However Pennsylvania will itself be required to clean up twelve of its own polluters that cause air quality problems in other states. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule represents the culmination of a months-long process during which the EPA gathered input on a proposed draft rule and accepted comments from the public. While industry groups pushed for a weak standard that would minimize the need for new pollution controls, health and environmental organizations advocated science-based standards that would dramatically reduce cases of illness. The EPA also had to act in the knowledge that any rule too weak to fulfill Clean Air Act requirements would likely get thrown out in court. Hot on the heels of the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, this fall the EPA will announce other Clean Air Act rules the include the nation's first standard limiting mercury emissions from power plants, as well as stricter fuel efficiency standards for automobiles. The series of new rules will help bring the Clean Air Act up-to-date with modern times, and address some of those tricky questions like what you can do when a power plant across the state line is polluting your community with smog.

Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel: EPA finalizes stricter air pollution rules for Wisconsin, other states

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday finalized stronger regulations for Wisconsin and 26 other states aimed at curbing air pollution from long-distance sources. The rules will help those states fight ozone and particle pollution caused by power plants in Illinois, Indiana and other states. But Wisconsin utilities - whose pollution can contribute to air-quality problems elsewhere - will also need to find ways to reduce their own emissions. The likely result: Higher electric bills in the coming years. A group of power companies known as the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity called the action one of the most costly crackdowns on coal ever. Nationwide, the EPA estimated that utilities are projected to spend $800 million on the rule in 2014, in addition to $1.6 billion a year that's been spent to satisfy an earlier version of the regulations. But in a teleconference with reporters, EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson extolled the health benefits of cleaner air, including $120 billion to $280 billion in annual health and welfare benefits beginning in 2014.EPA's analysis found the rule will save up to 34,000 lives a year and prevent more than 400,000 asthma attacks as well as 19,000 admissions to hospitals. Environmental groups also said the rule will reduce acid rain pollution from Midwest coal plants that led to smog and damaged waterways in the eastern United States."We will look back a decade from now and mark today as the beginning of the final chapter in the sad saga of chronic acid rain and smog on the East Coast of America," said Brian Houseal, executive director of the Adirondack Council, in a statement. The regulations, known as the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, will require Wisconsin and the other states to start cutting emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides next year. Those emissions produce fine particle and smog pollution, which pose the greatest risk to people with lung and heart disease. The rule was advanced by President Barack Obama's administration to replace the regulations from President George W. Bush's administration that were rejected in the courts. Among the changes, the new regulations seek deeper cuts in emissions and bar out-of-state emissions trading. Such trading allows one utility to pay another that had previously cut pollution. The Bush-era plan allowed utilities to trade these emissions over much greater distances. Under the EPA's regulations, each state has been allocated a cap on their emissions. States can devise their own plan to meet those limits or accept the EPA's, said Joseph Hoch, regional pollutant and mobile source section chief at Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources."I think that the message is that these are going to be substantial reductions and they will benefit Wisconsin and other states," Hoch said. Wisconsin utilities knew stricter rules were coming and have been making moves to retrofit their power plants to control air pollution. We Energies, the state's largest electric utility, has moved to clean up most of its coal-fired power plants under a consent decree with EPA that settled allegations the company had violated the Clean Air Act over the years. The utility is spending $1.2 billion on projects linked to that settlement, which include new pollution controls at power plants in Pleasant Prairie and the original Oak Creek coal plant, built in the 1950s and 1960s.As a result, We Energies spokesman Brian Manthey said, "We think we'll be in fairly decent position and would not expect as large an impact on our customers as other utilities may experience due to the rule."But the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity called the rule "among the most expensive ever imposed by the agency on coal-fueled power plants, dramatically increasing electricity rates." In Wisconsin, a business group raised worries about higher costs."Our concern is that whatever the cost utilities face will ultimately be paid for the homeowners and businesses that use the electricity," said Scott Manley, director of environmental policy for Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce. The EPA said Thursday the rule would increase national average household electricity prices by 1% in 2014.We Energies customers have experienced rate increases in recent years, partially because of pollution control projects. Also , a 6% to 8% increase in electricity bills could hit

customers in 2012 or 2013, linked, in part, to a major pollution control project at its Oak Creek power plant. In Portage, three utilities will spend $627 million in the coming years to add controls at Wisconsin's largest source of sulfur dioxide, the Columbia Energy Center. State regulators approved the project earlier this year. The cost will be paid by customers of two Madison utilities and Green Bay's Wisconsin Public Service Corp. Thursday's rule is part of new federal regulations targeting pollution from coal, including one unveiled earlier this year that aims to cut emissions of mercury and other toxins."It's a piece of the administration's broader move to say, 'Let's get busy and enforce the Clean Air Act,' " said Jennifer Feyerherm of Wisconsin's Sierra Club. "It's long overdue and much needed to reduce pollution."

Daily Caller: New EPA rules to devastate coal industry

The coal industry is crying foul over new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations which they say will be among the most be costly rules ever imposed by the agency on coal-fueled power plants. The result, industry insiders say: substantially higher electricity rates and massive job loss.“The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause,” said Steve Miller, president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity (ACCCE). “America’s coal-fueled electric industry has been doing its part for the environment and the economy, but our industry needs adequate time to install clean coal technologies to comply with new regulations. Unfortunately, EPA doesn’t seem to care.”Thursday the EPA announced that they have finalized additional Clean Air Act provisions, collectively known as “The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule” to ostensibly “reduce air pollution and attain clean air standards,” by requiring coal companies in 27 states to slash emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide by 73 percent and 54 percent, respectively, from 2005 levels by 2014.According to the EPA, these emissions travel across state lines and contribute to ozone and fine particle pollution. The rule will replace a similar 2005 standard called the Clean Air Interstate Rule. EPA claims that the new rule will result in a savings of $120 to $280 billion in annual health and environmental benefits as well as save 13,000 to 34,000 lives. (EPA stimulating environmental regulations abroad)While the EPA’s alleged benefits are lofty, House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton cautioned that the new rules will come with a hefty price.“The goal for these rules should be reasonable regulation that protects public health and the environment while also preserving economic growth. Unfortunately, the unprecedented pace at which the administration is issuing major new rules that impose new costs and regulatory requirements on states, employers, and consumers fails that basic test,” said Upton. “By issuing multiple regulations for the energy and other sectors at such an accelerated rate, EPA has turned regulation from a manageable tool into an unpredictable moving target that makes it difficult for companies to invest and create jobs.”

