

# CEEPC Monthly Updates

Chicago's Willis Tower to Get Solar Windows (Mar. 22)  
San Francisco Mayor Calls for City to Go 100% Renewable by 2020 (Mar. 22)  
Carbon Capture and Storage: Carbon Dioxide Pressure Dissipates in Underground Reservoirs (Mar. 23)  
D.C. Circuit Sets Schedule for EPA Emissions Rules Cases (Mar. 28)  
EU to Drive Petrol Cars from Cities by 2050 (Mar. 28)  
VA OKs Study of Wind Turbines in Chesapeake Bay (Mar. 30)  
34 Senators Representatives Offer Resolution in Support of the Clean Air Act (Mar. 31)  
Dominion Virginia Power Announces Study of Offshore Transmission Power Line (Mar. 31)  
Dominion to Convert Coal Plants to Biomass (Apr. 1)  
Clean Energy is a Target of Ryan Budget Plan (Apr. 6)  
IEA Releases First Climate and Energy Progress Report (Apr. 6)  
Toyota's "Geek-Mobile" Prius Hybrid Hits One Million Mark in US Deliveries (Apr. 6)  
Barrasso, Bingaman Reintroduce CO<sub>2</sub> Capture Technology Act (Apr. 7)  
House Passes Bill to Strip EPA Authority, Senate Votes Down Amendments (Apr. 7)  
Sources Say O'Malley's Offshore Wind Bill Shelved with Study (Apr. 7)  
Arlington County Rolls Into Spring with New Capital Bikeshare Stations (Apr. 11)  
BGE Selects OPOWER's Advanced Customer Engagement Platform (Apr. 12)  
IRS Guidance on 100% Bonus Depreciation Benefits Renewable Sector (Apr. 12)  
Offshore Windmills Weather Crisis (Apr. 12)  
UPS Joins the Electric Drive Transportation Association (EDTA) (Apr. 12)  
Bloomberg and Clinton to Merge Climate Groups (Apr. 13)  
NOAA Climate Service Squashed in FY 2011 (Apr. 13)  
Climate Showcase Community Grants- Frederick County (Apr. 14)  
Pepco: Six-Point Plan for Outages is Working (Apr. 15)  
Texas to Install World's Largest Wind Energy Storage System (Apr. 15)  
EPA Releases 16<sup>th</sup> Annual U.S. Greenhouse Gas Inventory (Apr. 18)  
Group Publishes Report Detailing State-by-State Costs of Inaction to Climate Change (Apr. 19)  
Secretary Chu Announces New Funding and Partnership with Google to Promote Electric Vehicles (Apr 19)  
Governor O'Malley Celebrates Earth Day (Apr. 22)  
Washington Considers Annual Flat Fee for Electric Cars (Apr. 22)  
NYC Seeks 30% GHG Reduction in Update Plan (Apr. 26)  
Arlington Recognized as Gold-Level Walk Friendly Community (Apr. 29)  
FHA, Fannie Mae Programs Back Loans for Energy-Efficient Upgrades to Your Home (Apr. 29)  
Congregation in DC to Be Powered by Solar Energy (May 3)  
Montgomery County Passes 5-cent Bag Tax (May 3)  
Pepco Reduces Rates for MD, DC Customers (May 3)  
State Legislators Say Utility Deregulation Has Failed in Its Goals (May 4)  
Vanderbilt Professor Proposes Carbon Labeling on Products to Clue in Consumers (May 4)  
Upton Won't Rule Out Debt Ceiling as Vehicle to Thwart Climate Rules (May 12)  
National Research Council Releases 'America's Climate Choices' (May 15)  
Arlington, Alexandria Address Climate Change and Energy Use (May 18)  
Senate Hearing on Electric Vehicles (May 19)  
California: Judge Blocks Cap-and-Trade Plan (May 20)  
Fairfax County Private Sector Energy Taskforce Created

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## Federal Regulatory Updates

