



Green Legislative Update

Published Weekly During West Virginia's Legislative Session

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Under the Dome

By Donald S. Garvin, Jr.
WVEC Legislative Coordinator

Week 6 – Follow the Money

Last week the House of Delegates quietly passed HB 2931, “Removing the timber severance tax for years 2010 through 2013.”

Unfortunately, this bill was flying well beneath the WVEC radar screen. There is a similar bill in the Senate – SB 92 – and I had placed both bills on our minor bill tracking list, as I have done for the last three or four years. I didn’t even see that the Finance Committee had taken up the bill until I noticed that the full House had passed the bill.

Apparently this bill was flying well beneath House members’ radar screen as well. NOT ONE delegate voted against passage. And NOT ONE delegate voted against waiving the constitutional rule that a bill must be read on three days before passage.

So what does this bill do?

Basically, it removes the paltry “one and twenty-two hundredths percent” tax – that’s 1.22 percent – on the gross value of timber harvested in the state.

On its face value it doesn’t sound like much money, right?

Well, there is a fiscal note attached to this bill – a fiscal note submitted by Randy Dye, the Director of the Division of Forestry – that shows just how big an impact removing the severance tax will have.

The severance tax provides about 25% of the annual revenue of the Division of Forestry. The fiscal note estimates removing the tax will result in the loss of 4.6 million dollars to the Division over the four years.

Here’s what the Division of Forestry Fiscal Note concludes:

... continued on page 3

SSP Releases Slurry Study At Capitol

Coalfield residents hope preliminary lab results showing their water is unsafe to drink will spur lawmakers to stop coal slurry from being put in the water.

At a Capitol press conference Thursday, members of the Sludge Safety Project released an independent study on water and slurry samples from six sites in the state. An analysis found the samples contained concentrations of various metals that exceed federal primary drinking water standards.

“We’re making the case to say there’s enough data here, now, to say, ‘Enough,’” said Patricia Feeney, a coordinator with the Sludge Safety Project.

After coal is washed in a mixture of water and chemicals, it’s pumped underground into abandoned mines or into coal waste impoundments.

The state Department of Environmental Protection has missed deadlines on a study the Legislature mandated on the safety of that practice. The DEP gave samples from the sites to Wheeling Jesuit University, which then sent them to the National Center for Water Quality Research in Ohio.

The analysis found that concentrations of six metals - antimony, arsenic, lead, barium, cadmium and chromium - exceeded federal standards for primary drinking water. It also found “exceptionally high” concentrations of metals in the solid slurry samples from all the sites.

Coalfield residents said the water has sickened their families, and they held photographs showing brown, thick water in their sinks. “The DEP is not protecting us,”

... continued on page 3

WV Environmental Council Celebrates 20th Year Fall Gathering Reunion Planned

By Denise Poole

Founded in 1989 as the lobbying arm for the environmental movement, the "e-council" has experienced highs and lows, growth and struggles, successes and failures. We've gained members, and lost some dear friends. Some organizations alive in 1989 are thriving, while others are non-existent. New organizations have formed to address environmental atrocities we never dreamed of 20 years ago.

Many of you reading this were among those that gathered at Cedar Lakes that summer as the seed was planted, and the decision was made to form what became the West Virginia Environmental Council. Others of you have become environmentally active since that time.

In 1989, e-mail list serves, blog sites, and facebook did not exist. WVEC served as a major part of communication around the state through the G.R.E.E.N. (Grassroots Environmental Effort Newsletter) and phone trees. We were the entity where all groups and individuals could come for shared information and meet in person twice a year. Times have changed. We no longer have the same needs as two decades ago. Even though many organizations lobby their individual issues, the e-council still remains the only 501-C4 organization able to lobby year round, and look at all legislation at the capitol by fielding a lobby team.

As we celebrate this 20th year anniversary, and the 19th year as a lobby team, we ask each of you to help us reflect and evaluate WVEC.

Quite honestly, we need you. Now! We need you to attend our 20th annual Fall Convention (plans are in the works for September or October.) If you are in a leadership position with an organization, we ask that you contact us and help plan the weekend to include your group. If you are someone who is an "old-timer" we'd like to have you join with us for a reunion.