Canada Free Press: Samet: No end to EPA air regulation

If Jean-Paul Sartre were still alive he might be induced to update his play “No Exit” to be about Americans locked in a room discussing how EPA air regulation destroyed their standard of living. In a commentary in the New England Journal of Medicine (July 6), Jonathan Samet asserts that, For ozone and particulate-matter pollution, because no thresholds have been identified below which there is no risk at all, the EPA is using scenarios of risk and exposure to gauge the effects of setting the standards at various concentrations and giving consideration to the burden of avoidable disease.[Emphasis added]Samet is not just some random person spouting junk science; he happens to be chairman of the EPA’s Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), a group that purports to pass on the scientific merits of EPA air standards. What Samet is saying is that there is no scientific basis for EPA not continually reducing manmade air emissions until there aren’t any. As Samet points out, under the Clean Air Act, the

EPA could literally regulate us out of any sort of industry without regard to the consequences: The CAA also requires the EPA administrator to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for pollutants for which air-quality criteria are listed. The language of the law on this point provides a strong public health mandate that has evolved through application and litigation. By intent, the NAAQS must protect susceptible groups within the U.S. population, although protection for the most susceptible may be unattainable. The achievement of what the CAA calls an “adequate margin of safety” does not imply that risk-free levels have been set, but that an acceptable level of risk has been reached, given uncertainties in the evidence. The costs of implementation and compliance are not to be considered in setting the NAAQS, although the law does call for costs to be considered in the setting of individual emission standards (e.g., for vehicles and electric utilities) that are intended to help meet the NAAQS. [Emphasis added]Contrary to Samet’s view, however, the scientific reality of today’s air quality is that no one is America is being harmed by it. American air is clean and safe. As such, further EPA efforts to tighten air quality standards are unnecessary; they will cost millions of jobs and trillions of dollars in economic growth, while producing exactly zero in terms of public health. This is not what Congress intended when the Clean Air Act was passed in 1963 and amended in 1970, 1977 and 1990.The Clean Air Act, as implemented by the Obama EPA, is nothing short of a political attack on America using air quality as an excuse.

Grist.com: New EPA air pollution standard protects public health

Good news! Today the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a safeguard that will improve the lives of millions of Americans. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will protect families and communities from the dangerous air pollution spewed out by coal-fired power plants. If you have a child with asthma or a loved one at risk of a heart attack, you can breathe easier today, because these new protections will decrease the chances that they will end up in the emergency room. Specifically, the new protections will reduce power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, dangerous pollutants that form soot and smog and contribute to poor air quality days and respiratory illnesses affecting millions of Americans. (How much does coal affect your life?)Growing up just outside the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, I remember days when the air was so smoggy that you couldn't see the mountain views (a big threat to our tourism-based economy), and it was actually dangerous to your health to go hiking! The pollution came from coal-fired power plants in the Tennessee and Ohio Valleys. Thanks to these new protections, there will soon be fewer smoggy days in the Smokies and across the eastern U.S. They call this the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule because it curbs the millions of tons of air pollution that travel downwind and across state lines each year. Pollution doesn't stop at the border, so we're pleased that the EPA is acting to help states be good neighbors by reducing air pollution that drifts across state lines. The areas with the most cleanup to do will also realize the most benefits so that no state will bear an unfair burden. We also applaud the EPA's science-based approach and its decision to include Texas for both ozone and fine particulates, based on its new analyses that Texas' air pollution has a major impact on downwind states. The safeguard will help towns and cities meet clean air standards and reduce the pollution that not only endangers lives, but also costs Americans billions in health costs. The EPA estimates that in just the first two years of enforcement, these protections will save up to 34,000 lives, prevent more than 19,000 emergency room visits, prevent 1.8 million missed work and school days, and improve the lives of millions. To find out the local health effects of air pollution from coal plants in your town, just enter your zip code into our new interactive map. Even better: The benefits of the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule also greatly outweigh costs of implementation, saving Americans as much as $280 billion and costing only $2.4 billion annually. This is a long overdue and much-needed action. It has been in the works for over a decade, so industry has had plenty of time to prepare for these new safeguards. It's great to see

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson taking yet another stand for clean air and the health of our families.

AP: NY advocates say power plant rule aids Northeast

A new air pollution rule approved by the Obama administration will help plants and wildlife in the Catskills, Adirondacks and other Northeastern mountains recover from decades of acid rain, an environmental group said Thursday."This is a historic day for the Adirondack Park, the Catskill park and the neighboring Appalachian Mountain Range, from Maine to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park," said Brian Houseal, executive director of the Adirondack Council. "The worst-hit places in the nation now have a real chance for a healthy future, free of contaminated soils, dying forests and fish poisoned by mercury."The new rule, given final approval by the Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday, requires 27 states to reduce both smog and acid-rain causing pollutants, namely sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide. The regulation is one of several expected from the EPA that would target pollution from the nation's 594 coal-fired power plants. Houseal said Congress must reinforce EPA's authority to impose the new rule. That would prevent lawsuits by power companies from blocking its implementation. That's what happened the last time EPA tried to control power plant emissions with a different rule in 2008.The new rule is expected to result in increased visibility in national and state parks and increased protection for sensitive ecosystems including Adirondack and Appalachian lakes and streams, coastal waters and estuaries, and sugar maple, spruce and fir forests. Acid rain caused by smokestack emissions has wiped out native aquatic life in hundreds of Adirondack lakes and ponds and killed high-elevation forests. High-elevation smog is currently dense enough to harm hikers on Adirondack mountain peaks on hot summer days, Houseal said. The industry had mixed reactions."Based on our initial review of the final rule released today, we believe the compliance dates and emission reductions are reasonable and achievable, while maintaining the reliability of the electric system," said Michael Bradley, executive director of the Clean Energy Group, a coalition of electric power companies. A pro-coal industry association, however, called the regulations and other pending EPA rules "among the most expensive ever imposed by the agency.""The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause," said Steve Miller, president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity.