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- ✓ **D.C. Circuit Sets Schedule for EPA Emissions Rules Cases (March 28):** The procedural briefing schedule is set for each of the three D.C. Circuit court cases brought by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to challenge EPA's GHG rules. The opening briefs are due between May and June, with briefing to continue until the end of 2011. The cases, *Coalition for Responsible Regulation v. EPA*, challenge four EPA actions: the first challenges the finding which determined that GHGs endanger public health and welfare. The second challenges both the regulation of GHGs under the Clean Air Act (CAA) to large emitters, and the trigger of the regulation of stationary sources on the same date that mobile sources are regulated. The third case challenges the new mobile source standards for car and light duty truck emissions.
- ✓ **IRS Guidance on 100% Bonus Depreciation Benefits Renewable Sector (April 12):** March 2011 guidelines from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) temporarily expand bonus depreciation from 50% to 100%. If an asset qualifies for the investment credit, a project may now see up to 60% of costs covered in the first year of the asset's life.
- ✓ **FHA, Fannie Mae Programs Back Loans for Energy-Efficient Upgrades to Your Home (April 29):** The FHA's PowerSaver pilot program will allow eligible homeowners to borrow up to \$25,000 at fixed rates between 5 and 7 percent for as long as 20 years to finance high-efficiency home improvements. Fannie's program is a mortgage add-on that folds the energy efficient improvement costs into the mortgage. Takoma Park, MD is participating in the Better Building Program, which will allow homes there to be some of the first in the FHA PowerSaver pilot.

## Federal Legislative Updates

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- ✓ **34 Senators Representatives Offer Resolution in Support of the Clean Air Act (March 31):** 34 Democratic Senators offered S. Res 419 in support of the CAA. 135 Representatives sent a letter to House Speak John Boehner in support of EPA and the CAA.
- ✓ **Barrasso, Bingaman Reintroduce CO<sub>2</sub> Capture Technology Act (April 7):** Senators Barrasso and Bingaman reintroduced a bi-partisan bill, the Carbon Dioxide Capture Technology Act, which would encourage innovative technologies for carbon capture and sequestration. It was originally introduced during the previous Congress.
- ✓ **House Passes Bill to Strip EPA Authority, Senate Votes Down Amendments (April 7):** The House passed H.R. 910, the Energy Tax Prevention Act, by a vote of 255-172. The bill prevents EPA from regulating greenhouse gas emissions. The Senate rejected several amendments to a small business bill that would restrict EPA authority.
- ✓ **Upton Won't Rule Out Debt Ceiling as Vehicle to Thwart Climate Rules (May 12):** Chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee would not rule out the prospect of using debt-ceiling legislation as a vehicle for provisions that would limit federal climate change rules, stating that a clean debt-ceiling increase would not pass in Congress.
- ✓ **Senate Hearing on Electric Vehicles (May 19):** On Thursday, May 19 the Senate Energy Committee held a hearing on S. 734 and S. 948, relating to the deployment of electric vehicles, as policies that would reduce oil consumption. Representatives from DOE, Rockwood Holdings, Inc., the Electric Drive Transportation Association, CALSTART and NRG Energy, Inc. testified.

## Federal Budget Updates

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- ✓ **Clean Energy is a Target of Ryan Budget Plan (April 6):** Representative Ryan released a long-term Republican budget plan that calls for drastic cuts in federal spending on energy research and development, as well as the elimination of subsidies and tax breaks for wind, solar, and other alternative energy technologies. Update: The bill passed in the House by a vote of 235-193.
- ✓ **NOAA Climate Service Squashed in FY 2011 (April 13):** The Continuing Resolution that will fund the remainder of FY 2011 prevents the use of funds to “implement, establish, or create a NOAA Climate Change Service.” NOAA’s plan does not involve additional funds or staff to establish and run the Service, so it is still possible that NOAA could establish the Service in FY 2012.
- ✓ **Secretary Chu Announces New Funding and Partnership with Google to Promote Electric Vehicles (April 19):** DOE announced the availability of \$5 million in funding for community-based efforts to deploy electric vehicle infrastructure and charging stations. DOE will partner with Goggle Inc. and more than 80 EV stakeholders to help consumers find charging stations nationwide.

