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ADMINISTRATOR JACKSON

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EPA Jackson holds community meeting in New Orleans (*Sify News*)

2010-05-03 05:30:00
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson says the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has spawned a huge environmental challenge, but not yet a catastrophe.
She told community leaders gathered at a New Orleans church Saturday that the spill is a challenge complicated by the well head being 5,000 feet below water.
Jackson says efforts to use dispersant at the surface of the spill have been "moderately successful," but she's skeptical of a proposal to try to disperse oil at the well head.
Audience members vented their anger at BP's response and urged Jackson to hold the company to hire local contractors to assist in the cleanup.
After the meeting, Jackson expressed confidence BP is "working on this with all cylinders."

EDITORIAL / OP-ED / COMMENTARY / LETTERS

Drilling, Disaster, Denial (*New York Times*)

May 3, 2010 Monday
Late Edition - Final
Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; OP-ED COLUMNIST; Pg. 25
Drilling, Disaster, Denial
By PAUL KRUGMAN
It took futuristic technology to achieve one of the worst ecological disasters on record. Without such technology, after all, BP couldn't have drilled the Deepwater Horizon well in the first place. Yet for those who remember their environmental history, the catastrophe in the gulf has a strangely old-fashioned feel, reminiscent of the events that led to the first **Earth Day,** four decades ago.

And maybe, just maybe, the disaster will help reverse environmentalism's long political slide -- a slide largely caused by our very success in alleviating highly visible pollution. If so, there may be a small silver lining to a very dark cloud.

Environmentalism began as a response to pollution that everyone could see. The spill in the gulf recalls the 1969 blowout that coated the beaches of Santa Barbara in oil. But 1969 was also the year the Cuyahoga River, which flows through Cleveland, caught fire. Meanwhile, Lake Erie was widely declared "dead," its waters contaminated by algal blooms. And major U.S. cities -- especially, but by no means only, Los Angeles -- were often cloaked in thick, acrid smog.

It wasn't that hard, under the circumstances, to mobilize political support for action. The **Environmental Protection Agency** was founded, the **Clean Water Act** was enacted, and America began making headway against its most visible environmental problems. Air quality improved: smog alerts in Los Angeles, which used to have more than 100 a year, have become rare. Rivers stopped burning, and some became swimmable again. And Lake Erie has come back to life, in part thanks to a ban on laundry detergents containing phosphates.

Yet there was a downside to this success story.

For one thing, as visible pollution has diminished, so has public concern over environmental issues. According to a recent Gallup survey, "Americans are now less worried about a series of environmental problems than at any time in the past 20 years."

This decline in concern would be fine if visible pollution were all that mattered -- but it isn't, of course. In particular, greenhouse gases pose a greater threat than smog or burning rivers ever did. But it's hard to get the public focused on a form of pollution that's invisible, and whose effects unfold over decades rather than days.

Nor was a loss of public interest the only negative consequence of the decline in visible pollution. As the photogenic crises of the 1960s and 1970s faded from memory, conservatives began pushing back against environmental regulation.

Much of the pushback took the form of demands that environmental restrictions be weakened. But there was also an attempt to construct a narrative in which advocates of strong environmental protection were either extremists -- "eco-Nazis," according to Rush Limbaugh -- or effete liberal snobs trying to impose their aesthetic preferences on ordinary Americans. (I'm sorry to say that the long effort to block construction of a wind farm off Cape Cod -- which may finally be over thanks to the Obama administration -- played right into that caricature.)

And let's admit it: by and large, the anti-environmentalists have been winning the argument, at least as far as public opinion is concerned.

Then came the gulf disaster. Suddenly, environmental destruction was photogenic again.

For the most part, anti-environmentalists have been silent about the catastrophe. True, Mr. Limbaugh -- arguably the Republican Party's de facto leader -- promptly suggested that environmentalists might have blown up the rig to head off further offshore drilling. But that remark probably reflected desperation: Mr. Limbaugh knows that his narrative has just taken a big hit.

For the gulf blowout is a pointed reminder that the environment won't take care of itself, that unless carefully watched and regulated, modern technology and industry can all too easily inflict horrific damage on the planet.

Will America take heed? It depends a lot on leadership. In particular, President Obama needs to seize the moment; he needs to take on the "Drill, baby, drill" crowd, telling America that courting irreversible environmental disaster for the sake of a few barrels of oil, an amount that will hardly affect our dependence on imports, is a terrible bargain.

It's true that Mr. Obama isn't as well positioned to make this a teachable moment as he should be: just a month ago he announced a plan to open much of the Atlantic coast to oil exploration, a move that shocked many of his supporters and makes it hard for him to claim the moral high ground now.

But he needs to get beyond that. The catastrophe in the gulf offers an opportunity, a chance to recapture some of the spirit of the original **Earth Day.** And if that happens, some good may yet come of this ecological nightmare.

Pollution From Ships (*New York Times*)

May 3, 2010 Monday
The New York Times on the Web
Section ; Column 0; Editorial Desk; LETTER; Pg.
Pollution From Ships
To the Editor:
"In Antarctic Waters" (editorial, April 23) rightly praised the International Maritime Organization's recent decision to create an Emission Control Area around our coasts to clean up container ships, cruise liners, oil tankers and other oceangoing vessels.

These floating smokestacks are some of the dirtiest engines in our midst -- typically using fuel containing as much sulfur as 3,000 diesel trucks.

When the Emission Control Area goes into effect in 2015, ships within 200 miles of the United States coast will use fuel that has 98 percent less sulfur. Starting in 2016, these ships will also use pollution controls that will reduce smog-forming nitrogen oxides by 80 percent and cancer-causing particulate soot emissions by 85 percent.

Taking this step will substantially improve the health of communities up and down all United States coasts. Because air pollution travels with the wind, benefits will extend hundreds of miles inland, as far away as Nevada, Tennessee and the Grand Canyon.

The **Environmental Protection Agency** estimates that by 2020, this will eliminate as many as 14,000 premature deaths, relieve acute respiratory symptoms in nearly five million people, and save Americans up to $110 billion in health costs a year.

And that translates into a great investment in public health.

Richard Kassel New York, April 23, 2010

The writer, a senior attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council, was a member of the United States delegation to the International Maritime Organization at the March meeting that adopted the Emission Control Area.

URL: http://www.nytimes.com

NPR reports on the EPA: Ix-nay on ixon-nay (*PhillyBurbs*)

By: Commentary by J.D. Mullane phillyBurbs.com

Heard a report on NPR's "Weekend Edition" about the 40th anniversary of the Environmental Protection Agency and all the wonderful things the agency has done. Curiously, and almost comically, the report and studio folo-up discussion with the host and reporter did not mention this significant fact: President Richard Nixon created the agency by executive order. There was no mention of Nixon or his role in this huge expansion of gummit. NPR mentioned William Ruckelshaus, the first administrator, but did not say what prez admin he worked for, or why Nixon would have chosen him. Instead, NPR spoke of the "the government" creating the EPA.

Reminds me of how, when libs discuss Japanese-American prison camps during WWII, they never say, "The Roosevelt Administration ordered Americans of Japanese descent" into the camps. Sainted FDR a racist xenophobe? No, it's the disembodied "government" that imprisoned those innocent citizens.

This is the media version of Stalin erasing images of hated rivals from official state photographs.

The Tribune Democrat, Johnstown, PA (*Tribune Democrat*)

May 3, 2010
Marcellus Shale: Reigniting state's energy potential
Rep. Bill Shuster
— In 1859, the first commercially successful oil well was drilled in Pennsylvania and our state became the leading producer of oil in America for over a generation.

Now, Pennsylvania has the opportunity to recapture its past by becoming a leading producer of another energy source – shale gas.

The Marcellus Shale, which underlies a vast majority of the state, is the largest unconventional natural gas reserve in the world. There is enormous economic potential for Pennsylvania to take advantage of this reserve as new drilling techniques have

unlocked vast resources previously impossible to reach.

Natural gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale will generate $14 billion and has the potential to create 98,000 jobs in 2010 alone, and bring in $800 million in state and local tax revenue.

Natural gas is a key energy resource in our quest to become more energy independent. Just a few years ago, we thought domestic production of natural gas had peaked.

With the discovery of the enormous amount of shale gas underlying Pennsylvania and several other states, and the mastery of technology necessary to reach it, we have enough domestic gas reserves to last us more than a century, allowing us to produce, not import, a greater share of our energy needs.

Activity is picking up in Pennsylvania, with numerous companies beginning exploration and operations throughout the Marcellus.

They bring with them job potential not only for those directly involved with drilling operations, but for other industries as well.

From steel to rail, other industries are already responding to the needs of the growing gas industry. This will lead to more jobs and economic growth throughout the state.

It is important that we recognize the enormous potential shale gas holds for Pennsylvania and encourage this growing industry with smart policies that encourage economic development.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has been doing a good job of this so far, balancing the needs of development with the protection of our environment.

Natural gas drilling is effectively regulated at the state level by the Department of Environmental Protection. I believe the state continues to be in the best position to manage and regulate the industry.

Unfortunately, the Environmental Protection Agency is looking to take over at the federal level and may restrict drilling activities that would limit the potential growth and positive impact on the state.

The federal government is considering regulation of a critical drilling technique called hydraulic fracturing, which is necessary to recover gas from the Marcellus Shale.

Hydraulic fracturing has been used safely for 60 years; more than 1 million wells have been hydraulically fractured and there has never been a single documented case of groundwater contamination.

The practice is regulated effectively at the state level and there is simply no need for the

federal government to step in with unduly burdensome regulations.

The successful development of natural gas represents one of our best opportunities to reignite Pennsylvania as a center for innovation and economic growth.