AP: NJ environmentalists praise new power plant rules

Regulators say some of New Jersey's coal-fired power plants will have to get makeovers quickly to comply with a new set of federal rules designed to cut down on air pollution crossing state lines that was finalized Thursday. But the big change could come from what happens elsewhere. Pennsylvania and Ohio, coal-dependent states that are upwind of New Jersey, both have requirements to make major cuts to emissions of the chemicals that cause smog and acid rain, starting next year."It's great news for New Jersey. It's great news for anyone who wants to breathe clean air," Judith Enck, the administrator for the federal Environmental Protection Agency region that includes New Jersey and New York. "We know that air pollution does not respect state boundaries."The EPA estimates that the changes could avert 450 to 1,200 premature deaths per year in New Jersey and between 13,000 and 34,000 a year in the 27 states affected by the rules. The rules replace ones from 2005 that was struck down by a federal court. Enck said the new version should withstand any court challenges. Critics, including some who speak for the coal industry, see the rules as an expensive attack on the industry by the Obama administration. Mike Jennings, a spokesman for Public Service Enterprise Group, New Jersey's largest utility and the operator of several coal-fired plants in New Jersey and elsewhere, could not say Thursday what the regulations could mean for the

company. The company generally has supported measures to control pollutants that cross state lines.EPA data show New Jersey, which has 36 coal-fired power plants, contributes to pollution largely in Connecticut and New York. One of New Jersey's main environmentalists, state Sierra Club Director Jeff Tittel, said the rule is needed because New Jersey receives so much pollution from elsewhere. He said the Portland Generating Station in Northampton County, Pa., is the single biggest cause of air pollution in northwestern New Jersey."This rule is really going to help people in New Jersey breathe better," he said. "We have some of the worst air pollution in the United States."

Green Technology World: EPA 'Emits' New Rules for Coal-Fired Power Plants

On July 7, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued new rules for coal-fired power plants that, beginning in 2012, will protect 240 million Americans living downwind from thousands of tons of smokestack emissions. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will shield communities in 27 eastern states from emissions of compounds that cause soot, smog and acid rain —at an additional cost to utilities of less than $1 billion a year, according to the EPA. In announcing the rule, the agency said that cleaner air would prevent as many as 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks, and hundreds of thousands of cases of asthma and other respiratory ailments annually. “No community should have to bear the burden of another community’s polluters” EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson commented. “This is a long-overdue step to protect the air we breathe.”Carried long distances and across state lines by wind and weather, power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide react in the atmosphere and contribute to harmful levels of smog (ground-level ozone) and soot (fine particles), which are scientifically linked to widespread illnesses. By 2014, the rule and other state and EPA actions should reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels. Nitrogen oxide emissions will drop by 54 percent, the EPA predicts. The rule would also help improve visibility in state and national parks, while better protecting sensitive ecosystems, including Appalachian streams, Adirondack lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and forests. Jackson stated that the goal is “to deliver significant reductions in harmful emissions, while minimizing costs for utilities and consumers.” The agency said that utilities could meet the new standards at modest cost by using readily available technology like catalytic converters and smokestack scrubbers. However, the EPA’s optimistic projections are not endorsed by all factions. “The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause,” said Steve Miller, president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity. “America’s coal-fueled electric industry has been doing its part for the environment and the economy, but our industry needs adequate time to install clean coal technologies to comply with new regulations. Unfortunately, EPA doesn’t seem to care.”Earlier this month, ACCCE released an initial analysis by National Economic Research Associates (NERA) of the combined impacts of this rule and the Utility MACT Rule. Using government data, NERA’s initial analysis found that these two proposals by the EPA would result in net employment losses of over 1.4 million job-years by 2020. While the EPA claims the regulations would create jobs, the NERA analysis projects that four jobs would be lost for every job that might be created. NERA also found that the two regulations would increase electricity rates by over 23 percent in some areas of the United States that rely on coal for electricity. In addition, consumers will be paying over $8 billion per year in higher natural gas prices because of these proposed rules.“We urge EPA to take a realistic look at the enormous impact of all the regulations they are considering and how those regulations affect families and businesses. In a time of high unemployment, we should be pursuing sensible policies that create jobs, not eliminate jobs.” said Miller. In a supplemental rulemaking based on further review and analysis of air quality information, EPA is also proposing to require sources in Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions during the summertime ozone season. The proposal would

increase the total number of states covered by the rule from 27 to 28. Five of these six states are covered for other pollutants under the rule.

AP: AEP says rates likely to rise from pollution rules

Indiana customers of American Electric Power might face rate increases as high as 30 percent as a result of a new federal rule on the downwind effects of power plant emissions, a company spokesman said. The rule will force Ohio-based AEP to add pollution controls to its Rockport generating plant east of Evansville and close three-fourths of its plant near the southeastern Indiana city of Lawrenceburg, company spokesman Pat Hemlepp told the Evansville Courier & Press.EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced the plan to reduce smokestack pollution causing smog and soot in downwind states. It takes effect next year and by 2014 will help reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels and nitrogen oxide emissions by 54 percent at power plants in 27 Eastern and Midwest states. The tight deadlines will prevent utilities from spacing out the pollution controls over a longer period so that rate increases could be phased in more slowly, Hemlepp said.AEP subsidiary Indiana Michigan Power, which serves customers in northern Indiana and Michigan, operates the Rockport plant. Scrubbers, or equipment to remove sulfur dioxide and other pollutants, had been planned for the Rockport plant starting in 2017.Other Indiana power companies including Duke Energy and Vectren have installed pollution controls over past decade. Duke Energy's Indiana spokeswoman Angeline Protogere said Duke has spent $1.75 billion during the past 10 years to reduce its overall Indiana air emissions. All five of the generating units at Duke's massive Gibson Station power plant near Princeton, Ind., now have scrubbers for controlling sulfur dioxide and equipment for controlling nitrogen oxide, she said. Vectren already controls 100 percent of its sulfur dioxide emissions and 90 percent of its nitrogen oxide emissions with scrubbers and other pollution controls on four generating units in southwestern Indiana's Warrick and Posey counties. Indianapolis Power & Light's website said all generating units at its Petersburg power plant are equipped with scrubbers and some have controls for nitrogen oxide emissions.