## State Government Updates

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- ✓ **VA OKs Study of Wind Turbines in Chesapeake Bay (March 30):** State regulators have approved scientific surveys for a test project by Gamesa Energy USA, a Spanish wind-turbine company, that aims to build an offshore turbine that could generate as much as 5 MW of electricity three miles west of Cape Charles. If the site is approved after the study is completed, the turbine could be operational next summer.
- ✓ **Sources Say O’Malley’s Offshore Wind Bill Shelved with Study (April 7):** Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley’s wind energy bill stalled in committee before the legislative session ended. The General Assembly is expected to agree to further study and reconsider the issues in a special session or in the 2012 session.
- ✓ **Governor O’Malley Celebrates Earth Day (April 22):**As part of the Maryland Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley announced the installation of eight Electric Vehicle Charging Stations as part of a project that will add sixty-five stations to the region by June. See map for charging station locations:<http://energy.maryland.gov/Transportation/documents/MDchargingforwardEVmap.pdf>. This announcement comes after a legislative session which established a \$400 tax credit towards the installation of home charging stations, a requirement for the Public Service Commission to establish a pilot study on how best to encourage off-peak charging, and a statewide electric vehicle planning council.
- ✓ **State Legislators Say Utility Deregulation Has Failed in Its Goals (May 4):** Two Maryland legislators, Sens. James C. Rosapepe and E.J. Pipkin have asked the Public Service Commission (PSC) to make regulation a requirement in its approval of a deal for Exelon Corporation to buy Constellation Energy, stating that deregulation has not created competition to lower prices as expected. The Maryland Senate approved a re-regulation bill in 2009 that failed in the House. Gov. O’Malley has been supportive of re-regulation but thinks that the PSC should be the entity to take action.

## Local Government Updates

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- ✓ **Arlington County Rolls Into Spring with New Capital Bikeshare Stations (April 11):** Arlington County added 4 new capital Bikeshare stations to the Rosslyn and Courthouse area. The County will add 30 stations with 200 bikes in 2011.

- ✓ **Climate Showcase Community Grants- Frederick County (April 14):** Frederick County was one of 47 communities selected as a 2011 winner of an EPA Climate Showcase Communities Grant. The County received \$500,000 over three years for their Green Homes Challenge, which is a replicable, multi-level green home certification program.
- ✓ **Arlington Recognized as Gold-Level Walk Friendly Community (April 29):** The Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center named Arlington one of the top five walk friendly communities in the nation, giving it a gold-level rating. The Walk Friendly Communities program is sponsored by the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and FedEx.
- ✓ **Congregation in DC to Be Powered by Solar Energy (May 3):** Florida Avenue's Baptist Church in NW DC near Howard University installed 44 solar panels that will save 15 percent of their electric costs, about \$450. The amount will increase after they have an energy audit and perform energy efficiency retrofit actions.
- ✓ **Montgomery County Passes 5-cent Bag Tax (May 3):** The Montgomery County Council passed a 5-cent bag tax that will take effect January first, applying to both paper and plastic bags from all retail establishments. Funds will be used for free reusable bags for the poor and elderly and for water protection.
- ✓ **Arlington, Alexandria Address Climate Change and Energy Use (May 18):** The Alexandria City Council adopted a goal to reduce carbon emissions by 80% in 40 years as part of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan passed May 14. The Arlington County Board passed its Community Energy Plan on May 17, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 70 percent by 2050. Staff will develop an implementation process over the next 18 months.
- ✓ **Fairfax County Private Sector Energy Taskforce Created:** The Private Sector Energy Task Force was created by Chairman Sharon Bulova and is chaired by Leo Schefer, President of the Washington Airports Task Force. The purpose of the Task Force is to bring together prominent members of the Fairfax County business community as well as academia to create a new energy strategy for the County. The Task Force will meet four times in 2011 from February to May.