In this sense, we stand at a crossroads that will define what our state will look like for generations to come.

Will we choose to develop the Marcellus Shale and give our children the chance to prosper? Or will we allow government, red tape and bureaucracy get in the way?

The choice is clear and the choice is development of natural gas.

U.S. Rep. Bill Shuster's 9th Congressional District includes parts of Cambria and Somerset counties.

Motorcycles: Loud pipes, real gripes (*Boston Globe*)

May 3, 2010 Monday
SECTION: EDITORIAL OPINION; Editorial; Pg. 10
Spring has sprung, and motorcycles are back. Back at sometimes ear-splitting volume.

Last year, the Boston City Council passed an ordinance threatening a $300 fine for any rider whose exhaust system lacks a stamp saying it complies with **EPA** noise standards. But some motorcyclists flout the ordinance. ``I can hear them from Mass. Ave. all the way to Arlington Street,'' complains state Representative Marty Walz, who lives on Commonwealth Avenue in the Back Bay. In warm weather, she receives frequent complaints about the problem from other residents.

On Newbury Street one recent afternoon, a biker with unbaffled after-market pipes created such a din merely by revving his engine at a traffic light that conversation on the sidewalk was impossible. Once the light changed, one could track his progress for blocks from the slowly receding roar. Several other motorcycles, though not quite that loud, were just as obviously out of compliance.

There's a simple solution here, one Walz is pushing for: better enforcement of the new ordinance. Police need to ticket motorcyclists who persist in causing noise pollution. When that happens, word will spread quickly among scofflaws. City Councilor Sal LaMattina, sponsor of the ordinance, says that when the police focused on offenders in the North End last year, it had a pronounced effect. Other areas of the city deserve the same peace.

MAY 3, 2010

The War on a Weed Killer (*Wall Street Journal*)

The EPA opens a re-re-evaulation of a safe chemical.

With the headlines full of oil spills and immigration, the Obama Administration's regulatory agenda is getting little attention. That's a mistake. Consider the Environmental Protection Agency's effort to revive an assault on atrazine, one of the oldest, most well-established agricultural chemicals on the market. Just this past week, the EPA held its third "re-evaluation" hearing on atrazine.

Atrazine is the nation's second-most common herbicide. For 50 years it has been the farm industry's primary crop protector. In the U.S., the weed killer is used in the production of 60% of corn, 75% of sorghum and 90% of sugarcane.

Since atrazine's debut in 1959, 10 Administrations have endorsed its use. The EPA in 2006 completed a 12-year review involving 6,000 studies and 80,000 public comments. In re-registering the product, the agency concluded the cumulative risks posed "no harm that would result to the general U.S. population, infant, children or other . . . consumers." The World Health Organization has found no health concerns.

None of this has stopped the most politicized environmental groups, which oppose both chemicals and the idea of industrial farming itself. Organizations such as the Natural Resources Defense Council have spent years ginning up claims that atrazine in groundwater causes cancer, birth defects and other maladies. Manufacturers such as Syngenta have been required to conduct millions of dollars worth of studies investigating these alarmist claims. EPA staff routinely review the studies in atrazine's favor.

But now the Obama Administration has begun to fill such agencies with hires who are either sympathetic to, or even hail from, these activist groups. Consider the EPA's new head for toxic substances, Stephen Owens. As director of Arizona's Department of Environmental Quality, he so aggressively imposed an activist's climate agenda that the state legislature voted to strip his department of authority to enact greenhouse gas rules.

In August, the NRDC and the Pesticide Action Network began a new campaign against atrazine. In October, the EPA announced it would begin a re-re-evaluation of atrazine with a series of scientific panel meeting, and those are underway. The goal seems to be to lay the groundwork to ban atrazine.

Among the environmental lobby's new lines of attack is that some U.S. water systems occasionally show "spikes" in the chemical. This ignores that the EPA's drinking water standard for atrazine—three parts per billion—has a built-in, 1,000-fold safety factor. It ignores EPA findings that atrazine isn't likely to be carcinogenic to humans.

Also re-energized by the EPA's sudden interest in atrazine is, you guessed it, the plaintiffs bar. Tort kingpin Stephen Tillery, joined by Baron & Budd, filed a class action in 2004 against atrazine makers in tort-friendly Madison County, Illinois, but they've struggled even there. The EPA's re-re-evaluation is already helping the lawyers sign up more water-district plaintiffs—Mr. Tillery has filed a new federal class action—and it surely will provide ammunition in court.

There is an agenda here far more ambitious than getting one chemical. The environmental lobby wants more farmland retired to "nature," and one way to do that is to make farming more expensive. The EPA notes that eliminating atrazine would cost $2 billion annually in lost crop yields and substituting more expensive herbicides. Some farmers would go out of business or ask the federal government for more subsidies.

The environmental lobby also figures that if it can take down atrazine with its long record of clean health, it can get the EPA to prohibit anything. Sounds plausible. Between this and its determination to regulate greenhouse gases, the Obama EPA is proving itself a regulatory fundamentalist, with scant regard for good science or economics.

AIR

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Posted on Mon, May. 3, 2010

GreenSpace: Gas mowers a menace, to Earth and us (*Philadelphia Enquirer*)

By Sandy Bauers
Inquirer GreenSpace Columnist
In the growing movement to replace chemical-guzzling lawns with greener domains - think rain gardens with native species - one environmental evil of the lawn is often overlooked: the gasoline mower.
These things, it turns out, are the smokestacks of garden equipment.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, mowing your lawn with a typical gasoline-powered mower for one sweaty hour unleashes as many hydrocarbons as driving the average car almost 200 miles.

Hydrocarbons are the chemicals that on hot summer days - when most people mow their lawns - contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone, or smog.

Environmental problems also contribute to health problems.

Smog can cause shortness of breath, wheezing and coughing. It can exacerbate chronic lung problems such as asthma and emphysema.

So mowers "are running typically at the absolute worst time for breathers," said Frank O'Donnell, president of Clear Air Watch, a national advocacy group.

The EPA has issued new mower rules, requiring tiny catalytic converters, but they don't take effect until next year.

There's an alternative, and I don't mean those little push mowers that my grandfather had, although they certainly have a fan base among super-ecos and fitness devotees.

I mean electric mowers. To be sure, the early versions had their limitations, chief among them the power cords.

O'Donnell has used one for 17 years. Reaching the edges of his lawn requires three extension cords, which means the project inevitably involves tangles and cursing. But he still loves it.

Electric mowers now have rechargeable batteries. Neuton and Black & Decker are two of the major companies that make the mowers. Typically they'll mow a third of an acre - the average size of the U.S. lawn - per charge.

In 2008, Neuton mowers were part of two industrial innovation museum exhibits in Chicago and Washington. But the mowers were already getting plenty of attention in more practical circles.

In recent years, dozens of regional air pollution agencies around the country have begun lawn mower trade-in programs, offering electrics at a reduced price if people fork over a working gas model.

They incorporate catchy little phrases urging residents to "mow down air pollution" or "get your grass off gas."

California's South Coast Air Quality Management District - recall the brown haze of Los Angeles - has been doing it for eight years, and last year's offering of 4,800 mowers sold out in four days.

This year, the agency is offering 9,380 mowers. Four models that normally would cost $349 to $499 sell for $100 to $165.

The agency and the state make up the $1.6 million difference.

When this year's program is over, 37,800 gas lawn mowers will have been ditched.

"To take thousands and thousands of these polluting machines out of people's backyards and send them to the scrap heap and replace them with zero-emission rechargeable battery mowers is a big step in the right direction," said spokesman Sam Atwood.

I don't know of any similar programs here.

If the pollution savings don't motivate you, here are some mowers with a high fun factor. Several companies offer robotic electric mowers that zip around an area defined by special markers, chomping on the greenery as they go.

One is even solar-powered.

Not everyone is instantly awed by electric mowers.

Carrie Edwards of Linwood, N.J., won a Neuton in a raffle sponsored by the regional Clean Air Council in 2008.

When the mower arrived and they opened the box, her husband and sons sniffed. They thought it looked girlie.

So at first, they stuck with gas. She figured it was a macho thing. "They just think they have to get out there with the stinky old lawn mower."

But Edwards didn't. "You just push a button. There's no cord-pulling, there's no gas, there's no smell," she said.

Neither was there spillage - one more environmental woe for gas lawn mowers.

Best of all, perhaps, she found the mower lessened another kind of pollution: noise.

"It's like a hum," Edwards said of the machine. "You don't disturb anyone."

How could this not catch on? Sure enough, the other day, Edwards noticed that one of her sons had cut the lawn. He'd used the battery-powered mower.

Contact staff writer Sandy Bauers at 215-854-5147 or sbauers@phillynews.com. Visit her blog at http://go.philly.com/

Texas facing tougher regulators, losing contracts (*Dallas Morning News*)

12:00 AM CDT on Monday, May 3, 2010

By CHRISTY HOPPE / The Dallas Morning News
choppe@dallasnews.com / The Dallas Morning News
Tom Benning contributed from Washington.
AUSTIN – Gov. Rick Perry certainly has taken his shots at Washington officials, labeling them power-grabbing, free-spending socialists. And now he says the feds are firing back.
The state lost the $2.6 billion contract for producing Army trucks. The Johnson Space Center is facing the cancellation of a $108 billion moon launch program. The Environmental Protection Agency is breathing down the state's smoggy neck, as are other federal regulators.

Some believe that Texas skated during the Bush administration, and now regulations are being enforced. Or that with huge deficits, some programs and contracts are going to be cut.

And then there are those, including the governor, who believe Texas is being punished for having dodged the worst of the recession and for taunting Washington's ear-marking ways.