We would love for you to send us a short story about your experiences as an environmentalist - perhaps a story about why or what issue caused you to become active. Perhaps you have a story about a particular incident you came up against while working on an issue. If we receive enough submissions, I will put together a booklet of memories by the fall convention. Include photographs if you have them. Your experiences and thoughts are valuable.

We will be in touch with details for the fall gathering, and hope to hear from you.

Legislative Session 2009 Information Sources:

Legislative Reference & Information Center:

MB-27, Bld. 1 - State Capitol Complex, Charleston WV 25305

WV Legislative web-site: www.legis.state.wv.us

(For bill tracking, bulletin board (journals), legislators' e-mails.)

To Call Toll Free: 1-877-565-3447 or local Charleston area: (304) 347-4836

WV Environmental Council Web-site: www.wvecouncil.org

WVEC Office: (304) 414-0143

CAPWIZ: <http://capwiz.com/catholicconferencewv/issues/alert/?alertid=10836991>

Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition:

www.ohvec.org/ovec_news.html and www.ohvec.org/news_gen.html daily.

Every morning, OVEC checks scores of news sources and posts links.

WV Environmental Council 2009 Board of Directors:

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Legislative Update welcomes letters, articles, and art work from readers and reserves the right to edit or reject submissions. Please send materials to:

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Under The Dome ... *continued from page 1*

“Unless we receive general revenue to make up for the . . . severance tax funds, we will not be able to purchase any vehicles, we would have to shut down all the offices except the State Headquarters, and we would have to lay off 30 employees for the Logging and Sediment Control Act (LSCA) program and would no longer be able to regulate logging and water quality as required by WV Code.”

“At the end of FY2011,” the note continues, “with the Severance Tax Fund balance near zero, all employees (30 FTE) for the LSCA Program would be laid off, and the Division would no longer be able to regulate logging and water quality as required by WV Code 19:1B.

“Additionally, in FY2010 we would begin closing all offices with the exception of the state headquarters.

“The Division would be forced to end the payment to volunteer firefighters and VFDs for their time and equipment use in the suppression of forest fires, thereby increasing the time, cost, and hazards for Division employees fighting the fires on the ground.

“Beginning in FY2010, the Division would be forced to suspend regular replacement of its vehicle fleet. While this would result in an immediate estimated savings of \$838,000 in FY2010-2013, this short-term savings would be offset by higher repair and maintenance costs on the aging fleet.”

How in the world could members of the Finance Committee ignore the impact this will have, particularly after hearing this directly from Randy Dye in a committee presentation?

Lobbyists for the West Virginia Forestry Association have apparently convinced members that the loss of the timber tax revenues will be made up by increases from the general revenue fund budget.

In other words, West Virginia taxpayers will pay for regulating the industry, which is preposterous in the first place.

And just how reasonable is it to expect that will happen, with the Governor now estimating the state needs a 4.5 percent cut in next year’s budget?

At any rate, HB 2931 is now in the hands of Senator Walt Helmick (D-Pocahontas), chair of the Senate Finance Committee.

So if you think all of this is outrageous, give him a call. He can be reached at (304) 357-7980.

Today is the first day of spring, so keep your bird feeders full and enjoy the new colors on all our fine-feathered friends.

SSP Releases Slurry Study At Capitol ... *continued from page 1*

said Chuck Nelson, a Raleigh County resident. “We are not protected, and our health is being put at risk.”

Sen. Randy White, D-Webster, has introduced legislation that would ban injection permits beginning in May. He said he fears the findings released Thursday are “just the beginning,” and urged action on his proposal.

The Rev. Dennis Sparks, director of the West Virginia Council of Churches, said the issue is a top concern for his group. “We’re glad the study is here,” Sparks said. “But if our Legislature really cared, they would have acted before there was a study.”

DEP spokeswoman Kathy Cosco said Thursday that results of the Legislature-mandated study would be ready in May. Then, the Department of Health and Human Resources will determine whether there is a health threat.