Ft. Worth Star-Telegram: EPA orders Texas to cut other states' pollution

A federal rule announced Thursday could force a substantial number of Texas power plants to add more pollution controls to reduce emissions that contribute to health-threatening smog. Dallas-Fort Worth, which is in violation of the federal ozone standard, could benefit from reductions in emissions from power plants in Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and East Texas as a result of the rule, Al Armendariz, regional administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, said in a telephone interview. The EPA estimates that the new Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, applicable in 27 states and effective Jan. 1, will prevent 670 to 1,700 premature deaths in Texas every year, Armendariz said. He said the estimates are compiled by economists and health scientists. Nitrogen oxides emitted by the plants contribute not only to smog, but also to soot. The new rule would also curb emissions of sulfur dioxide, which contributes to soot and acid rain.In terms of health benefits, "I think this is one of the most important rules the agency has ever published," Armendariz said. The EPA estimates that the rule will protect 240 million Americans from smog and soot pollution, preventing up to 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks, 19,000 cases of acute bronchitis, 400,000 cases of aggravated asthma and 1.8 million sick days a year beginning in 2014 -- "achieving up to $280 billion in annual health benefits."The benefits will "far outweigh" the $800 million in projected annual costs for compliance with the new rule and an estimated $1.6 billion per year in capital expenditures to comply with a previous rule, the agency said. But not everyone is happy about the new rule.Gov. Rick Perry, in a statement, said it "is another example of heavy-handed and misguided action from Washington, D.C., that threatens Texas jobs and families and puts at risk the

reliable and affordable electricity our state needs to succeed."Perry, considered a potential contender for the 2012 Republican presidential nomination, said the Obama administration "seems intent on increasing energy costs for American consumers."U.S. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said it was "outrageous" that the administration would issue the rule, which "will adversely affect thousands of Texas jobs creators and electricity consumers."But the EPA estimates it will increase a typical family's home electric bill by "less than $1" per month, Armendariz said. The rule applies to 27 states with power-plant pollution that contributes to unhealthy air downwind in other states. Windblown emissions from Texas power plants are believed to contribute to air pollution in Louisiana, Illinois and Michigan, Armendariz said. Three environmental groups -- the Sierra Club, Public Citizen and Environmental Integrity Project -- praised the rule as "a new safeguard to protect Americans from dangerous pollution from coal-fired power plants." Environment Texas also expressed support. The rule is expected to particularly affect Texas, the nation's leading power generator and consumer as well as home to 19 coal-fired plants, more than any other state. Luminant, the Dallas-based power generator and owner of 12 Texas coal plants, complained in a statement that the rule "will have a disproportionate impact" on the state, noting that the 26 percent reduction in nationwide sulfur dioxide emissions required by 2012 is in Texas. The state will be required to slash its sulfur dioxide emissions by 47 percent from 2010, Luminant said. The rule imposes "wholly unreasonable mandates and unrealistic timelines for Texas," Luminant complained. Power generators might close some plants rather than bear the cost of complying with the new rules. Armendariz said that some older, less efficient coal plants have already been shut down and that low natural gas prices are making that fuel increasingly attractive for power generation.

American Statesman: EPA announces emissions cuts for power plants

Power plant smokestack rules announced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday will improve breathing conditions for elderly people and those with asthma, according to the agency. The rules call for Texas plants to cut emissions that contribute to smog and soot, and utilities have said the new rule will drive up the costs of generating electricity. According to the EPA, Texas air quality suffers from power plant emissions from as far away as South Carolina. Texas plants, in turn, affect air quality in states as far away as Michigan. But the consequences in Austin are likely to be limited."If you're good and healthy and don't spend much time outdoors, this won't make much of a difference," said Bill Gill , air quality program director for the Capital Area Council of Governments, which coordinates municipal and county governments around the Austin area. "If you spend time outdoors or face compromises to your respiratory system, that's where large benefits will come."Nonetheless, EPA regional administrator Al Armendariz said the rule will "generate significant improvements in air quality and produce public health benefits to people in Texas."The rule, known as the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule , will force utilities to cut sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions. Cuts in emissions are to begin next year. The rule is a more stringent rewrite of a 2005 Bush administration rule that the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit ordered the EPA to revise in 2008 .The new proposal could face a challenge from the State of Texas, as have other EPA rules handed down by the Obama administration. The effect on the reliability of electricity and its cost "is potentially very substantial," said John Fainter , president of the Association of Electric Companies of Texas. Officials at the utility Luminant , which operates 12 coal units in Texas capable of generating enough to power more than 6 million homes , said in a news release that the rule establishes "wholly unreasonable mandates and unrealistic timelines for Texas."