"I tell people this president has put a target on Texas' back," Perry said last weekend, citing NASA cuts. "And I don't appreciate it."

One thing is certain: The way Texas does business is being challenged.

Since January, besides losing big federal contracts, Texas' pollution permit process has been rejected for failing to meet Clean Air Act requirements; the state is facing fines for chronically missing food stamp benefit deadlines, and thousands of teachers were deemed noncompliant with the No Child Left Behind law.

Envious of success?

"I don't know if anyone can group all these issues in one pile and say it's because Texas is a red state," said former U.S. Rep. Henry Bonilla. "But there is a concern among many in Texas that that is the case."

The San Antonio Republican, now a lobbyist, said he believes the Obama administration is giving more power to federal agencies. "They want us to be strangled by more regulations," he said.

It is part of a Washington culture that "looks down their noses" at self-sufficient states like Texas, he said.

"This resentment probably transcends all government agencies, and they just can't stand that we're a successful red state," Bonilla said.

Stanford University professor Jane Hickey, who headed Texas' liaison office in Washington for Democratic Gov. Ann Richards, attributed the run of harsh news to a collision between the business-friendly, laissez faire approach of Texas and an administration oriented toward public health and tough enforcement.

"The Obama administration disagrees with Rick Perry, and they have a different set of priorities in terms of what to do with federal money and what the government ought to be doing," Hickey said. "They think Rick Perry and his environmental people are wrong about a lot of things."

She said an equally important factor is that the Texas congressional delegation has lost its considerable clout.

In the 2003 midterm redistricting push by Perry, a new Republican-tilting map was drawn that helped topple six longtime Democratic incumbents.

When the Democrats took control of Congress in 2008, Texas' delegation was heavy with GOP members and had few seasoned Democrats in line to claim powerful chairmanships.

"It always helps when you have important friends," Hickey said. "Those members of Congress are just critical."

Democratic political operative Matt Angle agrees.

"Texas is struggling because it weakened its congressional delegation, taking away 100 years of seniority," Angle said. "When you have to decide how the pie is cut up, Texas doesn't have anyone holding the knife."

The state's problems are tied to Perry's policies, he said.

"The chickens are coming home to roost a little for Perry," Angle said. "And it's typical bluster and audacity by Rick Perry to try to make himself a victim when he is the perpetrator."

Perry pilloried Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison in the primary for bringing funding to the state, and now he's bemoaning losing contracts and blaming Obama, Angle said.

On federal regulations, he said, "You don't have disproportionate enforcement in Texas. You have disproportionate noncompliance in Texas."

Perry spokesman Mark Miner said Perry's policies have given the state one of the strongest economies in the nation. Instead of punishing Texas, the federal government should hold it up as an example, he said.

He pointed out that working with businesses has helped lower pollution in the state, and yet such policies as cap-and-trade pollution credits could cost Texas thousands of jobs.

"Signs clearly point to an administration that is implementing policies that will hurt the people of Texas," Miner said.

What the governor doesn't mention is that environmental monitoring in 2008 shows that Texas emitted more than 9.4 million pounds of cancer-causing chemicals into the air, the most of any state.

And while Perry has castigated runaway federal spending, Miner said the governor was calling on Congress to "spend their money wisely." If they are going to cut, it shouldn't be only programs "that appear to have disregard for one state," he said.

Army vehicles

U.S. Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Austin, particularly feels the sting. The Army is moving its vehicle manufacturing from Sealy in his district to Oshkosh, Wis.

McCaul, who won his seat in 2005 after the midterm redistricting fight, said the Army has turned a deaf ear to quality and efficiency issues, and in some part, he blames politics.

"It's unfortunate that in the middle of the worst recession in decades this administration is purposely killing thousands of jobs in Texas," McCaul said.

He also noted, "The chairman of Appropriations [David Obey] is from Wisconsin. This doesn't pass the smell test."

The fact is, compared to the years of having the president, majority leader and powerful chairmen from Texas, the state's "delegation really does not have the influence it used to have," said Hickey, who also worked in government relations for Public Strategies before joining academia.

But, she allowed, just because you're paranoid ...

"Do I think it's possible that [Chief of Staff] Rahm Emanuel has a long memory? Uh-huh. And that [House Speaker] Nancy Pelosi is a serious political operative? Oh yeah," said Hickey.

Staff writer Tom Benning contributed from Washington.

A cut above (*News Journal*)

Cleaner models challenge the polluting gas mower

BY AARON NATHANS • THE NEWS JOURNAL • MAY 3, 2010

You’ve been recycling for years, switched out your lightbulbs and even brought a small fuel-efficient car.

But if you've still got that old gas-powered mower in the garage, there's one more thing you can do for the environment: Replace it.

Mowers are among the worst household polluters, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Using an older model gas-powered lawnmower for one hour emits as much pollution as driving a sedan from Washington to Boston, said Bill Becker, executive director of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies.

The EPA estimates there are 44 million gasoline-powered mowers in the country. But the topic of pollution rarely comes up when customers come in the store, said Chris Babbitt, general manager of Burke Equipment Co., in Newark.

"It's usually other features they're more interested in," said Babbitt, referring to performance, size, ease of operation and safety. "Pricing's always a concern," he added.

Modern lawn equipment is usually more energy-efficient than earlier models, experts say. The EPA is helping: Standards for mowers that will go into effect next year set a 35 percent emissions reduction standard.

For those who want to go above and beyond, there are a few lines of cordless, battery-powered electric lawn equipment. Mowers are just the start: There are also battery-powered hedge trimmers, leaf blowers, even battery-powered chainsaws.

But "you do sacrifice power, there's no doubt about it," Babbitt said. A cordless electric mower might be good for a homeowner with less than an acre, who could finish cutting before the battery dies, he said.

The version with the cord provides more power, but "people don't like to be tethered. That's the bottom line," Babbitt said.

Neuton brand electric mowers, made by DR Power, sell for $400 and $500 at Suburban Lawn & Equipment in Newport. A "quality" gas mower sells for $350 to $400, said Grey Petruccelli, a member of the family that owns the store.

According to company literature, the Neuton's battery fully recharges in 12 hours, at the cost of 10 cents, and delivers an hour of mowing charge.

There's also the cordless electric Toro e-Cycler, which is listed on that company's Web page for $419.

Worx also makes some nice, affordable, battery powered hand-held lawn equipment, Petruccelli said.

For those with larger lawns to tend and more money to spend, there's an all-electric riding lawnmower called the Zeon, from Hustler Turf Equipment. It costs about $6,500, compared to a $4,000 gas-powered model, Petruccelli said. Its battery provides a charge of about 80 minutes.

"It sounds like a golf cart when you're riding it," Petruccelli said.

Environmental groups and local clean air agencies are working to motivate people to buy environmentally friendly lawn equipment. They're spurred, in part, by federal air quality standards, which many counties are out of compliance with.

Exchange programs are planned for this spring in Denver and Sacramento, Calif., among many other spots.

Last year, Together Green and Audubon Maryland-DC, as well as a Baltimore-area neighborhood association, sponsored "Cash for Lawn Guzzlers." It allowed people to turn in their gas mowers for $110 coupons toward a Neuton.

Delaware's Sustainable Energy Utility, which has run appliance rebate programs and encouraged other forms of energy efficiency, has no such offerings at this time, a spokeswoman said.

Of course, there's nothing more environmentally friendly than a manual mower, said Philip Socorso, manager of Foulk Lawn & Equipment in Wilmington.

But "there are very few good ones out there," he said. There's no easy way to sharpen the blades, except on a few high-end ones that are self-sharpening, he said.

Modern gas-powered models use less fuel, Petruccelli said. Honda's new lawnmower engines are "very green," he said, but he added that they have their limits. "You're still talking about a gas-powered machine."

Petruccelli noted that a New Jersey electric utility recently had a promotion in which the utility would credit ratepayers up to $250 for buying an electric lawnmower.

In Delaware, Suburban Lawn & Equipment did a lot of business on this promotion, he said.

"If they could get something like that done over here, that would be pretty nice," Petruccelli said.

AT A GLANCE: FEDERAL ACTIONS IN TEXAS (*Dallas Morning News*)

12:00 AM CDT on Monday, May 3, 2010
This year, Texas has faced the following federal actions:

• In January, the Environmental Protection Agency declared more Texans breathe dirty air than previously believed, triggering requirements to cut pollution.

• In March, the EPA disapproved of the state's permitting program for small and midsize businesses that emit pollution, saying it did not meet requirements of the Clean Air Act.

• This summer, the EPA is expected also to reject the state's flexible permits for big industrial plants.

• The head of the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service reiterated that Texas faces a $173 million fine for delays in missed deadlines in processing food stamp benefits.

• The Department of Education rejected the state test given to license new elementary school teachers, saying it failed No Child Left Behind standards. Thousands of teachers will have to take new competency tests.

• President Barack Obama announced he intends to cancel the $108 billion Constellation program at the Johnson Space Center in Houston.

• The Department of Defense completed its evaluation and decided to transfer the longtime contract for Army truck production from Sealy, Texas, to Oshkosh, Wis. The contract is worth $2.6 billion and is credited with 10,000 direct and indirect jobs.

EPA ramps up air quality monitoring for oil spill (*Associated Press*)

Story also appeared: *The State*

By JOHN FLESHER (AP)

NEW ORLEANS — The Environmental Protection Agency says it's stepping up air quality monitoring on the Gulf Coast.

There are concerns that vapors from the oil and controlled fires might cause health problems for people living in the region. An oil smell could cause headaches or nausea, but EPA spokesman Dave Bary said Saturday there have been no confirmed reports of such problems.

