

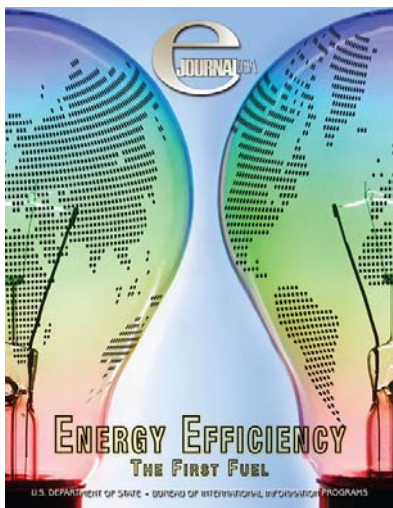


ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

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Embassy of the United States Madrid

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GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS



E-Journal - Energy Efficiency: The First Fuel
US Department of State
April 2009

Increasing the efficient use of existing energy supplies is widely acknowledged as the fastest, cheapest, and cleanest way to meet future energy needs. Energy Efficiency: The First Fuel examines the strong U.S. record of tapping efficiency as a resource, and the accelerated efforts by individuals, organizations, and governments to squeeze greater productivity from all energy sources.

<http://www.america.gov/media/pdf/ejs/0409.pdf#p0pup>

Remarks by the President on Investments in Clean Energy and New Technology

The White House
March 23, 2009

We gather at a challenging time for our country. We face an economic crisis unlike any we've known in a generation. We've lost 4.4 million jobs since this recession began. Millions of families are at risk of losing their homes, and tens of millions more have lost value in their homes. Our financial system has been severely undermined by the collapse of a credit bubble that was -- is as irresponsible as it was unsustainable.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-The-President-on-Investments-in-Clean-Energy-and-New-Technologies-3-23-09/

Fact Sheet: Investing In Our Clean Energy Future

The White House

March 23, 2009

The American Reinvestment Recovery Act and his FY10 budget dramatically increase investment in cutting-edge research, the development and deployment of clean energy technologies, and incentives for private sector R&D. These investments will establish the foundation for America's future economic prosperity, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and help combat climate change.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Fact-Sheet-Investing-in-Our-Clean-Energy-Future/

Chairmen Waxman, Markey Release Discussion Draft of New Clean Energy Legislation

Committee on Energy and Commerce

US House of Representatives

Chairman Henry A. Waxman of the Energy and Commerce Committee and Chairman Edward J. Markey of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee today released a draft of clean energy legislation that will create jobs, help end our dangerous dependence on foreign oil, and combat global warming. The American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (ACES) is a comprehensive approach to America's energy policy that charts a new course towards a clean energy economy.

http://energycommerce.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1560&Itemid=1

Economic Stimulus Act Provides \$16.8 Billion for EERE Programs

US Department of Energy

February 18, 2009

President Barack Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 on February 17, and the measure includes \$16.8 billion for the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE). The funding is a nearly tenfold increase for EERE, which received \$1.7 billion in fiscal year 2008.

http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/news/news_detail.cfm/news_id=12243

The Impact of Ethanol Use on Food Prices and Greenhouse-Gas Emissions

Congressional Budget Office

April 2009

Over the past several years, spurred by both rising gasoline prices and long-standing subsidies for producing ethanol, the use of ethanol as a motor fuel in the United States has grown at an annual average rate of nearly 25 percent. U.S. consumption of ethanol last year exceeded 9 billion gallons—a record high. The

paper discusses the relationship between ethanol, greenhouse-gas emissions, food prices, and federal spending on nutrition programs.

<http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/100xx/doc10057/04-08-Ethanol.pdf>

Climate Change: Observations on Federal Efforts to Adapt to a Changing Climate

United States Government Accountability Office

March 25, 2009

This report summarizes GAO's prior and ongoing work examining (1) actions that federal, state, local, and international authorities are taking to adapt to a changing climate, (2) the challenges that federal, state, and local officials face in their efforts to adapt, and (3) actions that the Congress and federal agencies could take to help address these challenges

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09534t.pdf>

Biochar: Examination of an Emerging Concept to Mitigate Climate Change.

Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress

February 3, 2009

Biochar is a charcoal produced under high temperatures using crop residues, animal manure, or any type of organic waste material. The combined production and use of biochar is considered a carbon-negative process, meaning that carbon is removed from the atmosphere and will not be released into the atmosphere at a later time. Biochar has multiple potential environmental benefits, foremost the potential to sequester carbon in the soil for hundreds to thousands of years at an estimate. Studies suggest that crop yields can increase as a result of applying biochar as a fertilizer to the soil.