Dow Jones: Texas Bristles At Late Inclusion In US Emissions Rule

Texas officials and power companies complained Thursday that the state was included at the last minute in a new federal rule capping pollution from coal-fired power plants, denying Texans the opportunity to voice their concerns before its adoption. The rule, issued Thursday by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, affects about 1,000 coal-, gas-, and oil-fired power plants in 27 states. Texas was added late in the rule-making process and was the subject of a down-to-the-wire lobbying effort in recent days. The EPA regulation, which takes effect in January 2012, requires cuts in sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions that cross state lines. Those pollutants contribute to smog and soot, which are linked to lung and heart problems, the EPA said. Texas officials and power companies complained the EPA didn't make it clear Texas would be subject to the new rule until shortly before it was issued. Other states had more than a year to plan and prepare for the rule."Today's EPA announcement is another example of heavy-handed and misguided action from Washington, D.C., that threatens Texas jobs and families and puts at risk the reliable and affordable electricity our state needs to succeed," Texas Gov. Rick Perry said in a statement. The EPA said Texas had time to participate in the rule-making process. It also said the regulation, called the "Cross-State Air Pollution Rule," replaces an earlier rule that included Texas."The state of Texas and Texas stakeholders enjoyed ample notice and opportunity to comment on the rule comparable to that afforded other states and stakeholders," the EPA said in an emailed statement. The agency also said it made an "explicit request for comment" to Texas power companies and regulators, and obtained comment from them before finalizing the rule. Sen. John Cornyn (R., Texas) said the rule would "adversely affect thousands of Texas jobs creators and electricity customers" and that Texas had not been given "fair notice and the opportunity to be heard."Texas has about 18 coal-fired power plants that generate more than 11,000 megawatts of electricity, some of which "could be forced to add expensive equipment...or prematurely shut down," said Barry Smitherman, chairman of the Public Utility Commission of Texas.NRG Energy Inc. (NRG) and Xcel Energy Inc. (XEL), which own coal-fired power plants in Texas, said they were still studying the rule, which runs 1,300 pages, and aim to meet or exceed environmental regulations where they operate. Utilities in other parts of the country were also examining the rule. American Electric Power Co. Inc. (AEP) of Columbus, Ohio, is concerned about the deadlines for complying with the rule and "a series of other rules coming out of EPA," said AEP spokesman Pat Hemlepp. For example, the "Cross-State" rule has a 2014 deadline that would require AEP to install pollution-control equipment on one or more plants, a task that generally takes more than three years, Hemlepp said. Duke Energy Corp. (DUK), of Charlotte, N.C., plans to shut down older coal-fired power plants as part of a modernization plan that includes plans to commission four new power plants next year, said Duke spokesman Tom Williams.

Technology Review: New Coal Regs Make Economic Sense

Today the Environmental Protection Agency issued new regulations that will force cuts in pollution—including soot and emissions that cause smog and acid rain—from coal plants. Utilities say the rules will force closures of old power plants and increase the cost of electricity. The EPA counters that it will improve health and create jobs in the pollution control industry. An analysis by economists at Harvard and MIT finds that reductions in cases of asthma and other diseases could cut health care costs by well over $20 billion a year (up to $300 billion). It notes some factors that will keep down the costs of the regulations: natural gas, which burns cleaner than coal, can provide a relatively inexpensive alternative to the coal plants that will need to be shut down, and that many coal plants can continue to operate after being retrofitted with existing technology to meet the regulations. In the short term, more jobs will be created by these retrofits than will be lost due to plant closures, it says. The authors conclude: The Transport Rule has undergone a series of such thorough assessments, and the results consistently indicate that it

would create benefits that far exceed its costs. Failure to take timely action on this opportunity would seem to be imprudent, if not irresponsible.

TriCities.com: New EPA regulations could mean jobs lost in Southwest Virginia

The Environmental Protection Agency issued new standards for coal burning power plants in 28 states. The new rules, issued Thursday, will cut smokestack emissions reducing soot, smog, and acid rain. The EPA says the new regulations will cost utilities less than $1 billion a year. According to the New York Times, the EPS also says the cleaner air would prevent up to 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks, and hundreds of thousands of cases of asthma every year. But not everybody likes the idea. Virginia Congressman Morgan Griffith said in a statement, "The EPA is back at it again. More overreaching regulations, more jobs lost...All indications are that they will hurt jobs in Southwest Virginia." He goes on to say, "These rules will cause electric rates to increase significantly, thus making it harder to do business and create jobs."The new regulations are also a concern of Kevin Crutchfield, CEO of Alpha Natural Resources. He reiterates the same concerns about electricity rates going up, saying they could rise by 25 percent. Crutchfield says, "I think it's a grave concern to our nation because coal still fuels nearly half the electricity in the United States and its one of the most abundant affordable and reliable sources of electricity and what are we going to replace it with."Crutchfield says Alpha Natural will be okay because they have enough international coal exports. But its his employees he worries about.EPA says the new regulations on coal burning power plants won't go into effect until the beginning of 2012.

Christian Science Monitor: EPA tells coal-fired plants to reduce pollution. Some may just shut down.

The details of new EPA regulations, released Thursday, mandate reductions in power-plant emissions. 'Old, decrepit plants' without pollution controls may be just too costly to retrofit and be shut down by their owners, say analysts. [Editor's note: The headlines and story have been updated to clarify that while EPA's actions may cause some power plants to be closed, the agency is not mandating their closure.] Environmental Protection Agency today unveiled tough new air pollution regulations aimed at dramatically cleaning up emissions of coal-fired power plants and boosting air quality across 27 states, a move analysts say will likely cause scores of older, inefficient plants to become uneconomical and be shut down. Effects should appear relatively quickly. Under the new Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, some 900 coal-fired, natural gas-fueled, and oil-burning power plants must slash emissions by 2014. "This is a real milestone," exulted Frank O'Donnell, president of Clean Air Watch, a Washington-based environmental group in a statement. "This is a long-overdue and much-needed step towards protecting the health of people in states downwind of big coal burning power plants. It will prove to be a life saver."But beyond environmentalists' cheers, industry groups were predictably upset. Coal-state lawmakers and industry groups predict the rule will harm the economy."The EPA is ignoring the cumulative economic damage new regulations will cause," said Steve Miller, president and CEO of the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, an industry lobby group, in a statement. "Our industry needs adequate time to install clean coal technologies to comply with new regulations."The industry doesn't have long. By 2014, power plants must slash emissions of nitrous oxides (NOx) by 54 percent and sulfur dioxide (SO2) by 73 percent from 2005 levels. One likely response in Congress could be legislative "riders," amendments to squelch the regulations' impact by slashing the budgets for enforcement, said Kevin Book, senior analyst with ClearView Energy Partners, an energy market research firm.EPA officials, however, say that the utility industry was put on notice under the Bush administration's national air pollution plan, and most began upgrading facilities years ago. Effects of the new rule will