State health agencies are advising people having such symptoms to stay indoors and ventilate their homes with air conditioning.

Crude oil gives off gaseous vapors. But Jonathan Ward, an environmental toxicology professor at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, says the vapors likely will be mostly dispersed by brisk sea breezes by the time they reach shore.

AWARDS

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United States Of America : Kohl's bags inaugural Gold Edison Green Award (*Fibre2fashion.com)*

May 3, 2010

Kohl's Department Stores announced that the company received the inaugural Gold Edison Green Award at the annual Edison Awards Gala held last night in New York City. The Edison Awards, associated with the Thomas Edison Papers at Rutgers University, symbolize the persistence and excellence personified by Thomas Alva Edison. Kohl's receipt of the Edison Green Award recognizes the company's commitment to developing sustainable solutions and green business models in an effort to reduce the community's carbon footprint.

"Kohl's is honored to be recognized by its peers for our ongoing efforts to improve our shared environment," said Ken Bonning, Kohl's executive vice president of store planning and logistics. "By engaging associates, partners and members of the

community, Kohl's continues to operate our business with a commitment to environmental responsibility. From partnering in green building pilot programs to supporting renewable energy initiatives, we're focused on long-term solutions that help protect the Earth's resources."

The Edison Awards, a peer-review honor, are voted on by roughly 2,000 members of the not-for-profit Marketing Executives Networking Group (MENG), America's top executives and academics. Edison Awards are judged on marketplace innovation, marketplace success, technological innovation, market structure innovation, societal impact and design innovation. Some of Kohl's initiatives that support these categories include:

•Industry-leading energy management and green building programs: A 2010 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year, Kohl's has more than 450 ENERGY STAR-labeled buildings and more than 85 solar locations nationwide. Kohl's is also a leader in the construction and design of green buildings and has worked closely with the U.S. Green Building Council to LEED-certify more than 60 locations to date. Characteristics of LEED-certified Kohl's stores include water-efficient landscaping, carefully managed construction waste, use of recycled and regionally sourced building materials and central energy management systems.
• Carbon neutral: Kohl's voluntarily discloses emissions to the Carbon Disclosure Project and to the Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Leaders program. The company has committed to reaching net zero carbon dioxide emissions by the end of this year and will continue to set ambitious goals.
• Green Power leadership: A 2009 Green Power Partner of the Year, Kohl's currently ranks number one among retailers and second overall on EPA's quarterly rankings of top green power purchasers in EPA's Green Power Partnership. Kohl's purchases renewable energy credits in the areas of wind, solar and biomass generation.
• Waste stream reduction: Kohl's has a longstanding recycling program, and in 2009, recycled more than 130,000 tons of plastic, cardboard and hangers. Kohl's also works closely with internal and external partners to reduce the amount of waste throughout its operations and supply chain.
• **Smart Shipping:** Kohl's contract carriers are required to be members of EPA's SmartWay Transport Partnership, which stresses fuel efficiency and emissions-reduction strategies. A 2009 SmartWay Shipper Excellence Awards winner, Kohl's transports more than 40 percent of inbound merchandise using rail and aims to ensure, whenever possible, that trucks are filled on trips both to and from distribution centers.
• Greener fuel alternatives: From June 2009 through January 2010, more than one million miles of shipments to Kohl's stores from distribution centers were moved using bio-diesel fuel made from renewable sources. In addition, since October 2009, all trucks moving goods from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are clean trucks fueled using liquefied natural gas.
• **Encouraging environmental values:** As part of this effort, Kohl's serves as a sustainability mentor for local businesses and implements programs to educate

associates about environmental responsibility. Throughout April, Kohl's associates across the country volunteered in a green activity for a youth-focused nonprofit agency as part of the company's first-ever national Kohl's Volunteers Go Green Event (NVGG). Through this initiative, Kohl's plans to donate $2 million in grants to community organizations nationwide.

CLIMATE CHANGE / GLOBAL WARMING

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Cuccinelli draws praise, derision (*Richmond Times Dispatch*)

MARK GORMUS/TIMES-DISPATCH

"If there was a four-year period during my adult lifetime to be attorney general, this is the one I'd pick." - Ken Cuccinelli

By Jim Nolan
Published: May 3, 2010
Updated: May 3, 2010 12:19 AM

Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli spent his first 100 days in office trying to roll back nondiscrimination policy and obstruct meaningful reform on issues such as health care and environmental protection.

To Cuccinelli and his supporters, however, the conservative Republican's election as the state's top lawyer came just in time -- to head off an unconstitutional power grab by the federal government that tramples states' rights and threatens to cost Virginia's economy millions.

"If there was a four-year period during my adult lifetime to be attorney general, this is the one I'd pick, because of the constitutional conflict that needs to be resolved now," Cuccinelli said in an interview, taking stock of his first months on the job.

"It is the balance between states and federal power and how much absolute control the federal government is going to be able to exercise under our constitutional system."

Challenging the federal government has defined the beginning of Cuccinelli's tenure. It has drawn praise and derision on the local and national stages, galvanizing liberal Democrats and winning friends among the insurgent tea party movement.

Virginia's lawsuits challenging health-care reform and the Environmental Protection Agency's finding that global warming poses a threat to people, and his recommendation that the state's public colleges and universities remove from their anti-discrimination

policies protections for gays, have caused him to be lampooned on Comedy Central as a backward thinker and courted on Fox News as a conservative darling.

"He's trying to build political power by publicly making Virginia hostile to the government of the United States," said former state Del. Steve Shannon, a Fairfax County Democrat who was soundly defeated by Cuccinelli last November in the election for attorney general.

"At 100 days, he's proven to be reckless, uninterested in good government and seems to be running for president of Virginia's far right. Other than that, what's not to like?"

Cuccinelli said he is not about to change.

"Whenever government grows, citizens' liberty decreases," he says, making a point to blame Republicans' spending in the first part of the decade for the increase and expansion of the federal government.

"The Democrats have continued that, put it on steroids but added a new element. And that is . . . they don't care what the constitutional boundaries are," Cuccinelli added.

"I'm a strong believer in saying what you mean and meaning what you say and then doing it. I don't think anybody would say they're surprised by anything we've done."

Victoria Cobb, president of the Family Foundation of Virginia, said social conservatives appear satisfied with Cuccinelli's start. They expected an aggressive attorney general, and they appear to have gotten one.

"Most significantly, social conservatives are pleased to see him lead the way for the commonwealth to block an encroaching federal government," Cobb said. "Obamacare is not an acceptable solution to reforming health care."

Cuccinelli said the high-profile lawsuits have overshadowed much of the work being done in the attorney general's office. He cited recent work on electricity-rate adjustments and the efforts of the Medicaid fraud unit. He called the unit the best of its kind in the country and said he will expand it.

But the 41-year-old lawyer and former state senator from Fairfax County did not downplay the significance of the high-profile litigation on the EPA and health care. He said critics have misunderstood the reason for the state taking legal action.

"In both cases probably the single most substantial misconception is that we're suing because we don't like the policies," Cuccinelli said.

"Now, it may well be, and it is the case that if we step aside from the suits, that I don't like the policies included here. But we aren't suing over policies we don't like," Cuccinelli added.

"We're suing because the health-care bill is unconstitutional. We're suing because the EPA did not go through anything near a proper process, or consider appropriate information in making a determination in establishing a regulation that is so sweeping and broad it dwarfs cap and trade in terms of economic impact," he added.

"There's no question the economic destruction the regulations they're talking about would be massive. And Virginia is not unique in the certainty of its suffering or its consequences."

But others see the lawsuits as frivolous and not in the best interests of Virginians -- exercises that may, in the long run, be more beneficial to Cuccinelli's political future than to the commonwealth.

"Traditionally those who have trumpeted states' rights have done so in an effort to restrict human freedoms," said state Sen. A. Donald McEachin, D-Henrico.

McEachin said the rationale was applied to the Civil War to justify slavery, to Jim Crow laws that prevented blacks from being able to vote, and to the state's policy of Massive Resistance to the desegregation of public schools.

"Now it's being done to restrict them from getting health insurance," he said, saying Cuccinelli had "politicized" the attorney general's office.

Neither Cuccinelli nor his supporters have doubts about the road they are traveling.

His rising prominence on the state and national stage has spurred talk that he could achieve success beyond the office he currently occupies. Asked whether he is interested in being governor, Cuccinelli replied:

"Not per se. I wouldn't rule it out one of these days, but it's not what I am doing now," he said.

"I think some people have arrived in this office on Day One running for governor. I'm not. My operating assumption right now is re-election to this office. And that's how we're conducting ourselves. It's not an absolute, but that's the operating assumption."

Over the last week, Cuccinelli's campaign organization sent out its first post-election fundraising letter to donors asking for support to "Challenge Obamacare."

"The Democrats have already activated their campaign to try to defeat me and marginalize my efforts," the letter states. " . . . Your funds will go right to the front lines to battle against the attacks that are already being hurled my way."

The fundraising appeal was followed by a five-page news release summarizing the attorney general's accomplishments in the first 100 days.

"It is notable that the attorney general did not list among his accomplishments his ill-advised letter advising university presidents to rescind their policies protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination," said Kent Willis, director of the Virginia chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union.

"He was clearly wrong on both the law and policy in that instance, and even elicited a rebuke from the governor. It might be more instructive if the AG also made a list of his significant missteps during his first 100 days."

But Noah Walls, political director of Cuccinelli's campaign, said the campaign has received more calls in the months since Cuccinelli took office than it did in his yearlong campaign to get the job.

"There's a lot of popular support out there for what Ken is doing," Walls said.

Contact Jim Nolan at (804) 649-6061 or jnolan@timesdispatch.com .