The report describes biochar, its potential advantages and disadvantages, legislative support, and research and development activities underway in the United States and abroad.

http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40186_20090203.pdf

Clean Coal

U.S. Government Accountability Office

March 11, 2009

Coal-fired power plants generate about one-half of the nation's electricity and about one-third of its carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, which contribute to climate change. In 2003, the Department of Energy (DOE) initiated FutureGen, a commercial-scale, coal-fired power plant to incorporate integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC), an advanced generating technology, with carbon capture and storage (CCS). U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) recommends that DOE re-examine its restructuring decision, based on the comparative costs, benefits, and risks of the original and restructured programs.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09248.pdf>

Climate Change: Current Issues and Policy Tools

CRS Report
March 6, 2009

This report does not discuss or analyze current legislative proposals. Rather, it introduces the reader to fundamentals of the climate change issue. Part One summarizes current understandings and controversies concerning the science, economics, international cooperation, and other aspects of the climate change policy problem. Part Two is a brief update on the status of domestic and international policies. Part Three outlines the policy toolbox seen as being available to policymakers to address the challenge as they define the emerging legislative agenda.

Climate Literacy: the Essential Principles of Climate Science

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
March 2009

The guide is to help individuals of all ages understand how climate influences them and how they influence climate. “As climate policy is being discussed, it is very important for the citizens of our nation to have an appreciation for some of the fundamental aspects of climate and climate change,” said Tom Karl, director of NOAA’s National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N.C., and lead for NOAA’s climate services. “This guide is a first step for people who want to know more about the essential principles of our climate system, how to better discern scientifically credible information about climate, and how to identify problems related to understanding climate and climate change.”

<http://climate.noaa.gov/education/pdfs/ClimateLiteracyPoster-8.5x11-March09FinalLR.pdf>

25 Cities with the Most Energy Star Qualified Buildings in 2008

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
March 5, 2009.

The report presents a list of U.S. metropolitan areas with the largest number of energy efficient buildings in 2008 that have earned EPA’s Energy Star. The list is headed by Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, Washington, D.C., Dallas-Fort Worth, Chicago, Denver, Minneapolis-St Paul, Atlanta and Seattle.

http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/downloads/2008_Top_25_cities_chart.pdf

THINK TANKS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Energy Cost Index 2009: Ranking The States

Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council. Raymond J. Keating
April 7, 2009

The study ranks the 50 states and District of Columbia according to key energy costs affecting business. It looks at two major energy costs affecting small businesses, individuals and families: 1) the price of regular gasoline at the pump, and 2) the cost of electricity (average revenue per kilowatthour).

http://www.sbecouncil.org/uploads/EnEn%20_102%20-%20EnergyCostIndex%5B1%5D.pdf

Cap and Trade's Economic Impact

Interview by Toni Johnson with Michael Levi, Council on Foreign Relations Senior Fellow for Energy and Environment and Director of the Program on Energy Security and Climate Change
March 19, 2009

CFR.org asked six experts what impact a cap-and-trade system would have on the U.S. economy if it were imposed right now.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/18738/cap_and_trades_economic_impact.html?breadcrumb=%2F

Federal Government Should Give Greater Support to Decision Makers Coping With Climate Change

The Academies
March 12, 2009

The report recommends six principles that all agencies should follow in supporting decision makers who are facing the effects of climate change. For example, agencies' efforts should be driven by the needs of end users in the field, not by scientific research priorities. And agencies should create close ties between the scientists who produce climate change information and the practitioners who use it.

<http://www8.nationalacademies.org/onpinews/newsitem.aspx?RecordID=12626>

A Rising Tide of Ocean Debris

Ocean Conservancy
March 10, 2009

The report features the Marine Debris Index the world's only country-by-country, state-by-state analysis of trash in our ocean and waterways. The trash was collected and the data recorded by the nearly 400,000 volunteers around the world who combed their local beaches and waterways during the 23rd

International Coastal Cleanup the largest volunteer effort of its kind. Volunteers removed nearly seven million (6.8 million) pounds of debris, from 6,485 sites in 104 countries and 42 U.S. states and the District of Columbia with a common mission of improving the health of the ocean

http://www.oceanconservancy.org/site/PageServer?pagename=icc_report

Research Priorities For Fossil Fuels

RAND Corporation

March 5, 2009

This is the full text of testimony presented before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The author states that the U.S. energy policy needs to focus on developing greenhouse gas reduction technology.

http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2009/RAND_CT319.pdf

U.S. Solar Industry Year in Review 2008

Solar Energy Industries Association

March 2009

The review highlights a third year of record growth. It notes that 1,265 megawatts (MW) of solar power of all types were installed in 2008, bringing total U.S. solar power capacity up 17 percent to 8,775 MW. The 2008 figure included 342 MW of solar photovoltaic (PV), 139 MWTh, thermal equivalent, of solar water heating, 762 MWTh of pool heating and an estimated 21 MW of solar space heating and cooling.

http://www.seia.org/galleries/pdf/2008_Year_in_Review-small.pdf

Who Pays for Climate Policy? New Estimates of the Household Burden and Economic Impact of a US Cap-and-Trade System

Tax Foundation

March 2009

With climate change legislation becoming a top congressional priority in recent months, the study shows that a cap-and-trade system curbing greenhouse gas emissions would place an annual burden of \$144.8 billion on American households. The average annual household burden would be \$1,218, which would be approximately 2% of the average household income. The author explains that this burden would be disproportionately borne by low-income households, those under age 25 and over 75 years, those in southern states, and single parents with dependent children.