sweep across the eastern US, vastly reducing the amount of fine particulate matter that blows from power plant smokestacks in the Midwest toward the east coast, affecting over 240 million Americans along the way, EPA officials said. Annual benefits of $280 billion from the new regulations – much of it due to reduced health impacts – will easily outweigh the estimated $800 million annual cost of implementation and $1.6 billion per year in utility industry capital investments already under way, the agency reported. The new rule will reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides by about 8 million tons annually. This will vastly reduce acid rain, smog, and small particulates that harm public health, say EPA officials. “These Clean Air Act safeguards will help protect the health of millions of Americans and save lives by preventing smog and soot pollution from traveling hundreds of miles and contaminating the air they breathe,” said EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson. It will "help ensure that American families aren’t suffering the consequences of pollution generated far from home, while allowing states to decide how best to decrease dangerous air pollution in the most cost-effective way.”The EPA's move responds to a mandate from a 2008 US Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia decision, which overturned the Bush administration's national air pollution plan. The court found that the Bush plan failed to substantially maintain air-quality standards among states – and ordered the EPA to develop a new rule. Since the rule’s outlines were unveiled a year ago, industry groups have responded with studies indicating the costs would be substantial. One recent study conducted for the American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity claims 1.4 million jobs lost by 2020 from a combination of today's cross-state rule and another pending rule that would limit mercury emissions. Other studies, however, like "New Jobs-Cleaner Air," published by University of Massachusetts economists in February, found that EPA air pollution regulations would actually create up to 300,000 new US jobs in each of the next five years, as companies upgrade plants and equipment. American Electric Power, one the nation’s largest utilities and one of the biggest complainants about the new rule, announced last month that these new air regulations would cause "premature" shutdown of a quarter of its coal-generating capacity, causing electric rate increases and the loss of hundreds of jobs.“The cumulative impacts of the EPA’s current regulatory path have been vastly underestimated, particularly in Midwest states dependent on coal to fuel their economies," said Michael G. Morris, chairman and chief executive officer of American Electric Power, in a statement last month. "The sudden increase in electricity rates and impacts on state economies will be significant at a time when people and states are still struggling."But when speaking to investors on June 1, Mr. Morris seemed far more sanguine about the new air pollution rules and the resulting coal-fired plant closures, news reports indicate."On balance, we think that is the appropriate way to go," Morris said of the closures, the National Journal reported. "Not only to treat our customers, but also to treat our shareholders, near and long term, with that small amount of the fleet going off-line."Plants that can’t be scrubbed get scrapped. Scores of aging plants, with little or no pollution abatement equipment, will be too costly to upgrade. Of the approximately 600 coal-fired power plants in the US, more than 86 could be forced into early retirement, according to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, which oversees the power grid. Yet some studies have shown that such closures will actually produce financial benefits to the utility industry. Up to one-fifth of the nation's coal-fired power plants – the oldest, smallest plants, with few emissions controls – could be closed as a result of the new cross-state rule and other expected air pollution mandates expected in the next few years, predicted "Growth From Subtraction: Impact of EPA Rules on Power Markets," a Credit Suisse study issued last fall. Still, the Credit Suisse study foresees a positive long-term outcome for investors, as big utility companies shed these old, inefficient plants. EPA rules, it said, " simply accelerate an inevitable market tightening by 4-5 years," as coal – for decades the low-cost fuel for energy production – cedes to natural gas. For state air quality regulators on the front lines, the new rule can't come soon enough. They expect to see reductions in the costs many states currently must shoulder from pollution that blows in from power plants upwind."This is the biggest thing we've seen in decades," says John Paul,

administrator of the Regional Air Pollution Control Agency in Dayton, Ohio, a state regulator. "You'll definitely see a difference in reactions depending on the utility. Some aren't complaining at all. Those with well-controlled, fairly modern units don't see this rule as a big burden. But utilities with coal-fired units 40-60 years old now know the end for those is near – and they're hollering."But his sympathy, he says, has its limits."Those old, decrepit plants were paid for decades ago and have made a lot of money for these companies – and they should have been replaced long ago," he says. "For 20 years we've been anticipating this – and I, for one, think it's about time."

New Jersey Newsroom: N.J. Sierra Club applauds EPA soot and smog rule

Millions of Americans will be able to breathe easier with the release of the Environmental Protection Agency's new Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. This proposed rule will reduce hundreds of thousands of tons of soot and smog from being released into the air that travels across state borders. Today as the air is unhealthy here in New Jersey, at an orange ozone level, this rule will help protect our lungs. This Rule will protect the health of millions of Americans around the country from premature death, asthma attacks, and nonfatal heart attacks. The New Jersey Sierra Club applauds the EPA for protecting our lungs on a bad air day in New Jersey. This rule will go a long way to protect the public health of the people of New Jersey from out of state and in state pollution from coal power plants. Smog is one of the most dangerous forms of air pollution that only worsens during hot summer days. Soot is a mix of metals, chemicals, and acid drops. Both of these dangerous air pollutants come from dirty coal-fired power plants, cars, and trucks. However you do not have to live in communities that are near coal plants or busy high to be at risk for serious health problems because of air you breathe. Millions of Americans are affected by pollution that is carried long distances by the wind or weather from dirty power plants miles away. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will improve air quality by cutting emission that contributes to pollution problems in other states. Along with this rule the EPA has come up with a comprehensive package of rules regarding coal pollution, CAIR, the Coal Ash Rule and the Mercury Rule. With the coal industry and their allies in Congress attacking these rules it makes it that much more important to support these rules that protect our health. The EPA has put together an important package of rules to protect the people of New Jersey and United States for the pollution from coal power plants. Together these rules go a long way in cleaning our air and protecting our environment. The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will help protect New Jersey because we get a third of our pollution from out of state dirty power plants. Even though we do not have as many coal plants as other states, because of our location at the end of the air stream, we receive a lot of pollution from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and other Midwestern states. GenOne the coal plant located in Portland, Pennsylvania is the largest pollution source in Northwestern New Jersey. Added to the pollution from own our coal plants, BL England, Hudson and Mercer Generating Plants, coal pollution is having a devastating health impact in New Jersey. According to a report "Toll from Coal," 531 people in New Jersey die each year from coal related deaths. There are 445 hospitalizations and 987 heart attacks in New Jersey from coal plants. For years, we have been subsidizing the coal industry because we have not charged them for the impacts they have on society and health. This proposed rule will ensure that our lungs no longer have to bear the burden from other states dirty air emissions. Air pollution from coal-fired power plants and from cars is especially harmful to our children. According to the EPA, asthma affects one out of every 10 school children and asthma is the top illness that causes kids to miss school. Children are especially vulnerable to these pollutants because their lungs are still developing. On a hot summer day when all children want to do is go out and play many of them are stuck indoors because of high levels of smog or soot in their communities. Clean air would mean a healthy economy, as residents of New Jersey could reduce health costs, sick days and boost the clean