Tougher ozone standards mean cleaner air for all (*Asheville's Citizen Times*)

MAY 3, 2010

Far too often, we take the air we breathe for granted. But this spring, many of us have been hacking and sneezing through with a bumper crop of pollen. That may just nature's way of telling us we're not in charge of the environment. But this spring has also brought days that have been hard on those with asthma and emphysema when ozone levels have hit unsafe levels. That's something that people can do something about, cleaning up manmade pollutants in the air.

The American Lung Association reported last week that six in 10 Americans are living in places where the air often reaches dangerous levels of ozone pollution. That would include most residents of Western North Carolina where Graham, Haywood and Yancey counties got failing grades for high ozone days from 2006-08. Buncombe County got a C in the report with five code orange days during that period.

That only shows that we have a ways to go with cutting down on emissions in our cars and using less electricity from the power plants that burn coal, directly affecting our air quality.

What the report didn't show, using data only through 2008, was that last year marked North Carolina's lowest ozone levels since monitoring began in the 1970s, due to a cooler and rainy summer and less emissions due to a faltering economy.

We are making progress, according to Paul Muller, regional supervisor for the NC Division of Air Quality. “The air is definitely cleaner now than it was in the 1990s,” he said.

That’s due in large part to landmark legislation like the NC Clean Smokestacks Act that got power companies to clean up their act, cutting down on emissions from the coal-fired plants that produce the bulk of our electricity. Our cars and trucks have grown more efficient as well, with less pollutants coming out of the tailpipes whether in Charlotte or Atlanta, which can drift up over our mountains, choking some of our more vulnerable citizens and clouding the majestic vistas that draw visitors to our area.

But you can still expect more code orange days in the years to come with the Environmental Protection Agency tightening up the standards for acceptable amounts of ozone in the air. The federal agency could issue new standards by the end of this summer, which will take effect for the ozone season starting in April 2011.

For now, Western North Carolina is largely in compliance with the existing standard of 75 parts per billion. The EPA may lower that standard to between 60-70 parts per billion, a level deemed safer by health researchers. That tougher standard could mean that monitors along ridgetops, where ozone can reach higher amounts than in valleys, would not be in compliance, potentially placing the whole Asheville metropolitan area in nonattainment.

Regions that aren’t in compliance with that air quality standard would face more restrictions and regulations on how large power plants or highway projects might be built in the future.

While we haven’t experienced a code red day in Western North Carolina when the air is deemed unhealthy for everyone, we’ve had our share of code orange days.

With our mini heat wave back in April with unseasonable highs in the ‘80s, the Bent Creek valley monitor recorded unhealthy levels of ozone, while Fryingpan Mountain posted three days in the orange.

Stiffer standards from the EPA can help make energy efficiency more attractive and alternative vehicles more affordable and commonplace. Moving in that direction, the Clean Car Coalition, headed by Bill Eaker at the Land of Sky Regional Council, has reached a milestone, documenting 400 alternative fuel vehicles in the Asheville area.

That includes vehicles running on propane, compressed natural gas, electricity and biodiesel, but not the many hybrids, which use gasoline and electricity. With that goal reached, Asheville can qualify as a Clean City in name at least, one of 85 communities around the nation committed to finding alternative fuel vehicles and less emissions.

Automakers plan to have all-electric affordable cars in showrooms in the next year or so. Land of Sky Regional Council is looking at building public sites for recharging electric cars at area colleges and universities, shopping centers, and perhaps even rest areas on the interstates.

We'll have to see what standards the EPA does put in place, but let's hope any new guidelines only motivate both public officials and private consumers to save money with better cars, and use less energy in homes, businesses and our public buildings. The real benefit would be less reliance on foreign oil sources and better air for all to breathe.

ENERGY
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The Home Depot Field Report (*In-Store Marketing Institute*)

(May 3, 2010)
By Tim Binder
The Home Depot tapped into Earth Day on April 22 by using various tactics to boost its Eco Options sustainability program, which identifies national-brand and private-label products as better for the environment.

The green-thinking home improvement chain (see "The Home Depot Field Report: April 6, 2010" in Related Articles) is using upfront mobile floorstands labeled "Eco Centers" to distribute bilingual catalogs titled *The Green Guide*, as well as to give away samples of eco-friendly products. (See Image at right.)

The catalog highlights 10 ways to "save money, energy and water" by purchasing and using products carrying the Eco Options logo, including items qualified by the federal Energy Star and WaterSense programs. (Energy Star, created in 1992, is an Environmental Protection Agency/Department of Energy effort; WaterSense, launched in 2006, also is backed by the EPA.) For each of the 10 suggestions, the retailer compares the cost of purchasing related products with the estimated yearly savings consumers can derive from their use.

The floorstands also stock free exclusive water-saving faucet aerators from Neoperl and offer free samples of Clorox Co.'s GreenWorks all-natural laundry detergent. Exclusive take-ones promote GreenWorks and the Eco Options program. (See Images at right.)

Eco Options (see "Home Depot Greens Up ..." in Related Articles) is also promoted through numerous other P-O-P materials, among them violators, posters, shelf signs and even the protective canopies over vegetable plants. Some shelf signs also label energy-saving products that are eligible for tax credits. Among manufacturer-specific activity, US GreenFiber's natural insulation is stocked on dedicated endcaps with promotional take-ones. (See Images at right.)

Additionally, Home Depot devoted a full-page in its April 18 circular to Eco Options, which currently encompasses 3,600 SKUs. The page also plugged the chain's Garden Club (See "Marketing at The Home Depot" in Related Articles.) Stanchions signs supported. (See Image at right.)

Promotional Activity

Home Depot staged spring versions of "Black Friday" in March and April to mark the beginning of the home improvement channel's busiest season. Beginning on March 18 in warmer southern and western states, the retailer offered four-day "door buster deals" in such product categories as live goods, lawn care, outdoor power, eco-friendly gardening, and patio and grill. Stores in northern states staged the promotion in subsequent weeks. Radio spots and circular features supported, declaring "Black Friday is Back." (See Image at right.)

"Spring is our Christmas," executive vice president-merchandising Craig Menear said in a release. "Traffic in our stores is at its highest during the spring season as customers look to take on outdoor projects to improve the appearance of their homes."

Merchandising

During the 2009 recession, discretionary spending went away as consumers focused on the essentials, Menear said during a March presentation at the Citi 2010 Retail Conference in New York. Accordingly, Home Depot increased its focus on cleaning products, which were a growth category last year. "Shame on us for not being in 'cleaning' before," said chief financial officer Carol Tome at the conference.

Financial Performance

Sales in fiscal 2009 (ended Jan. 31) broke down as follows, according to the company's latest 10-K:

plumbing, electrical and kitchen, 29.8%;
hardware and seasonal, 29.1%;
building materials, lumber and millwork, 21.9%; and

paint and flooring, 19.2%.

Overall sales dropped 7.2% to $66.2 billion during the year

The company has begun to increase the number of store-level employees for the first time in four years after posting better-than-expected sales results in fourth-quarter 2009, according to an April report from Bloomberg News. "We have already added to our payroll this year," chief executive officer Frank Blake told Bloomberg. "As you have positive transaction growth, you need more associates to handle that in the stores. We are going to lean into our skis a little bit."

Marketing Expenditures

Gross advertising expenses in 2009 were $897.0 million, down 10% from the prior year, according to the 10-K. Co-op advertising allowances declined 2.0% to $105.0 million.

Store Growth

The Home Depot, Atlanta, operates 1,976 stores in the U.S., including eight in Puerto Rico, one in Guam and one in the Virgin Islands.

Published: May 2010

GRANTS
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May 03, 2010 2:00 AM

EPA offers grant funds for cleanup of brownfield sites (*Seacoast Online)*

EXETER — The Rockingham Economic Development Corporation received a revolving loan fund grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. The $1 million award comes through the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2001, through which the EPA helps states and communities nationwide clean up and revitalize brownfield sites.

The EPA estimates there are more than 450,000 brownfield sites in the country.

In New Hampshire, such sites are contaminated properties in town and village centers originating from early industrial uses, including textile, woolen and wooden product manufacturing mills in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Brownfield sites are often underutilized or abandoned, taking a significant economic, environmental and social toll

on local communities. The grant's purpose is to restore the sites to productive use and revitalize the communities.

The revolving loan fund grant provides low interest loans to public and private borrowers for brownfield site cleanups. REDC will work with the EPA and N.H. Department of Environmental Services to administer funds for cleanups. For information, call REDC at 772-2655 or visit www.redc.com.

HAZARDOUS WASTE

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State breaks silence on 'Easterly's Pile' (*Gary Post Tribune*)

May 3, 2010
BY GITTE LAASBY, (219) 648-2183

BURNS HARBOR -- For the first time in five months, state officials are breaking their silence about waste piles dumped at ArcelorMittal Burns Harbor named after the state's top environmental official.

In November, the Post-Tribune broke the story about the waste, which ArcelorMittal officials have named "Easterly's Pile" after Indiana Department of Environmental Management Commissioner Tom Easterly. He was the top environmental official at ArcelorMittal's predecessor, Bethlehem Steel, from 1994 to 2000.

Easterly has declined to comment.

Gov. Mitch Daniels revealed Friday he has inquired about the waste.

"I've been asking a lot of questions and I'm trying to make certain this thing is appropriate. I know we've displeased you guys mightily on some of these things," he told the Post-Tribune editorial board.

Also Friday, IDEM officials told the Post-Tribune that the waste piles near Lake Michigan existed long before Easterly's tenure at Bethlehem Steel.

"They've been conducting similar activity in this area since the early 1980s, prior to Tom Easterly's arrival at the Burns Harbor facility in September 1994," IDEM spokeswoman Amy Hartsock said in an e-mail to the Post-Tribune.