## Utilities Updates

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- ✓ **Dominion Virginia Power Announces Study of Offshore Transmission Power Line (March 31):** Dominion Virginia Power is initiating a study of what it would take to build a high-voltage underwater transmission line from Virginia Beach into the Atlantic Ocean to support potentially multiple offshore wind farms. Dominion is working with PJM Interconnection and plans to complete the study this year.
- ✓ **Dominion to Convert Coal Plants to Biomass (April 1):** Dominion Virginia Power plans to convert three power stations from using coal to biomass. The conversions could generate up to \$350 million for local economies over the next 30 years as well as help Dominion meet Virginia's voluntary renewable portfolio standard. The power stations in Altavista, Hopewell and Southampton County could power 37,500 homes at full capacity.
- ✓ **BGE Selects OPOWER's Advanced Customer Engagement Platform (April 12):** Baltimore Gas & Electric (BGE) has elected to use OPOWER's Advanced Customer Engagement platform for its smart meter rollout. The rollout will eventually reach 1.2 million residential and small business customers.
- ✓ **Pepco: Six-Point Plan for Outages is Working (April 15):** Pepco executives outlined progress that has been made since posting a six-point plan last August. The utility has taken numerous measures including: doubled the capacity of phone lines and voice boxes; hired extra customer service reps; more than quadrupled personnel dedicated to trimming trees; identified overhead lines that could potentially benefit from

undergrounds; invested \$24 million in power load equipment; and added computers to field trucks for better communication.

- ✓ **Pepco Reduces Rates for MD, DC Customers (May 3):** Beginning June 1, Pepco customers in Maryland and DC will see a decrease in their electric bills due to the decreased price in the electricity supply that Pepco is purchasing. The average customer in Maryland will see a \$22 decrease per bill; the average customer in DC will see a \$10 decrease per bill.