Delays on the DEP study “have not been intentional,” Cosco said.

“We realized this was far more complicated and complex than what we thought it would be, and probably what the Legislature thought it would be,” she said. “The complexity of the issue, and the policy decisions that will be made based on the findings of this study, warranted the time we took.”

Besides the ban on slurry injection, members of the Sludge Safety Project also want emergency drinking water to be provided to residents near coal slurry sites, and for DHHR to submit a budget and timeline for their portion of the study.

(This article by reporter Alison Knezevich appeared in the March 20 online edition of the Charleston Gazette, and is reprinted here with their permission).

Shameless Plea

It's that time of the session and it happens every year ... funds run low. So if you haven't renewed your membership, or if you have some spare change in your pocket, now is the time to send it. We have a great lobby team, and they deserve to be paid.

If you do it today, and you'll feel better for it tomorrow!

Don Garvin, WVEC Legislative Coordinator

E-Day 2009 In Review

"Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Economy"

E-Day at the Capitol was held last Wednesday, March 11th for, believe it or not, the 19th year. Over 20 environmental organizations & green business exhibitors - and approximately 100 citizens participated, as we gathered in the lower rotunda and lobbied our legislators.

Our press conference and mid-day program focused on renewable energy and related legislation. Speakers included Delegate Barbara Fleischauer (D-Monongalia) who has championed renewable energy legislation - and whose refrain was "wild & wonderful West Virginia" urging us to remind Governor Manchin and our legislators of our state's slogan and the meaning behind it. Other legislators saying a few words included first time Delegates Manypenny (D-Taylor), Bill Wooten (D-Raleigh). Additionally, Beth Ann Boyd joined us from the eastern panhandle to speak representing 'WV Citizens Against PATH, and Julie Archer briefed the crowd on SORO (Surface Owner's Rights) legislation. Don Garvin gave everyone an overview of all environmental bills active, and encouraged us to 'go ye out and lobby'.

We were treated to a skit entitled "Nothing to Worry About" by Kanawha County elementary and middle school students. Organized by Chelena McCoy, WVEC's Vice President, these young environmentalists were: Donald Forman, Isaac Googel, Aaron Bard, Rachel Long, Josh Wyner, Michael Susman, Austin Susman and Jess McDaniel.

In the evening, our annual E-Day benefit dinner brought in many friends including House Majority Leader Brent Boggs, Delegates Mary Poling, Don Perdue, Bill Hamilton, Barbara Fleischauer, Joe Talbot, Mike Manypenny and Senators Clark Barnes and Randy White. And of course, Speaker of the House Rick Thompson who received WVEC's "Chuck Chambers Public Service" award.

Special gratitude to: musicians Robin Godfrey (who never lets us down) and Dugan Carter; WVEC's Prez Danny Chiotos, VP Chelena McCoy, Sec. Karen Grubb, Treas. Frank Young; Board members Mary Ellen O'Farrell, John Christensen, Denise Poole, Chuck Wyrostok, Greg Carrol, Kevin Smith. Other e-council volunteers include Treavor Swan, Rowan Zoeller, Lisa Diehl, Becky Young, and Sally Swisher.

Extra cheers to our lobby team Don Garvin (Leg. Coordinator), John Christensen, Leslee McCarty (lobbyists) and Denise Poole (administrative, Leg. Update newsletter editor & organizing support.)

WVEC 2009 Awardees:

Speaker of the House of Delegates Richard Thompson, "Chuck Chambers Public Service" award. Delegate Richard Thompson (D-Wayne) was elected Speaker by his fellow delegates in 2007, running on a platform of openness and inclusion. WVEC honored him for his leadership on and commitment to enacting a strong "antidegradation" water quality rule for West Virginia. He included WVEC at

the table every step of the way, and stood firm against industry proposals to weaken protections for the state's highest quality rivers and streams.