energy sector. We thank Lisa Jackson for all her hard work on going after pollution from coal fired power plants. She is an environmental champion and we are proud of the work she has done on this as well as other issues. Roughly half the people in the United States live in counties that have dangerous levels of air pollution, according to the American Lung Association. More than 35 million Americans live within 300 feet of a major road, putting them at greater risk for illnesses like asthma. Air pollution from power plants is estimated to kill 13,000 people each year in the United States. According to the EPA the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule protect over 240 million Americans living in the eastern half of the country. The proposed rule will also prevent up to 34,000 premature deaths, 15,000 nonfatal heart attacks, 19,000 cases of acute bronchitis, 400,000 cases of aggravated asthma, and 1.8 million sick days a year beginning in 2014 - achieving up to $280 billion in annual health benefits. For too long we have been paying for the costs of air pollution with all these health problems. We need strong air quality standards from the EPA to help clean up major sources of pollution, protect our public health, and better our economy. The coal lobby and their allies in Congress will try to prevent this rule from going forward as they are trying to stop other rules. It is critical for the people of New Jersey and across the county to stand up for clean air and against special interest.

West Virginia Gazette: Trying to make sense of EPA's Lisa Jackson on air pollution, jobs and the future of the coalfields

I was starting to think that maybe my good friend Sen. Joe Manchin was on vacation … I mean, hours and hours went by after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced its final rules to combat cross-state air pollution, and Sen. Manchin hadn't issued a news release yet. So I was relieved when the release from Manchin's overactive press office finally reached my inbox at nearly 7 p.m. last evening:"The continued jobs-destroying overreach of the EPA is outrageous, and it's incomprehensible that in these difficult economic times, the Administration would be so callous as to arbitrarily impose onerous rules that they know will cost countless American jobs and raise the daily costs of life for so many struggling families," Senator Manchin said. "Once again, the EPA is taking aim at the coal industry, small businesses and the hardworking families who help power and build this nation."As I have said before, it's time the EPA realizes that it cannot regulate what has not been legislated. Our government was designed so that elected representatives are in charge of making important decisions, not bureaucrats. That principle is even more true today when the American people see the consequences of the EPA making rules that affect our whole country and could hurt our fragile economy."Sen. Manchin never fails to disappoint … but come on now. Arbitrarily impose onerous rules? EPA can't regulate what hasn't been legislated? I wonder if Sen. Manchin doesn't need to get some better staff work done, or if he's just trying to misstate things in his zeal to show his allegiance to the coal industry. Maybe Sen. Manchin disagrees with EPA's rationale for this final rule. But he doesn't offer one bit of evidence to support his allegation that it's being arbitrarily imposed. EPA officials outlined their reasoning pretty clearly right here on the agency's website. And trying to regulate what hasn't been legislated? Seriously? Perhaps Sen. Manchin needs to go back and actually read the Clean Air Act. Congress already gave EPA authority under the Clean Air Act's "good neighbor" provision to cut down interstate pollution that interferes with the attainment and maintenance of the national ambient air quality standards protecting public health. That's in section 110(a)(2)(D)(i)(I) of the law, Senator. It's one thing if Sen. Manchin wants to discuss or disagree with the actual way in which EPA is writing these rules, but he's not doing that — he's making incorrect statements about what authority EPA has and doesn't have under laws already passed by Congress. And that leads me to EPA, and that agency's administrator, Lisa P. Jackson. While reading Sen. Manchin's statement, I couldn't help but think about the brief discussion I had with Administrator Jackson earlier yesterday during a press conference call about those EPA air pollution rules. When EPA