It's the first time IDEM officials made any indication about whether Easterly had a connection to the waste.

Bethlehem Steel recycled various wastes in its sinter plant in the mid-1980s. But under Easterly's watch, the company reported to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1999 that although it had stopped recycling 14 years earlier, it still had treatment plant sludge and other waste sitting in the open.

In its latest inspection report, IDEM indicated it is not taking enforcement action against ArcelorMittal because the company has periodically recycled some waste and has applied for a landfill permit to dispose of the waste. The company is allowed to stockpile waste for recycling for up to six months.

It isn't clear exactly how much of the waste in Easterly's pile in the northeast corner of the property is recycled.

IDEM said company records indicate all basic oxygen furnace sludge is recycled, but the sinter plant has been shut down since December.

Critics, including Valparaiso lawyer Kim Ferraro of the Legal Environmental Aid Foundation of Indiana, have repeatedly asked for an explanation of Easterly's involvement and called on IDEM to sample and test the waste to see how toxic it is rather than relying on test results that Bethlehem Steel submitted to the EPA in 1999. At the time, EPA said the waste met screening standards and that no further action was necessary. ArcelorMittal has been, and is still, adding more waste.

IDEM's Hartsock said the company uses a depressed 27-acre area in the northeast, known as the basic oxygen farm, to mix and dry waste materials to be recycled in the sinter plant. The waste is pushed up the sides of the depression and piled along the rim until transported to the sinter plant.

"Based on information we have reviewed to date, and observations made by staff during on-site inspections, there is no indication that any of these materials show characteristics of hazardous waste," IDEM's Hartsock said in an e-mail.

Even if the waste were hazardous, it would be exempt from federal hazardous waste regulation because it comes from certain processes involving ores, IDEM said. The law was intended to combat open dumping while encouraging recycling.

"It doesn't diminish the fact that it's been sitting there for more than six months and has not been recycled. Nothing they say is going to change that," Ferraro said. "The big deal is pretty obvious. With respect to ... Easterly's Pile next to Lake Michigan, it'd be important regardless of these intricate, complicated regulations, that the lake is being protected. At some point, could we just do the right thing and get an understanding of what's out there? Test the ground, test the water, test the waste and do the right thing because this is next to Lake Michigan."

Asked if IDEM should have handled the matter differently, Gov. Daniels answered hesitantly.

"I don't know, honestly. I'm trying to learn more about this," he said. "Frankly, it's no one ... EPA has not recognized any issue out there as far as I know."

EPA mainly has jurisdiction over hazardous waste. Unless the waste is open dumped, other kinds of waste are the state's responsibility.

SUPERFUND

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South Buncombe residents still fight for CTS plant cleanup (*Ashville Citizen Times*)

EPA, state studies track contaminants
By Nanci Bompey • May 3, 2010

SKYLAND — Some residents living near the old CTS of Asheville site on Mills Gap Road have been pushing federal officials to clean up contamination at the site for decades.

Patricia Pinner has only been at it for six months, but she's no less adamant.

Pinner, who lives within a mile of the site on Chapel Hill Church Road, is pushing to get 14 homes in her neighborhood connected to municipal water. She's gone to county commission and City Council meetings and even has a You Tube video pushing her cause.

“We went into this very naively thinking this would be such a no-brainer,” said Pinner, whose well has not tested positive for contamination although ones near her have. “We lived here for 10 years and never knew the extent of the contamination.”

As residents like Pinner continue to push local, state and federal officials for help and answers about the CTS site, agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency and the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources continue to try to determine the
extent of the contamination.

The EPA started an attribution study in February to determine how contamination is flowing. The state is working with CTS to install monitoring wells to track the contamination.

The two studies will help the agencies determine “where the contamination from the site is going and based on that at some point a decision will be made by the EPA to rank the site on the National Priorities List or if it doesn't rank on the NPL, it falls to the state to work with CTS to address the site,” said Jack Butler, section chief of the Superfund

Section of the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Listing of the site on the NPL would make it eligible for federal funding for cleanup activities. An EPA spokeswoman said the attribution study could take until the end of the summer to complete but did not know when the NPL determination would be completed.

In the meantime, contamination showed up in seven wells near the site. The EPA has placed residents on bottled water but said the pollutants found did not match up with those that have been detected previously at the CTS site.

“We are going to do resampling just to make sure, but this is not something that had previously been seen,” said EPA spokeswoman Dawn Harris-Young.

A public health assessment performed by the state is also going through final revisions to address
comments to a draft report released in January and look at new data, including additional private well sampling. The final assessment is expected to be completed in the next three-six weeks, according to Sandy Mort, health assessor with the N.C. Division of Public Health.

Mort said it is unlikely the findings of the EPA removes tanks in Rutland (*MyWebTimes.com*)

05/02/2010, 7:42 pm Derek Barichello, derekb@mywebtimes.com, 815-673-6372
Construction to rid the village of Rutland of a potential hazard
concludedlast week.

With funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, old gas
tanks were removed at the former gas station on the corner of Route 251
and Market Street. The station has been closed since the 1970s,
according to Village President Dan Krischel.

This project was one of 27 selected across the state by the Environmental Protection Agency.

"The gas station was closed when the owners passed away," Krischel said. "Then it sat there. Nobody wanted to buy the property because of the potential hazard and the cost of removing the tanks."

Krischel said La Salle County owns the property but the municipality plans to purchase it.

He said the cost of the project depends on whether soil samples show up contaminated.

"We'll know in the next coming weeks if that's the case," Krischel said. "Right now, we're trying to rid the property of any hazard, so it can be utilized."

TOXICS

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May 3, 2010

Pike Builders hold second EPA Lead Seminar (*Pocono News*)

MILFORD - The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule affects contractors, property managers, and others who disturb more than 6 square feet of interior or 20 square feet of exterior known or presumed lead-based paint. This rule went into effect on April 22.

This strict new rule covers any work performed for pay, including painting, and remodeling that results in the disturbance of painted surfaces in pre-1978 homes and child occupied facilities. Examples include removal or modification of painted components such as doors; repairing a painted surface or preparing it for repainting by sanding, scraping or by performing any action that may generate paint dust, removal of walls, ceilings and other structures; replastering, re-plumbing; weatherization work and all window replacements. This class is ½ day lecture with ½ day hands on work.

The Pike County Builders Association (PCBA) will sponsor a one-day EPA Certification Course on May 8th at the Hampton Inn in Matamoras, PA from 8:00am – 5:00pm. The class will include a light breakfast and lunch. The cost is $200.00 for a PCBA member and $240.00 for a non-member. The training class taught by EnviroEd, LLC partnering with the National Center for Healthy Housing is an EPA-accredited training provider. EnviroEd, LLC is a proud member of the Pennsylvania Builders Association in Harrisburg.

The class size is limited, call the PCBA office at 570-296-5589 or email pcba@ptd.net.

EPA Releases New Chemical Toxicity Database (*Info Today*)

May 3, 2010

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released a new database, called ToxRefDB (**http://epa.gov/ncct/toxrefdb/**), which allows scientists and the interested public to search and download thousands of toxicity testing results on hundreds of chemicals. ToxRefDB captures 30 years and $2 billion of testing results.

ToxRefDB provides detailed chemical toxicity data in an accessible format. It is a part of ACToR (Aggregated Computational Toxicology Resource), an online data warehouse that collects data from about 500 public sources on tens of thousands of environmentally relevant chemicals, including several hundred in ToxRefDB. Those interested in chemical toxicity can query a specific chemical and find all available public hazard, exposure, and risk-assessment data, as well as previously unpublished studies related to cancer, reproductive, and developmental toxicity.

ToxRefDB connects to an EPA chemical screening tool called ToxCast. ToxCast is a multi-year, multi-million dollar effort that uses advanced science tools to help understand biological processes impacted by chemicals that may lead to adverse health effects. ToxCast currently includes 500 fast, automated chemical screening tests that have assessed more than 300 environmental chemicals. ToxRefDB, along with ACToR, allows users to take advantage of this linkage to find and download these results.

ToxRefDB contains toxicity information that forms the basis for pesticide risk assessments when combined with other sources of information, such as those on exposure and metabolism.

More information on the database is available at **http://actor.epa.gov/toxrefdb**.

WATER

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More progress on the Hudson (*Albany Times Union*)

First published: Monday, May 3, 2010
The tide has shifted, all right, in the ever-delicate political equation that surrounds the costly and arduous dredging of PCBs from the Hudson River.

For several years, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency faced resistance from the very people along the Hudson who stand to gain the most from a river free of pollution and instead full of economic and recreational possibilities. In some of the towns, notably Waterford and Halfmoon, that rely upon the river for their drinking water, there was an uneasy, altogether understandable concern that dredging the river might, at least over the short term, endanger their water supply. Who would pay, town officials demanded to know, for an alternate source of drinking water?

Now comes the answer: The EPA itself, the entity most determined of all to rid the river of PCBs left there long ago by General Electric Co.

That should mean new allies for the EPA, namely Waterford Supervisor Jack Lawler and Halfmoon Supervisor Mindy Wormuth. The EPA decision to pay for the temporary inconvenience of having to get drinking water from Troy, a riverfront city that oddly enough gets its water elsewhere, represents money saved for two towns that could use it. The EPA will be paying a $600,000 annual water bill for Waterford and one of between $100,000 and $200,000 a year for Halfmoon.

At the very least, the EPA shouldn't have to think of local officials and the constituencies they represent as disaffected ones. The people counting up their savings and declaring victory can reassess dredging accordingly. They don't have to pay for what's rightfully someone else's bill. Ms. Wormuth notes that it was the EPA, specifically regional administrator Judith Enck, that took the initiative here.

