

# CEEPC Monthly Updates

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Jeffrey King, [jking@mwkog.org](mailto:jking@mwkog.org); Jeannine Altavilla, [jaltavilla@mwkog.org](mailto:jaltavilla@mwkog.org)  
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## Federal Regulatory Updates

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- ✓ **Biofuels and the Environment: the First Triennial Report to Congress (External Review Draft) (January 28):** The Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA Section 204) directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a study of the environmental impact associated with current and future biofuel production and use, considering environmental issues such as air quality, water quality and soil quality. This report reviews impacts across the biofuel supply chain, including feedstock production and logistics, and biofuel production, distribution, and use.
- ✓ **CEQ Issues Final Guidance on NEPA Mitigation (January 28):** The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued final guidance on the use of mitigation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This is the second of three new guidance documents. The new guidance sets forth recommendations for federal agencies with regard to developing procedures, providing for public disclosure, and establishing a process for remedying non-implemented or ineffective mitigation.
- ✓ **Wyoming Challenges EPA Greenhouse Regs in Court (February 14):** Wyoming filed a legal challenge to EPA's regulation of greenhouse emissions in the state. They asked for a review of the process that led to federal permitting of GHG emissions in the state. Texas has also filed suit against EPA, while the six other states that did not meet the deadline for state regulations have not.
- ✓ **EPA Releases GHG Emissions Inventory for Public Comment (February 16):** EPA is seeking comment on its draft report of its annual greenhouse gas emissions, covering emissions from 1990 to 2009. Public comments will be accepted until March 25. The inventory shows a decrease from 2008 levels, representing the lowest total annual US GHG emissions since 1995.
- ✓ **Texas' EPA Challenge Bumped from LA Court to DC Circuit (February 25):** The US Court of Appeals Fifth Circuit transferred the Texas case against EPA to the District Court at the EPA's request, citing that the case brings up national issues that would be best dealt with in a central court. The District Court has decided not to freeze the new rules while it considers the case.
- ✓ **Implementing Instructions for Agency Climate Change Adaptation Planning (March 4):** The White House Council on Environmental Quality issued a set of implementing instructions for Federal Agency Adaptation Planning. The instructions will inform agencies on how to integrate climate change adaptation into their planning, operations, policies, and programs.
- ✓ **EPA Approves New Coolant for Car Air Conditioning Systems (March 8):** EPA has approved a new coolant known as HFO-1234yf for use in air conditioning systems in new motor vehicles and light-duty trucks. The compound has a global warming potential 99.7% less than the coolant currently used in most vehicles, which opens a new avenue to comply with the agency's GHG emission standards for new motor vehicles, where manufacturers to earn credit by reducing GHG emissions from air conditioning units.
- ✓ **EPA Announces New Energy Star Requirements for Televisions and Cable/Satellite Boxes (March 9):** EPA has announced the final energy star requirements for televisions and cable/satellite boxes, effective September 2011, to qualify for the Energy Star label, which signifies that the equipment is 40% more efficient than conventional models.
- ✓ **EPA Defers GHG Reporting Deadline to September 30 (March 17):** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) deferred until September 30, 2011 the deadline for submission of the first greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reports under the agency's Reporting Rule, affected approximately 10,000 facilities until an

unspecified date. The delay was deemed necessary to complete development of an electronic reporting system, which the Mandatory Reporting Rule requires reporting entities to use.

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### Federal Legislative Updates

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- ✓ **Waxman Presses Climate Skeptic on Industry Funds (January 25):** Representative Waxman wrote a letter to incoming Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Fred Upton requesting an investigation into Patrick Michaels, who spoke to the committee about climate change being an exaggerated threat in February 2009. Waxman details that Michaels may have misled the committee about the sources of his funding from the oil industry, which would possibly compromise his ability to present unbiased results.
- ✓ **Republicans Introduce Energy Tax Prevention Act as Amendment to Small Business Bill (March 15):** Senator Mitch McConnell introduced the Energy Tax Prevention Act as an amendment to a small business bill in order to strip EPA of its authority to regulate GHG emissions. Its supporters argue that regulating GHG emissions is harmful to the American economy, raising energy prices. The bill passed the Energy and Power Committee by a vote of 34-19, with three Democrats voting for the bill.

