

CEEPAC Monthly Updates

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Jeffrey King, jking@mwkog.org; Anne Mariani, amariani@mwkog.org; Jeannine Altavilla, jaltavilla@mwkog.org
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Federal Regulatory Updates

- ✓ **FTC Seeks to Tighten Rules for “Green” Labeling (October 6):** The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is revising its “Green Guides” for the first time since 1998. The revisions will set parameters to help prevent false and misleading statements in advertising and on product labels. Public comments will be accepted until December 10.
- ✓ **EPA Lays Out Five-Year Plan on Agency Priorities (October 7):** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued its fiscal year 2011 to 2015 strategic plan. The five strategic goals are: taking action on climate change and improving air quality; protecting America’s waters; cleaning up communities and advancing sustainable development; ensuring the safety of chemicals and preventing pollution; and enforcing environmental laws. The plan includes new benchmarks to track progress.
- ✓ **Interior Department Signs First US Offshore Wind Energy Lease (October 13):** The US Department of Interior (DOI) and Cape Wind Associates signed the nation’s first lease for commercial wind energy development on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) on October 6. The Cape Wind energy project would be the first wind farm on the OCS, and could generate enough power to meet 75% of the electricity demand for Cape Cod, Martha’s Vineyard, and Nantucket Island combined.
- ✓ **White House Interagency Task Force Releases Recommendations on Federal Agency Climate Adaptation Options (October 14):** President Obama’s interagency task force on adapting to climate change has released their report. The task force urges government agencies to prepare for the “inevitable” effects of global warming. The report also recommends that scientific information about climate change is available to officials so they can plan as needed.
- ✓ **New Interagency Agreement Establishes Framework for Collaboration on the Economy, Energy, and Environment Initiative (October 20):** The Department of Energy (DOE) joined the Department of Commerce (DOC), EPA, the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Department of Labor (DOL) in signing a Memorandum of Understanding in support of the *Economy, Energy and Environment (E3) Initiative*. As part of the initiative, federal agencies assist small and medium manufacturers to become more efficient, competitive, and sustainable by working with local utility companies.
- ✓ **Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces Renewable Energy Initiatives to Spur Rural Revitalization throughout the Country (October 21):** Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Vilsack announced a final rule to implement the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP). Also announced was a five year agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to develop aviation fuel from forest and crop residues to lessen dependence on foreign oil and stabilize aviation fuel costs.
- ✓ **US Proposes First GHG and Fuel Rules for Large Trucks, Next Phase for Light Duty Vehicles Released (October 25):** The EPA and Department of Transportation (DOT) released a proposal for model years 2014-2018 for vehicles such as long-haul tractor-trailer trucks, delivery trucks and heavy-duty pickup trucks. The proposal would require a 10 to 20 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and fuel use, depending on the vehicle and engine type, by 2018. Public comments will be accepted until December 31. The agencies plan to finalize the standards by July 30, 2011.
- ✓ **Vice President Biden Launches Home Energy Scoring Program (November 9):** Vice President Biden joined DOE Secretary Steven Chu to announce a Home Energy Score pilot program. The program will give homes a score between 1 and 10 and compare them to homes in their region. The pilot phase will run through late spring 2011. The guidelines are available for public comment through January 7, 2011.

- ✓ **EPA Releases GHG Permitting Guidance (November 10):** EPA released several tools to assist state and local air pollution control agencies when greenhouse gas (GHG) permitting under the Clean Air Act begins January 2, 2011. Documents have guidance for the Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD), Title V permit programs to GHGs, including assistance for determining Best Available Control Technology (BACT), and more. EPA will take public feedback on the guidance document over the next few weeks.

Federal Legislative and Budget Updates

- ✓ **Climate Communities Post-Election Recap and Analysis (November 4):** Climate Communities hosted a webinar to discuss the future of climate and energy legislation and funding after the election. It is unlikely that cap and trade legislation will be introduced, but EPA will continue to regulate greenhouse gas emissions using its authority under the Clean Air Act unless any potential legislative attempt to strip them of this authority is successful. Smaller legislative efforts on items such as a renewable portfolio standard, electric vehicles, energy efficiency incentives and renewable energy tax incentives could pass with bipartisan support. President Obama has announced that he will shift his strategy from cap and trade to other smaller measures. There is momentum in the House to continue funding the Climate Showcase Communities Grant. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program is not currently funded in the draft budget in either the House or the Senate. Local officials from Arlington County, College Park, MD, Loudoun County, and Montgomery County have signed a Climate Communities letter in support of the EECBG program. Letters and signatures in support of the EECBG program are needed by December 6. See www.energyblockgrants.org for more information about the campaign.

State Government Updates

- ✓ **Maryland's Turning Point on Smart Meters (October 13):** The Maryland Utility Commission will not allow utilities to pass the cost of smart meters onto their customers before more specific benefits of using the meters are known. The utility companies will have to undertake the deployment costs themselves.