### Other National and International Updates

- ✓ **Chicago's Willis Tower to Get Solar Windows (March 22):** Chicago's Willis Tower, formerly known as the Sears Tower, will replace the south facing windows on the 56<sup>th</sup> floor with transparent solar windows. These windows cut down on the heat gain and harness energy from the sun. If the pilot project is successful the project could be expanded to produce up to two megawatts of solar power on the building.
  - ✓ **San Francisco Mayor Calls for City to Go 100% Renewable by 2020 (March 22):** At the Vote Solar Initiative annual spring equinox bash San Francisco mayor Edward Lee told the crowd that the city needs to be on 100 percent renewable energy.
  - ✓ **Carbon Capture and Storage: Carbon Dioxide Pressure Dissipates in Underground Reservoirs (March 23):** Scientists in the Earth Sciences Division at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory have found that carbon capture and storage (CCS) could be done at an industrial-scale using open and partially open reservoirs to help relieve the pressure build-up through natural systems.
  - ✓ **EU to Drive Petrol Cars from Cities by 2050 (March 28):** The European Commission released a white paper with a roadmap of 40 concrete initiatives that will reduce transport emissions by 60% in 2050. The key goals include no more conventionally-fueled cars in cities; 40% use of sustainable low carbon fuels in aviation with at least a 40 % cut in shipping emissions; and a 50% shift of medium distance intercity journeys to rail and waterborne transport.
  - ✓ **IEA Releases First Climate and Energy Progress Report (April 6):** The International Energy Agency released its first Clean Energy Progress Report, which assesses global deployment of clean energy technologies and provides recommendations to countries on future action and spending. The report shows that over the past decade coal has met 47% of global new electricity demand and argues that more aggressive clean energy policies are required to implement cleaner energy options.
  - ✓ **Toyota's "Geek-Mobile" Prius Hybrid Hits One Million Mark in US Deliveries (April 6):** The Toyota Prius hybrid has sold 1 million vehicles since it was first introduced in the US in 2000.
  - ✓ **Offshore Windmills Weather Crisis (April 12):** A wind plant off Japan's shore proved resistant to the March 11 tsunami; neither the turbines nor the transformers were damaged during the tsunami. A company called Mitani owns the wind farm and is hoping to add eight generators to the seven existing.
  - ✓ **UPS Joins the Electric Drive Transportation Association (EDTA) (April 12):** UPS has joined the EDTA, an industry association dedicated to advancing electric vehicle technology and adoption. UPS's alternative fuel fleet includes; electric, hydraulic and electric hybrids, propane, and natural gas.
  - ✓ **Bloomberg and Clinton to Merge Climate Groups (April 13):** Michael Bloomberg and Bill Clinton have announced the C40 and the Clinton Climate Initiative will merge into the C40- Clinton Climate Initiative. The group is expected to have a budget of \$15 million and a staff of 70.
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- ✓ **Texas to Install World's Largest Wind Energy Storage System (April 15):** Duke Energy is matching a \$22 million federal grant to install a 36-megawatt battery at the 153 MW Notrees wind farm in Texas. The battery is expected to be operational by late 2012.
- ✓ **EPA Releases 16<sup>th</sup> Annual U.S. Greenhouse Gas Inventory (April 18):** The final report shows that 2009 GHG emissions decreased by 6.1 percent from the previous year, while overall GHG emissions increased by more than 7.3 percent from 1990 to 2009.
- ✓ **Group Publishes Report Detailing State-by-State Costs of Inaction to Climate Change (April 19):** The American Security Project published a state-by-state report of the economic costs of inaction on climate change. Maryland and Virginia reports are available, including past costs incurred and projected future costs.
- ✓ **Washington Considers Annual Flat Fee for Electric Cars (April 22):** Washington State has passed a bill in the State Senate that would charge electric vehicle owners a flat fee of \$100 per year. Oregon lawmakers are considering a bill that would charge electric vehicle owners up to 1.43 cents per mile driven. Mississippi and Texas both saw attempts to introduce bills that would tax electric vehicles, but the bills did not move forward.
- ✓ **NYC Seeks 30% GHG Reduction in Update Plan (April 26):** In an update to PlaNYC released last week, New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg announced that the city will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 30% and divert 75 percent of its solid waste from landfills. The city has already reduced greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels, come close to achieving almost two-thirds of its 2009 milestones.
- ✓ **Vanderbilt Professor Proposes Carbon Labeling on Products to Clue in Consumers (May 4):** Vanderbilt's Professor Michael Vandenberg, has proposed that adding carbon labels to household products, similar to how nutrition labels are displayed, could help change consumer behaviors. Such labeling would also give firms an incentive to look for carbon reductions in their supply chains.
- ✓ **National Research Council Releases 'America's Climate Choices' (May 15):** The National Research Council released a report titled "America's Climate Choices" in which a panel of scientific and policy experts concludes that the risks of inaction far outweigh the risks or disadvantages of action. The panel says that the most sensible and urgently needed action is to put a rising price on carbon emissions, which would encourage innovation and a gradual shift away from energy sources endangering the world.
- ✓ **California: Judge Blocks Cap-and-Trade Plan (May 20):** A California judge ruled that state air regulators must stop carrying out a cap-and-trade plan until they examine alternatives.

### **Upcoming Workshops and Events**

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- ✓ **June 15-17:** Climate Communities Local Clean Energy Leadership Summit, DC; see [www.climatecommunities.us](http://www.climatecommunities.us) for more information.
- ✓ **August 25-27:** Maryland Clean Energy Center 2011 Maryland Clean Energy Summit, Bethesda, MD; see [www.mdcleanenergy.org](http://www.mdcleanenergy.org) for more information.