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### Federal Budget Updates

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- ✓ **Michigan Congressmen Propose Extending \$7,500 EV Tax Credits (January 28):** A bill expanding the \$7,500 tax credit on purchase of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles from five manufacturers would allow 500,000 cars from each manufacturer to be eligible for the credit. The credit currently phases out when a manufacturer sells 200,000 vehicles.
- ✓ **Obama Proposes \$7,500 Rebates to Electric Car Buyers (February 8):** Obama has announced provisions to help reach the goal of one million electric vehicles on US roads by 2015. Two key provisions include changing the \$7,500 tax credit for purchase of a new electric vehicle to a point-of-sale rebate and grants for up to 30 cities to develop EV infrastructure and remove regulatory barriers.
- ✓ **FY 2011 Federal Budget Update (March 21):** The Senate defeated HR 1, which cut \$100 billion from President Obama's 2011 budget proposal including funding for air, energy and environment programs. The current Continuing Resolution expires on April 8, and includes a further \$6 billion in cuts to the last continuing resolution that expired March 18. President Obama has urged Congress to pass a budget that will cover the rest of the fiscal year rather than another continuing resolution.

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### State Government Updates

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- ✓ **Virginia House Stops Effort to Curb Cuccinelli's Powers in U-VA Climate Fight (February 16):** A House subcommittee left a bill tabled at the end of its legislative session that would shield universities from the State Attorney General's authority to issue civil subpoenas. The bill was in response to a subpoena from State Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, requesting documents and emails related to the work of former University of Virginia (UVA) professor Michael Mann. The [Virginia Supreme Court](#) has agreed to hear the case after Cuccinelli's appeal, and UVA will likely have to hand over the requested documents. Cuccinelli is pursuing Dr. Mann for financial fraud in research grant applications related to climate change.
- ✓ **VA Delegates Pass Measure Urging Congress to Stop EPA from Further Regulating Air Quality (February 23):** With a vote of 64-33 the Virginia House voted to urge Congress to prohibit EPA from regulating greenhouse

- gas emissions, and to establish a two year moratorium from writing new air-quality standards except in the case of an emergency. As a House resolution and not a joint resolution, the measure did not go to the Senate.
- ✓ **DC Solar Panels Rebate Update (February 27):** The District Department of the Environment expects to receive funding in October 2011 to continue to offer rebates for home owners installing solar panels who are already on the waiting list. Those on the waiting list have requests that total over \$6 million. Due to the high volume of requests DDOE is accepting no new applications at this time.
  - ✓ **EPA Announces U.S. Cities with the Most Energy Star Certified Buildings (March 14):** EPA released a list of U.S. metropolitan areas with the greatest number of energy-efficient buildings that earned EPA's Energy Star certification in 2010. Washington DC is the US metropolitan area with the second highest number of Energy Star certified buildings behind Los Angeles, California.
  - ✓ **Distributed Generation in Maryland and Virginia:** Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality has released proposed rules for distributed generation, open for public comment until April 4, 2011. There are two separate rules applying to permits for voluntary demand response use and permits for emergency use, both of which set regulations for generator requirements and reporting requirements, as well as operation restrictions. Maryland's Public Service Commission (PSC) is reviewing regulations that apply to generator and reporting requirements, as well as operation restrictions for curtailment service providers who operate demand response programs. The PSC held a hearing on February 10, 2011.
  - ✓ **Renewable Portfolio Standards in the District and Maryland:** In the District Councilmember Mary Cheh introduced legislation #B19-0010 which would amend the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard by requiring that the solar requirement be met with systems located within the District or the areas served by the distribution grid of the District. In Maryland, SB690 and SB717 passed unanimously in the Senate and are being heard in the House. These bills add waste-to-energy to Tier 1 renewable sources in the renewable energy portfolio and solar water heating systems to the eligibility list to meet the renewable energy portfolio standard.

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### Local Government Updates

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- ✓ **Frederick County Green Homes Challenge Launched (January 28):** Frederick County's Office of Sustainability and Environmental Resources has launched the first challenge in its three part Green Homes Challenge. Be a Power Saver allows Frederick residents to use online tools, brochures and community events to learn to energy and certify their homes as Power Saver Homes.
- ✓ **Frederick Community College Slated to Get Two of 55 Electric Car Recharging Stations Planned for State (March 2):** Frederick Community College will get two of the 55 stations as part of the \$1million grant funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in the state of Maryland. The stations will be the only ones in Frederick County funded through the grant.
- ✓ **Frederick County Energy Success Story Video (March):** The National Association of Counties (NACo), in partnership with EcoMedia Studios at CBS, produced a video highlighting Frederick County's efforts to promote energy efficiency in its government operations and for its citizens. The video is one of eleven produced by NACo.
- ✓ **Fairfax Urging Businesses to Go Green (March 6):** Fairfax County Board Chairwoman Sharon Bulova has convened a Private Sector Energy Task Force in Fairfax County to determine how to waste less energy. Fairfax County can offer incentives such as allowing green buildings to add another floor, but due to state laws cannot

offer tax incentives for energy efficiency like Montgomery County, MD. Some supervisors on the Board believe that businesses are already improving their energy efficiency because they see the monetary benefits.