issued its initial press release, this part of it jumped out at me:“No community should have to bear the burden of another community’s polluters, or be powerless to prevent air pollution that leads to asthma, heart attacks and other harmful illnesses. These Clean Air Act safeguards will help protect the health of millions of Americans and save lives by preventing smog and soot pollution from traveling hundreds of miles and contaminating the air they breathe,” said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. “By maximizing flexibility and leveraging existing technology, the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule will help ensure that American families aren’t suffering the consequences of pollution generated far from home, while allowing states to decide how best to decrease dangerous air pollution in the most cost effective way.”Now wait a second, I thought … “another community’s polluters“? Now, in this case, that means at least partly all of the coal-fired power plants that line the Ohio River Valley … in places like Moundsville and New Haven in West Virginia. Missing from EPA’s statement was any recognition that those power plants aren’t there just so that the evil coal companies and utilities and arbitrarily send pollution over to big cities or suburbs on the East Coast. Those power plants are there to give those city folks electricity to run their iPhones and their air conditioners. So it seemed to me that the folks enjoying the benefits of that “cheap electricity” from coal aren’t exactly powerless to do anything about the pollution that drifts their way from the coalfields. One thing they could do, for example, is to demand from that their political leaders push for other, cleaner forms of energy. Of course, some folks in those communities are doing that. And Lisa P. Jackson is a smart, educated and very capable woman. So it surprised me when she repeated almost that same statement from EPA’s press release in her conference call with the media. I perhaps foolishly assumed that Administrator Jackson understood the connection between coal-fired power plant pollution and the “cheap electricity” she and her neighbors to our east take advantage of every day. When it came my turn to ask a question, I decided to put this issue on the table, and see what she had to say. My question went something like this:… As you know a lot of this pollution that this rule is aimed at is produced generating electricity and other goods and services for people who don’t live where the pollution is actually produced. And I’m wondering what your agency is doing to follow up on its promise that it would work with areas like the coalfields of Appalachian to provide alternative economies and alternative jobs to replace those that might be impacted by these sorts of rules. I was amazed when Administrator Jackson responded by telling everybody on the call that I didn’t understand the issue at hand. She said: Just to clarify for everybody … this is a rule that talks about upwind and downwind air pollution. So it’s actually sort of the opposite of what you asked, with respect to air, what we’re trying to do is ensure is that someone who is generating pollution upwind isn’t causing a place downwind to be out of attainment for ozone or SO2, and therefore making people unhealthy in a state that has no ability through their permit process to do anything about it. She went on: Now, there are other forms of local pollution, and since I know your issues are … you know, water pollution, or land pollution from waste disposal, those are being addressed separately. Actually, Administrator Jackson, if your staff ever show you a copy of Coal Tattoo or of the Gazette, you’ll see we are concerned about quite a lot of issues about the coal industry … We’ve covered your agency’s efforts regarding greenhouse gas emissions and the recent proposal to for the first time regulate air toxics from coal-fired power plants. And we understand what you’re up to with the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. But it’s also clear from statements put out by folks like Sen. Manchin that your agency has a tough fight on its hands from the coal industry’s powerful political friends. And the folks who work at coal mines and power plants in places like Mingo and Mason counties in West Virginia have a right to straight talk from you and others in the Obama administration about how cleaning up coal pollution will affect their lives, including their jobs. We’ve tried on this blog and in our newspaper to explain to readers in West Virginia the downside of coal, and all of the ways that EPA’s regulatory proposals might help to curb the negative impacts of this industry. But it’s also true that your agency, on behalf of your boss, President Obama, made a very clear promise to the people of the coalfields two years ago:

Federal agencies will work in coordination with appropriate regional, state and local entities to help diversify and strengthen the Appalachian regional economy and promote the health and welfare of Appalachian communities. Sure, that promise was made in the context of EPA's announced crackdown on mountaintop removal permits. But it clearly is a commitment that must go beyond that, to helping communities — places that helped for generations to make our country strong — that are likely to see job losses from new air pollution, water pollution and greenhouse gas limits on coal. These aren't separate issues. They're all connected, and I'm sure that Lisa Jackson knows and understands that. Administrator Jackson did go on to talk about the notion of "green jobs" a bit in response to my question: In terms of what the administration is doing to try to help communities justly transition to cleaner forms of energy, I can just repeat the fact that this administration, this president has from the beginning said that there is great opportunity in greener, cleaner forms of energy. It's better for our health, it's better for our security, it's better for our environment. He has shepherded and stewarded everything form the recovery act which had tens of billions of dollars in investment in cleaner form of energy, including a carbon capture and storage project right in West Virginia at, I think it's an AEP plant, Mountaineer. So you know, whether it's the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, whether it's been work through our clean water programs to help communities finance and deal with water pollution, whether it's working with labor unions and others, boilermakers and others who will get work when plants have to control their pollution and do it here in America. I think this administration has policies that make good on what we've all talked about, which is we should invest in our energy infrastructure just like we invest in our other infrastructure. It makes our country cleaner, it makes our economy stronger, and it makes our people healthier, and as you can see from these estimates, we're not talking about small amounts of health improvements. We're talking about saving lives, and literally changing people's ability to enjoy the life they have. But you'll notice that the one West Virginia example she mentioned is one in which the work is meant to help keep the coal industry viable in a carbon-constrained world — not one aimed at helping transition folks who might lose coal-based jobs into something else with more of a future. It's been two years since the crackdown on mountaintop removal was announced. We're half-way through the third year of President Obama's term. Perhaps it's time for someone like Lisa Jackson to visit West Virginia, and tell us more about exactly how the coalfields can join in the clean, green energy future she keeps talking about.

The Intelligencer / Wheeling News-Register: Stop Vendetta Against Coal

At a time when millions of Americans are without work, when millions of others with jobs are struggling to make ends meet, President Barack Obama has chosen to ignore their needs to pursue his vendetta against the coal industry. On Thursday, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson announced what can only be described as draconian measures against the coal industry. Power plants in 27 states, including West Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania, will have to reduce emissions the EPA says cause smog and soot pollution, including acid rain, Jackson said. New, harsher rules affecting the plants are to reduce airborne pollution that drifts from the 27 states into others, she added. At the same time, emissions limits in five states and the District of Columbia will be relaxed, Jackson said. The five states are Massachusetts, Florida, Louisiana, Connecticut and Delaware. Presumably Jackson isn't worried about acid rain that may affect the Atlantic Ocean adversely or soot that may be carried across it to Europe. Though no reporter covering the story asked whether politics had anything to do with allowing more pollution from the five states and the District of Columbia, we're reasonably certain Jackson would have denied it. The new rules will send electric bills through the roof for many consumers. They will kill existing jobs in the coal and related industries.

Assuming Obama and the EPA are determined to wreck the coal industry - as they are - could they not have waited a few years until after unemployment created by the Great Recession had eased? Apparently not. Whatever the reason for Obama's grudge against the coal industry - and states such as ours - it already has been allowed to go too far. Congress needs to do the right thing and stop it.