The EPA has new challenges now, notably an examination of why PCB levels are higher than even it had anticipated around Thompson Island in Fort Edward, where what's expected to be a six-year, $460 million dredging project began last year. There's concern that perhaps GE isn't properly maintaining the PCB sensors that have been submerged in the river bed.

Every development, large and small, in a decades-old battle over how best to clean the river and who should pay for it occurs against the backdrop of EPA vs. GE. That the government would reverse its position and pay the water bills in municipalities affected by dredging, in part because of suspiciously high PCB readings, underscores the tensions between them. The EPA remains as committed as ever to dredging. GE thinks that so many PCBs are being stirred up -- resuspended, to use the technical term -- that serious questions need to be asked about the project.

Coming up this week is a meeting of a panel of experts that's supposed to do some sifting of its own, namely assess the conflicting views of the success of dredging so far. That's a process riverfront residents can watch with less worry about what it means for their drinking water.

The issue:

The EPA makes an overture to two towns affected by dredging.

The Stakes:

Waterford, Halfmoon now can assess the project on its merits.

BP chief executive grappling with crises on several fronts (*Washington Post*)

May 3, 2010 Monday
Suburban Edition
A-SECTION; Pg. A06
Maryland
BP chief executive grappling with crises on several fronts;
Hayward visits new command center, will go to Washington
By: Steven Mufson

On the day he got news that the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig caught fire in the Gulf of Mexico, BP chief executive Tony Hayward received a series of crisis updates in his London offices. The rig belonged to Transocean, but BP had leased it to drill an exploration well and BP bore legal responsibility for any consequences.

The grim updates were interspersed with long silences. One person there said that on several occasions, Hayward asked, "What did we do to deserve this?"

Twelve days later, Hayward is grappling with the widening oil slick from the damaged well -- an environmental crisis for the Gulf Coast states, a political crisis for U.S. offshore drilling and a corporate crisis for one of the world's biggest oil giants.

"This accident not only sets back BP, but could hurt it for years," said Fadel Gheit, an oil analyst at Oppenheimer.

On Sunday, the third anniversary of his becoming BP's chief executive, Hayward began his day in Houma, La., flew to a convention center in Mobile, Ala., where a new oil spill command center has been set up, and then went on to Venice, La. There, he planned to meet with local officials and others worried about the slick menacing the shore.

On Monday, he will be in Washington, running the gantlet of federal officials and members of Congress, many of whom are eager to tar BP with blame for the incident. Before the accident, he had expected to be in the United States giving a speech and promoting a **climate change** bill. Now, he will face questions about whether BP underestimated the risk and consequences of a well failure.

"Whatever else this is, it's a massive blow to confidence," said a senior BP insider who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to talk publicly.

The price tag for the disaster increases day by day. The company says it is spending $6 million a day on response efforts. Drilling a relief well will probably cost more than $100 million. The Defense Department says it will hand BP the bill for paying Louisiana National Guard troops, and the **Environmental Protection Agency** says it will charge BP for air monitoring. Covering damages to coastal fishermen, tourism businesses and residents could cost billions more. BP will pay 65 percent of these costs; its lease partners Anadarko Petroleum and Mitsui will pay 25 and 10 percent.

BP's share will come straight from its own pocket. "We are self-insured as a matter of policy -- you cannot insure these kinds of risks," a BP spokesman said.

Alabama Attorney General Troy King said Sunday night that he told BP representatives to stop circulating agreements offering coastal Alabamians $5,000 if they give up the right to sue the company. A BP official said the offer was part of a "standard waiver" to fishermen that was "inappropriate" and was "swiftly discontinued."

The oil spill crisis is just the sort of thing Hayward had hoped to leave behind when he became BP chief executive.

His predecessor, Lord John Browne, had been a brilliant deal maker and a friend of British Prime Minister Tony Blair's, but BP was often accused of neglecting safety precautions and adding to risks through deep cost cutting. Under Browne, who resigned after revelations about his personal life in Britain's tabloid news media, a fatal explosion took place at BP's Texas City refinery, leaks sprang onto the tundra from a company pipeline in northern Alaska, and a BP production platform in the Gulf of Mexico suffered structural problems that delayed its start date.

In 1990 and 1991, Hayward had been one of Browne's "turtles," company slang for the executive assistants Browne plucked from the ranks of BP's most promising young executives.

But when Hayward became chief executive, he wanted to make changes. A geologist who made his career on the oil exploration and production side of the business, Hayward didn't seem to share Browne's passion for greening the company image. Browne spruced up BP's logo and said that it stood for "beyond petroleum" not "British Petroleum." Hayward, who recently closed a BP Solar manufacturing facility in Frederick, said alternative energy projects had to make economic sense.

"The bit about 'beyond petroleum' being dead and buried is nonsense," he said. But, he added, "it's a business as opposed to an advertising slogan."

He wanted to change the corporate culture, in part by cleaning house. Hayward inherited 650 senior executives, but he pared that to 490, half of whom are new to their jobs and one third of whom are new to the company.

He showed an ability to strike deals, too. He resolved a dispute with BP's partners in its highly profitable joint venture in Russia. He won a contract to boost output from a supergiant oil field in Iraq, where BP had worked decades before. And recently, BP paid $7 billion to Devon Energy to buy deepwater oil and gas assets and leases in the Gulf of Mexico and off the coast of Brazil.

In an interview in Washington five weeks ago, Hayward called it "a natural fit with our deepwater portfolio." As oil and natural gas fields closer to shore have aged, the oil industry has been pushing out to deeper waters worldwide, and the Gulf of Mexico is

typical.

Last year, a BP well was drilled in 4,130 feet of water to a record depth of more than 35,000 feet by the same Deepwater Horizon rig that caught fire April 20 and sank. At a London meeting five days before the accident, Hayward had noted that the giant reservoir it discovered "lies further below the Earth's surface than the summit of Mount Everest does above it."

Hayward's initiatives were starting to yield results. Last week, BP's earnings far surpassed analysts' expectations.

But the good news was blotted out by the oil slick. Over five days, the price of BP shares tumbled about 13 percent, erasing about $20 billion in market value.

In a video filmed in the company's crisis center in Houston and broadcast to employees, Hayward praised the company's strong earnings. "But," he said, "of course they're irrelevant in the context of what has occurred in the Gulf of Mexico over the past week." He said he had felt a range of emotions: "shock and indeed anger when I first heard about it, how could it happen. Tremendous sorrow when it became evident that the 11 people missing had probably died in the initial explosion."

Some of that anger has been directed at Transocean, owner and operator of the rig and the blowout preventer system, which Hayward has called "the fail-safe mechanism" that failed.

But Hayward hasn't tried to deny BP's obligations. In his video, he vowed "steely determination" to control the well, clean up and "do everything we can to understand how this has occured and to ensure that it never occurs again."

U.S. NEWS
MAY 2, 2010, 9:52 P.M. ET

Boston-Area Residents Warned on Water (*Wall Street Journal*)

By JOHN KAMP And APARAJITA SAHA-BUBNA
About two million residents of Boston and many surrounding towns remained under an order to boil drinking water Sunday, and may be without clean water until midweek, as efforts continued to repair a major pipe supplying treated water to the region.
There is water from backup systems for bathing, toilet flushing and fire protection, but it is not suitable for drinking.
There has been a run on bottled water in supermarkets and concerned people have shown up in emergency rooms worried they drank unclean water. Massachusetts Gov.

Deval Patrick declared a state of emergency Saturday to facilitate the response to the water-main break.
The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority said water supplies should remain stable when workers commute to Boston Monday.
Michael Dwyer/Associated Press

The break in a 10-foot diameter pipe Weston, Mass., left, sent more than eight million gallons of water an hour bubbling out of the ground and into the Charles River before it was stopped Saturday evening.

More

- **Health information**

A 10-foot-diameter underground pipe, which is an essential conduit that delivers supplies from the 1930s-era Quabbin Reservoir in central Massachusetts to the Boston area, ruptured in the town of Weston on Saturday. Until the leak was isolated and stopped Saturday evening, about eight million gallons of water an hour flooded into the nearby Charles River.

"Excavation of the leak is complete, repairs have been initiated," the water authority said on its website Sunday. Those repairs are coming faster than initially expected. However, it could still take until Wednesday to test the work and assess water safety, said Ria Convery, a spokeswoman for the agency.

Water Woes

Tips for those in affected areas

- For drinking, brushing teeth, ice cubes, washing produce to be eaten raw, hand washing: Bring water to a rolling boil for at least one minute or use disinfectant tablets.
- For children: Use only prepared canned baby formula that doesn't require added water. Only sponge baths should be given.
- For dishes: It is best to use disposable tableware.

- Don't seek medical attention unless you have symptoms such as diarrhea, cramping, nausea or vomiting.
- Water may be used as-is for bathing, showering, flushing, and fire protection.

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

While this system carries treated water, "we've been mucking around with the pipe," and the water's safety must be verified, Ms. Convery said. The water authority has already asked towns to collect samples to look for common bacteria that can indicate contamination in the backup water supply.

Authorities found a missing collar that is supposed to seal two pipe sections and suspect this is the problem area. This won't be confirmed until the system is pressurized again, however.

A new steel collar was being placed into the hole dug around the buried pipe Sunday. From there it has to be welded in place, and the pipe must be tested and sealed in concrete.

The water authority activated emergency supplies from other reservoirs and an aqueduct and has asked residents to halt unessential water use.

Still, the boil-water order is "an added level of concern," said Priya Anant, who lives in the affected city of Newton, and is 8½ months pregnant.