Local Government Updates

- ✓ **ICLEI USA Honors 20 Cities and counties for Achieving Milestones in Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions (September 27):** Alexandria, VA achieved two milestones and Loudoun County, VA achieved three milestones in ICLEI's Milestone Awards program. The program is a five milestone process where communities take steps to measure and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.
- ✓ **Arlington Starting Green Business Competition (October 17):** Arlington Green Games is a competition between businesses and offices in the county that will encourage more environmentally friendly operations and actions that will lower energy costs. The competition is scheduled to begin in January. The program is being run with guidance from ICLEI, who ran a successful program in Chicago last year.
- ✓ **Manassas to Try 'Smart Meters' for Water, Electricity Again (October 31):** Manassas officials are piloting a water and electric metering system that could help residents save money, and that could save the city money because the meters can be read remotely. City officials are also seeking volunteers for a load-management pilot program in Point of Woods East, which would allow residents to control thermostats and water heaters remotely. Residents who participate will get a credit per appliance and on their monthly bill.

- ✓ **Sharon Bulova Wins APA Leadership Award (October 27):** The National Capital Area Chapter of the American Planning Association gave the Distinguished Leadership Award for an Elected Official to Sharon Bulova, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Bulova supported the plan for the transformation of Tysons Corner and the construction of the Silver Line. She also presided over COG's Region Forward 2050 study.
- ✓ **Loudoun Green Gala (November 16):** Loudoun County Government and the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce held an award ceremony for the inaugural 2010 Green Business Challenge. Representatives from the WE CAN program attended, distributing materials with both Dominion and Washington Gas. Businesses are encouraged to participate in the 2011 challenge.

Utilities Updates

- ✓ **Pepco Begins Installing Smart Meters in the District of Columbia (September 30):** Pepco began a 15-month meter exchange program to install smart meters in the District of Columbia in October. Pepco has received \$34.1 million in federal stimulus grants to fund the program.
- ✓ **Pepco Unveils Reliability Enhancement Plan for the District of Columbia (October 7):** Pepco announced its Comprehensive Reliability Enhancement Plan for the District of Columbia. The six-point reliability plan advances work to increase reliability for distribution across the district by reducing the frequency and duration of outages through: enhanced vegetation management, priority feeders, load growth, distribution automation, feeder improvement and selective undergrounding.
- ✓ **Offshore Wind Power Line Wins Backing (October 12):** Google, Good Energies and Marubeni have agreed to invest a combine \$5 billion in a proposed 350-mile transmission backbone for future offshore wind farms along the Atlantic Seaboard. The spine would remove critical obstacles to wind power development. The first stretch from northern New Jersey to Rehoboth Beach, Delaware could go into service by early 2016.
- ✓ **Dominion Taking Next Step in Solar Power Plant (November 2):** Dominion has plans to build a \$35 million integrated solar and advanced energy storage facility in Halifax County. It received approval for a \$5 million grant from the Virginia Tobacco Commission for a four-megawatt facility it hopes to have operating in 2012. Dominion will present plans to the Virginia State Corporation Commission for approval next year.

Other National and International Updates

- ✓ **Obama Administration Announces Plans to Install Solar Panels on White House (October 5):** DOE Secretary Steven Chu and Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) Chair Nancy Sutley announced plans to install solar panels and a solar hot water heater on the roof of the White House.
- ✓ **Britain's New Carbon Tax: Could It Work Here? (October 26):** Britain changed the design of their Carbon Reduction Commitment, a mandatory cap-and-trade program. Revenue from the program will be used to support public finances, rather than given as rebates to those companies with the greatest carbon reductions. The program affects about 5,000 companies who consumed at least 6,000 mWh of electricity in 2008. The companies will have to buy allowances at a cost of 12 GBP per ton of CO₂ emitted, resulting in revenue estimated at 1 billion GBP for the government.
- ✓ **Historic US Vote Makes Buildings 30% More Energy Efficient (November 2):** US building officials have voted to support the first building codes that require 30% more efficient buildings for every state. Although some states, like California, have had energy efficiency requirements in place, most states have had little to no requirements about reducing energy use. Buildings are responsible for 38% of US emissions, so it is possible

that these reductions will help the US to meet the 17% reduction in greenhouse gases that would have been required in Copenhagen. The average homeowner spends more than \$2,000 a year on energy bills (more than insurance or property taxes) so these savings will be money in the pockets of the average American. Total savings could be as high as \$10.2 billion annually.

- ✓ **Cap and Trade in California and New Mexico (November 3):** Proposition 23 failed on California's ballot by a vote of 61% to 39%, allowing the state's recent climate change legislation to continue. This will allow the California Air Regulatory Board (CARB) to move forward with the proposed greenhouse gas cap-and-trade regulation, released on October 30. The legislation requires emissions in that state to be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. See [this article](#) for information on New Mexico's program.
- ✓ **ICLEI USA Releases STAR Community Index Sustainability Goals and Guiding Principles for Communities/Local Governments (November 3):** The STAR Community Index is a national standard to create more sustainable, livable communities. It released its Sustainability Goals and Guiding Principles, 81 goals and 10 guiding principles that define community-scale sustainability and set a national standard for local governments.
- ✓ **Release of the Fleet Electrification Roadmap (November 15):** Members of the Electrification Coalition released the Fleet Electrification Roadmap, a comprehensive analysis of the advantages, challenges, and policies necessary to spur electric drive technology in commercial and government vehicle fleets.

Upcoming Workshops and Events

- ✓ **December 8:** COG annual meeting and award ceremony