Denise Poole, "Mother Jones" award. Denise has offered nearly 15 years of non-stop devotion to the protection of West Virginia's environment. Her broad-range of interests, leadership, organizing skills and creativity are amazing. She has worked primarily with the West Virginia Environmental Council (WVEC) serving as a lobbyist, newsletter editor, Program Coordinator, fundraiser, and organizer. On the WVEC board of directors, Denise has served as a regional representative, treasurer, Vice-President, and President. She has also worked in a variety of capacities with such organizations as WV Citizen Action Group, OVEC, Common Cause WV, Blackwater Canyon Campaign. Her interest in politics led her to work for local, state and national political campaigns. Denise co-founded the "Sustainable Living for WV" organization, and has been Co-Director of the annual WV Sustainable Fair since 1999.

Beth Little, "Laura Forman Grassroots Activist" award. If you want something done, ask a busy person - and Beth is busy! Beth came to Pocahontas County from Philadelphia over thirty years ago, and has fought to protect the mountains that drew her here since she arrived. Her selfless devotion, attention to detail and leadership ability make her a sought - after member of many community and state boards. She has worked tirelessly to protect the Monongahela National Forest, promote wilderness, helped defeat more than one proposed coal burning electric plant - including the recently proposed Western Greenbrier co-generation plant - and is now actively fighting to control Marcellus shale gas drilling. Beth has worked with the WV Chapter of the Sierra Club, WV Highlands Conservancy, Cleanbrier and is now serving on the Pocahontas County Water Resources Study Task Force.

Rory McIlmoil, "Linda Schnautz Environmental Courage" award. Rory is a champion of clean energy and green jobs in West Virginia and around the country. He earned an MA in Global Environmental Politics from American University with his thesis on Mountaintop Removal in West Virginia. Rory worked as a research assistant with Appalachian Voices in 2007, and then hired as a community organizer for Coal River Mountain Watch, promoting the Coal River Wind Project and wind power as a viable alternative to strip-mining in southern West Virginia coalfields. Rory was among those arrested in February protesting at Coal River Mountain.

Lorelei Scarbro, "Linda Schnautz Environmental Courage" award. Lorelei is co-director of the Coal River Wind Project and community organizer. She is a coal miner's widow and grandmother whose back fence literally demarcates the front lines of the impending mountaintop removal site. Lorelei was among those arrested in February protesting at Coal River Mountain.

... continued on page 5

Solar Energy Tax Credit For WV Homeowners

By John Christensen, WVEC Lobbyist

In an unexpected show of progressive legislative thinking in the Mountain State, two similar solar energy tax credit bills — SB 608 and HB 2535 – were advanced out of committee this week with little or no opposition.

Both bills would give homeowners who install a residential solar energy system on their property after July 1, 2009 the opportunity to qualify for a state personal income tax credit of 30% (up to a maximum credit of \$2,000) of the cost to purchase and install the renewable system.

Both bills allow for a “carryover credit.” If the residential property owner exceeds the allowable tax credit amount they may claim the remaining credit in the following taxable year.

In the Senate, the only sticking point on the bill was the net metering provision, which would reward the residential customer for producing electricity in excess of their monthly consumption at a rate of one and one-half cent per kilowatt hour up to 25 kw.

This provision might be in conflict with an already established Public Service Commission net metering policy, so Sen. Clark Barnes (R-Randolph) suggested striking it from the bill in the Senate version.

West Virginia PSC net metering rules have a long way to go to measure up to other states like Maryland’s law which is more consumer friendly toward residential power generation than ours. Hopefully that will change in the future.

Del. Nancy Guthrie (D-Kanawha) has proposed a related bill — HB 3114 — that would mandate that state-chartered banks provide loans for consumers purchasing solar energy panels. The loans would be of the low interest, ten-year variety to make it easier still for West Virginia homeowners to make the purchase.

These bills have particular personal interest for me. I plan to start work installing solar panel systems as soon as the session ends, and legislation such as this will undoubtedly promote that effort if passed. Just consider all the folks who are thinking about installing these systems but cannot afford to pay the extra couple of thousand it takes to make it happen. The state tax credit, along with existing federal credits, will enable them to do it and enjoy cheaper electricity bills for decades to come.