<http://www.taxfoundation.org/files/wp6.pdf>

ARTICLES

U.S. Homebuyers Opt for Energy Efficiency

America.gov

April 16, 2009

Developers who promote housing built to meet strict environmental standards say “green” building technologies are not only good for the environment but also for homeowners’ wallets. U.S. homebuyers are buying this message in greater numbers than ever.

<http://www.america.gov/st/business-english/2009/April/20090310104042AKlllenoCcM0.2718928.html&distid=ucs>

Greenhouse Gas Cuts Now Could Lessen Climate Change Effects

America.gov

April 16, 2009

Cutting emissions of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide (CO₂) by 70 percent during the 21st century could help nations worldwide avoid the most dangerous potential consequences of climate change, according to a new study by scientists at the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Colorado

<http://www.america.gov/st/energy-english/2009/April/20090416163105lcnirellep0.843487.html&distid=ucs>

California Turns to Sun for Energy

America.gov

April 7, 2009

California, a leader in promoting solar power, has come up with innovative financing schemes and incentives to make it easier to use rays from the sun as a power source. These efforts are part of state and municipal leaders’ push to cut greenhouse gas emissions and shore up the energy supply. State officials say the price of solar power is falling steadily in relation to hydrocarbon fuels and increasingly will provide “green” economic opportunities for their communities.

<http://www.america.gov/st/business-english/2009/April/20090303135102saikceinawz0.2817891.html&distid=ucs>

Town in Pennsylvania Catches Wind of Clean Energy Future

America.gov

April 7, 2009

Nearly 500 households in the town of 6,100 residents voluntarily pay an extra \$7.62 on their electricity bills monthly to buy clean energy generated from wind turbines in mountainous western Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) has honored Swarthmore as a Green Power Community — the only one in the East.

<http://www.america.gov/st/business-english/2009/April/20090311134331saikceinawz0.7878382.html&distid=ucs>

U.S. University Developing Renewable Energy from Bacteria

America.gov

April 7, 2009

Researchers at the University of California, Berkeley are investigating a new renewable energy source using living, nonhazardous bacteria to generate electricity

<http://www.america.gov/st/energy-english/2009/April/20090407085737abretnuh0.2269861.html&distid=ucs#ixzz0C51tvHKq>

U.S. Energy Efficiency Advances in 2009

America.gov

April 3, 2009

The economic stimulus law enacted in February 2009 recognizes the close ties between the economy and energy production, and provides a variety of funding sources and incentives to increase efficiency and encourage broader adoption of renewable energy technologies.

<http://www.america.gov/st/business-english/2009/April/20090410133728CMretroP0.1103871.html?CP.rss=true>

U.S. Institute Helps Developing Nations Put Climate Data to Use Core funding from NOAA helps build resilience in adapting to climate change

America.gov

March 13, 2009

As climate variability drives alterations in the physical environment, it is increasingly critical that all nations — especially the most vulnerable — are able to understand and harness climate and weather data in their efforts to adapt to a changing planet.

<http://www.america.gov/st/env-english/2009/March/20090313114740lcnirellep0.8691065.html&distid=ucs>

SELECTED WEB PAGES

DSIRE is a comprehensive source of information on state, local, utility, and federal incentives that promote renewable energy and energy efficiency.

<http://www.dsireusa.org/>

EarthTrends is a comprehensive online database, maintained by the World Resources Institute, that focuses on the environmental, social, and economic trends that shape our world.

<http://earthtrends.wri.org/>

Envirofacts provides access to several EPA databases to provide you with information about environmental activities that may affect air, water, and land anywhere in the United States. With Envirofacts, you can learn more about these environmental activities in your area or you can generate maps of environmental information.

<http://www.epa.gov/enviro/>

POLL

Half of Americans Believe Economic and Environmental Goals Are Aligned and We Do Not Need To Choose Between Them

The Harris Poll

February 24, 2009

- ...46% of Americans say that the issue of environmental conservation is something that is more important to them personally than it was a few years ago while 47% say it is no more or less important...

http://harrisinteractive.com/harris_poll/pubs/Harris_Poll_2009_02_24.pdf

UPCOMING WEBCAST

America's New Energy Economy

Gavin Newsom, San Francisco Mayor

April 17 at 2 p.m. EDT (18:00 GMT)

Canada and the United States share many of the same environmental concerns related to climate change and global warming. San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom will speak to Canadians interested in the topic and curious to hear about the environmental and economic initiatives he has put forth for his city.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/askamerica.html#gnewsom>

VIDEOS

Renewable Energy and Climate Change

2:11

The development of clean renewable energy sources by countries around the world may help to avert or lessen climate change and meet growing worldwide energy needs.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?videoid=1459170186>

Young Environmentalists

2:00

Young Americans and students from around the world work together to make positive change and ensure a healthy planet in the future. The speakers are students and faculty at the College of the Atlantic in Bar Harbor, Maine.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?videoid=2646924001>

The Greening of San Francisco

3:03

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and city officials describe their aggressive goals for “greening” the city using its own renewable resources.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?videoid=1460773999>

The Challenge of Climate Change

3:19

Nations can work together to reduce greenhouse gases and lessen the impact of human activities on the environment.

<http://www.america.gov/multimedia/video.html?videoid=1341017897>

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