"You now have to worry about water-borne illness," said Ms. Anant.

Sara Coen Dash, another Newton resident, said her family was headed Sunday for her mother-in-law's home in an unaffected town to shower and do laundry. She has been concerned about bathing her sick 1-year-old.

Water should be boiled for at least a minute, authorities said, and only boiled or bottled water should be used for things such as cooking, making ice and baby formula, in addition to drinking.

Richard Zane, medical director for emergency preparedness at Partners HealthCare System, which includes several large hospitals in the Boston area, said asymptomatic people have been showing up in emergency rooms concerned about water-borne illness. He emphasized that there is no need for concern if there are no symptoms, such as diarrhea, cramping, nausea or vomiting.

The water problems affect hospitals in many ways, ranging from complicating cooking to making it hard for doctors to sterilize hands before procedures.

The doctor said the hospital system has contingency plans covering this issue, and at this point hopes to avoid delaying elective procedures.

All of Fidelity Investments' Boston-area offices are open, spokeswoman Anne Crowley said. The closely held mutual-fund giant said it was notifying employees about the undrinkable water on Sunday. Area Fidelity offices won't be serving coffee, but the company is working to secure more bottled water.

At Brandeis University in the affected city of Waltham, officials reached out to students via the Internet, email and voicemail to warn them against drinking or brushing their teeth with water in their residence halls. The university is supplying them with bottled water and is boiling water in the dining hall, spokesman Andrew Gully said.

"It's an inconvenience issue more than anything at this point," he said.

Write to John Kamp at John.Kamp @dowjones.com and to Aparajita Saha-Bubna at Aparajita.Saha-Bubna@dowjones.com

Online Map Helps Users Track Chesapeake Bay Enforcement (*EP Magazine*)

May 03, 2010
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has launched an online map that shows the locations of federal air and water enforcement actions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
The map is part of EPA's increased focus on enforcement of federal pollution laws in the Chesapeake Bay region, including a new strategy of targeting geographic areas and pollution sources contributing the greatest amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment to streams, creeks, rivers and the bay.

"Transparency and accountability are essential to the work we're doing to clean up the Chesapeake and restore these treasured waters," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "The community now has new tools it needs to see where EPA is taking action to improve water quality and protect the bay."

EPA developed the Chesapeake Bay Compliance and Enforcement Strategy to target the greatest sources of pollution impairing the bay and its tributaries. The draft strategy is a multi-state plan for addressing violations of federal environmental laws, and will be finalized in May as part of the Chesapeake Bay Executive Order.

Last year, EPA tabulated enforcement statistics specifically for the Chesapeake Bay watershed and airshed for the first time. Since 2009, EPA has entered into 10 civil judicial settlements and issued 36 administrative orders to sources contributing to the bay's impairment. These enforcement actions cover 248 facilities in nine states and the District of Columbia. These actions will reduce approximately 16 million pounds of nitrogen oxides to the bay airshed and 2,100 pounds of nitrogen and phosphorus and 82 million pounds of sediment to the bay watershed annually once all required controls are fully implemented. Additionally, settling companies have agreed to invest more than an estimated $731 million in actions and equipment to reduce pollution to the bay and pay $7.2 million in civil penalties.

May 3, 2010

New EPA Website Simplifies Searches for Clean Water Act Violations (*Environmental Leader*)

Clean Water Act violations have always been serious business. This month, Hovnanian Enterprises agreed to pay the EPA $1 million for violations in 18 states. The EPA's new portal for viewing Clean Water Act violations from its Annual Non-Compliance Report (ANCR) will make it more important than ever for businesses to steer clear of serious infractions.

"EPA is taking another important step to increase transparency and keep Americans informed about the safety of their local waters," said Cynthia Giles, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. "Making this information more accessible and understandable empowers millions of people to press for better compliance and enforcement in their communities."

The website provides a map of the country, allowing users to view violations by state and company. The new tool could potentially make lawsuits more common as it makes it easier for the public to identify violations in their community. The tool also increases the likelihood that serious Clean Water Act violations will be picked up by the local and national press.

Visitors to the EPA webpage will be able to use interactive tools to view information on 40,000 Clean Water Act dischargers throughout the US, as well as giving summary information for every state, including a record of enforcement acts taken by state environmental agencies.

The ANCR debuts in the wake of an agreement by the EPA to begin evaluating water acidification due to CO2 emissions, in response to a lawsuit from the Center for Biological Diversity settled last month. Should the EPA decide to regulate CO2 emissions through the Clean Water Act, the ANCR may soon make it possible for the public to easily identify the largest CO2 emitters in their area.

The interactive map is available at www.epa-echo.gov/echo/ancr/us/.

Water Pipe Repaired; Testing Under Way (*WCVB-TV*)

Boil Water Order Remains In Effect For 30 Massachusetts Communities
POSTED: 6:04 am EDT May 3, 2010
UPDATED: 7:28 am EDT May 3, 2010
BOSTON -- A massive pipe that ruptured over the weekend, disrupting drinking water supplies to 2 million Boston-area residents, has been repaired, but it will likely be a few more days before testing indicates whether it is safe to drink again.

"At this stage, the treated water system is fully restored and is now pushing water throughout the system," Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles said.
"We now move to the second phase, which is the environmental testing to assure water quality, and over the next few days we'll begin the process of lifting the order, but it's important for everyone to understand that the boil water order remains in effect until we've got tests back from the field and we can guarantee that the water quality is at the standard that we need," Bowles said.
Massachusetts Water Resources Authority officials said the broken 10-foot pipe that connects the Quabbin Reservoir to 30 metro area communities was welded just before 4 a.m. Monday and crews conducted pressure tests to ensure it could hold water again.
"We're very confident this will hold," said Massachusetts Water Resources Authority Executive Director Fred Laskey.
An independent agency certified the welding job and said the repairs were good, but Laskey said the state's boil water order will remain in place until the governor lifts it, which won't happen until all agencies determine the safety of the water supply. He said he could not predict when that would be.
Bowles said it would likely be another 24 to 48 hours before all communities could use water from the tap for drinking again in a best case scenario.
"We've got to roll through the environmental testing. It's important to remember that testing takes 24 hours to process in order to be effective," Bowles said.
He said he did not think anyone had become sick from the state using untreated water to supply residents after the pipe ruptured.

Residents Coping

In the meantime, thousands of residents will continue using bottled water and boiling water. In Quincy, one of the dozens of communities affected by the boil water order, residents waited in long lines and hot cars for hours on Sunday to get cases of bottled water.
"We have waited here today for three hours," one woman said.
"It's been real terrible and very, very hot and aggravated. It's frustrating. Everywhere you go they're fighting. They're fighting at BJs, they're fighting at Shaw's, they're fighting at Super Stop & Shop. It's crazy," said another woman.
Over the weekend,
the Massachusetts National Guard began distributing bottled water at four locations in Greater Boston.
On Monday, schools in most of the affected communities were holding classes as usual. In Boston, English High School in Jamaica Plain was open but was prepared to provide bottled water to students and all water fountains were blocked off to prevent students from using them. Outside vendors will be providing packaged lunches to students.
Area restaurants and coffee shops, including some Dunkin' Donuts, were not selling coffee because water is pumped directly into the coffee makers.

"Our equipment is quite sophisticated. It's all piped directly to the machines and it's coming at specific temperatures and specific speeds, specific pressures, to get that quality of coffee," one store manager said.
In many local supermarkets and stores there was no bottle water to be found as consumers rushed to buy supplies and paper products were also selling out as residents used disposable products to avoid washing dishes. Communities as far as North Conway, N.H., reported that bottled water stocks were depleted.

O's sludge grudge (*New York Post*)

Hits BP at scene of the slime
By S.A. MILLER Post Correspondent
Last Updated: 7:05 AM, May 3, 2010
Posted: 4:00 AM, May 3, 2010
WASHINGTON -- Amid complaints his administration moved too slowly in response to a catastrophic oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, President Obama rushed to Louisiana yesterday and laid the blame squarely on BP.

"BP is responsible for this leak. BP will be paying the bill," Obama said after getting a firsthand look at the endangered Louisiana shoreline.

The leak began on April 20, when an oil rig exploded, presumably killing 11 workers.

Calling the spill "a massive and potentially unprecedented environmental disaster," Obama explained, "That's why the federal government has launched a coordinated, all-hands-on-deck [and] relentless response to this crisis from Day One."

FACT FINDING: As ecology professor Andrew Nyman inspects twisted oil boom on a Louisiana beach yesterday, President Obama talks with local fisherman.

He insisted that BP, the company that was leasing the rig, pay for the cost of the cleanup and damage.

"The oil that is still leaking from the well could seriously damage the economy and the environment of our Gulf states and it . . . could jeopardize the livelihoods of thousands of Americans who call this place home," Obama said.

The 30-mile-long oil slick was about nine miles southeast of the Louisiana coast last night.

The spill also poses political peril, as critics draw comparisons with then-President George W. Bush's bungled handling of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano tried to head off criticism, hitting the White House talking point that the administration has taken an "all hands on deck" approach.

She said any comparison between the ruptured BP oil well and Katrina was "a total mischaracterization."

Obama flew to New Orleans aboard Air Force One and then traveled by motorcade about two hours south to Venice. Bad weather and a tornado watch prevented the president from taking a helicopter to the command center.

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal met Obama in New Orleans and rode with the president to Venice.

Last week, Obama dispatched the heads of the Interior and Homeland Security departments, the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to the Gulf Coast. *With Post Wire Service*

Read more:
http://www.nypost.com/p/news/national/sludge_grudge_b6VWY0Nf02dKqcbdQ5e5yH#ixzz0mrkIVgfK

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