- ✓ **The City of Alexandria Requests Your Feedback on its Energy and Climate Action Plan (March 14):** The City of Alexandria seeks public feedback on the draft Energy and Climate Change Action Plan 2012 – 2020 through April 14, 2011. The development of the Plan builds on the work done in developing the Environmental Action Plan 2030 (EAP). Please submit your feedback to Erica Bannerman via email at [erica.bannerman@alexandriava.gov](mailto:erica.bannerman@alexandriava.gov).
- ✓ **Green Power Community Challenge Rankings Released- District and Brookeville, MD at Top (March 17):** EPA has released the rankings for the Green Power Partnership program, at the midway point of its first year. The District of Columbia leads all thirty-six participating communities in total green power used. Brookeville, MD in Montgomery County leads all communities in percent of electric use as green power. The first round of the Green Power Partnership will end in September 2011.
- ✓ **Montgomery County Commercial and Multi-Family Building Study:** Montgomery County is conducting a study of commercial and multi-family buildings to determine ways to reduce energy consumption in these sectors, which combine for a substantial portion of the County's greenhouse gas emissions. A draft of the report should be available for public comment in September 2011.

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### Utilities and Business Updates

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- ✓ **SolarCity Expands to the East Coast, Introduces Maryland's First Solar Lease (January 24):** SolarCity, the largest US solar provide, expands its operations to the east coast by purchasing the solar operations of Clean Currents, located in Silver Spring, MD. The company will offer zero-down solar leases to residents of Maryland and the District.
- ✓ **Dominion Virginia Power Proposes Rate Options for Charging of Electric Vehicles (February 1):** Dominion has proposed two rate options as a pilot for customers installing at-home electric vehicle charging stations that offer time-of-use pricing. Overnight charging for an electric vehicle would cost approximately 33 cents. Customers can choose between Electric Vehicle Only and Whole House pricing. Each option would be limited to 750 participants, require at least a one year commitment, and run through November 30, 2014
- ✓ **Survey Shows Rise in Demand Response, Advanced Metering Use (February 3):** A Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) survey covering calendar year 2009 found that over 500 entities offer demand response programs, with the potential response comprising up to 7.6% of US peak demand. Advanced metering has reached 8.7% of the US market, nearly double the 2008 rate, concentrated in the Midwest, West and Texas.
- ✓ **Greater Washington Board of Trade Green Business Certification:** The Greater Washington Board of Trade is developing a green business certification program to promote and recognize green business practices throughout the metropolitan Washington region. A system could be unveiled as soon as this summer.

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### Other National and International Updates

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- ✓ **US Wind Energy Industry Finishes 2010 with Half the Installations of 2009, Activity Up in 2011, Now Cost-Competitive with Natural Gas (January 24):** The US installed 5,115 MW of new wind power in 2010. There is currently over 5,600 MW of new wind power under construction. The cost of wind has dropped, giving it a competitive price to natural gas, with long-term price stability.

- ✓ **EPA Requests Applications for National Award for Smart Growth Achievement:** Applications must be received by April 6, 2011. Awards will be given in the categories of Programs, Policies, and Regulations; Smart Growth and Green Building; Civic Places; and Rural Smart Growth.
- ✓ **ACEEE Releases 2011 Greenest Cars Report (February 15):** ACEEE released the top 12 greenest vehicles for the 2011 model year. Models that made the list include compressed natural gas (CNG), electric, hybrid electric, and gasoline vehicles. The Honda Civic GX, a CNG vehicle, topped the list.

### Upcoming Workshops and Events

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- ✓ **March 28:** COG Street Lights Working Group; COG; contact [Jeff King](#) for more information
- ✓ **April 29:** Electric Vehicle Forum; COG; contact [Leah Boggs](#) for more information.
- ✓ **May 5:** Green Building and Climate Change Workshop; COG; 9am to 3pm; contact [Leah Boggs](#) for more information.