WVEC applauds delegate Bill Wooton (D-Raleigh) and Sen. John Unger (D-Berkeley) – lead sponsors of these bills – for their work in getting these bills introduced and hopefully passed into law. Sen. Unger was able to get it out of his Transportation & Infrastructure committee, while Del. Wooton got his passed out of Energy, Industry, and Labor.

Both bills are double referenced to the Finance Committees of their respective bodies. We hope committee chairs Walt Helmick (D-Pocahontas) and Harry Keith White (D-Mingo) will get these bills passed through their respective committees in the coming weeks.

E-Day Review ... continued from page 4

Ken Auvil - "Green Building, LLC", "Green Entrepreneur" award. Ken is a veteran West Virginia homebuilder of the Green Building Network and West Virginia Green, Inc. in Belington, WV. He opened the West Virginia Green Building School at Windwood near Davis in Tucker County in 2008. Ken offers monthly seminars on self-help or "sweat equity" housing. Ken has been active with the WV Sustainable Fairs, regularly offering workshops and seminars on 'Saving Energy In Your Home' and related topics. He tirelessly advocates for sustainable living. Mr. Auvil is also a former member of the state House of Delegates.

Heather Sprouse, "Youth Activism" award. Heather attends Marshall University in Huntington, where she was awarded the Sierra Student Coalitions BECC fellowship for Spring 2008, working with other students on campus. She served as President of Marshall Action for Peaceful Solutions in 2008, a student organization dedicated to promoting social justice and sustainability on campus and the greater local and global community. Advocated for a student led garden to promote local and organic produce, a sustainable recycling program in the residence and dining halls, helped launch the Campus Climate Challenge to encourage Marshall to sign the President's Climate Commitment. Heather also helped lead Marshall to be the first college in West Virginia to impose a \$5 per semester "green fee" to help fund environmental initiatives on campus. She was among those arrested in February protest at Coal River Mountain.

"There is something fundamentally wrong in treating the Earth as if it were a business in liquidation."

Herman Daly

Stimulus Funds Coming To A Community Near You?

By Leslee McCarty, WVEC Lobbyist

Jeff Herholdt is West Virginia's Energy Division director, and the person in charge of the [State Energy Program](#), which must be submitted to the feds before we can draw down \$33 million in stimulus money.

In a House Judiciary Committee meeting Thursday, March 19th, Herholdt told committee members that the \$33 million in Federal funds would be used to renovate state buildings to bring them up to higher energy efficiency standards, but he failed to mention lots of other innovative things that the monies could also be used for!

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that the State Energy Program would focus on including job creation and retention, saving energy, increasing energy generation from renewable sources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

States are instructed to plan for and maximize efforts toward achieving a reduction in per capita energy consumption by at least 25% of the state's 1990 per capita energy use by 2012.

States are encouraged to use their stimulus funding not only to support current energy and renewable energy projects, but to "seed sustainable programs that put in place long term funding mechanisms, such as revolving loans and energy savings performance contracting that will lead to long term market transformation."

The State has to obligate the \$33 million by September 2010 if the funds are approved. If approved, the funds could be used for hybrid fleets for government agencies, mass transit and privately owned vehicles. They could be used for programs to conduct energy audits of private homes, loans for energy efficient housing, retrofitting community centers, holding training and other workshops ... installing solar energy systems ... the list is very long, and you can read it and more on our web site.

If you want to read the Environmental Council's suggested Citizen's Energy Plan, go to our website www.wvecouncil.org and see how much further along we are than the State in thinking about this area.

"Clean Coal" ...
is an oxymoron

Growing Hemp Boosts the Economy You Can Help Make It So !

By Chuck Wprostok

Remember back in 2002 when growing hemp in WV became law? Many were surprised by the willingness of state lawmakers to overwhelmingly pass such a controversial "green" bill, but after a spirited effort spearheaded by Sen. Karen Facemyer, WV Environmental Council lobbyists and the national organization Vote Hemp, it happened.

Now, finally, in a burst of sanity, Congress is getting set to pass a law clearing the way for our farmers to finally cash in. West Virginia, ready with the legal framework in place, would be one of the front runners. Eleven other states have passed pro-hemp legislation or resolutions.

The Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2009 will be introduced soon. Last week, the offices of Rep. Ron Paul and Rep. Barney Frank sent out a Dear Colleague letter to members of Congress inviting them to be original co-sponsors of the Act, which does not yet have a bill number.

The legislation would allow American farmers to once again grow hemp to the extent allowed under state laws, repealing a provision in federal law that makes the U.S. the *only industrialized nation* where farmers are prohibited from competing in the booming industrial hemp market. Draconian rules enforced by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) kept American farmers from competing with those in Canada, Europe and China. Farm groups have long advocated a return to industrial hemp farming, especially for tobacco farmers hit hard with plummeting sales.

And the environmental benefits are *huge*. Hemp, unlike its sister, marijuana, has almost no THC (the intoxicant in pot) and is a fast-growing "weed" that is annually renewable, doesn't need chemical fertilizers or pesticides, and can virtually replace trees as the primary source for making paper. Its prohibition has been prompted by large corporations interested in making clothes from chemicals, parts from plastic and lubricants from fossil-based oil. Check out votehemp.com for an extensive rundown of how hemp can provide these fibers, lubricants and more.

Want to see this happen? Contact your U.S. Senators and your Congressperson and ask them to consider becoming an original co-sponsor of the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2009. This is a piece of the environmental puzzle whose time has finally come.

Help make it so.



"Coal-Aholism" Discovered In Charleston

It has come to our attention that there may be individuals around the state who could use some intervention to help them with their addiction to coal.

These individuals may be found at the highest levels of government, so we are going to try and get a handle on this disease before it spreads any further. Here is a start on a list of symptoms, but you may have noticed some more in your community, so please send us your ideas. We have taken the liberty to name this disease "coal-aholism".

You might be a "coal-aholic" if:

- You believe coal is carbon neutral.
- You do not think "clean coal" is an incredibly dangerous oxymoron.
- You believe alternative energy refers to coal and coal by-products.
- You created a state energy efficiency plan that relies mostly on coal and gives lip service to renewable energy.
- You think it is a good idea to build a giant transmission line across the state to get coal fired power plants' energy to folks on the east coast.
- You think it is OK to destroy whole mountains and streams to feed your addiction.
- You don't worry about pollution of streams and drinking water from toxic coal sludge and slurry.
- You are an absentee mountain top removal mine owner whose family does not have to suffer the consequences of the damage you are doing and you live in a mansion in a beautiful gated community.

Tell us where you are, and what symptoms you are noticing. We'll be happy to post those symptoms in *Legislative Update* so others can benefit from your findings.

"The free market knows
all about prices but
nothing about value."

Octavio Paz, 1990 Nobel Award Winner

Clean Elections Update

By Carol Warren

WV Citizens for Clean Elections

We are fast approaching the deadline for pieces of legislation to move from their committee and chamber of origin. If our Public Campaign Financing Act (H2764) is not taken up this coming week, it will die in committee. So if you have not made your calls to the members of Subcommittee A (below), please do so as soon as possible. If you've called, please consider calling again!

Del. Barbara Fleischauer, Chair (D-Monongalia) - 340-3169

barbaraf@mail.wvnet.edu

Del. Bonnie Brown (D -Kanawha) - 340-3106

bbrown1@mail.wvnet.edu

Del. Mike Caputo (D-Marion) - 340-3249

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Del. Patrick Lane (R-Kanawha) - 340-3275

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Del. Patti Schoen (R-Putnam) - 340-3141

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Del. Sally Susman (D-Raleigh) -340-3183

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Del. Robert Tabb (D-Jefferson) - 340-3274

rtabb@mail.wvnet.edu

The public financing legislation for Supreme Court Justices (S311) is still under discussion with House sponsors who are interested in moving the proposal forward. We are hopeful that this bill will be worked out and brought up for consideration next week. Don't forget our two upcoming events, at which we invite you to join us! Please let us know if you need more information or directions:

Sunday, March 22 at 9:30 AM - Julie Archer will speak about Clean Elections to the Unitarian Universalist discussion group in Charleston (500 Kanawha Blvd. W.)

Saturday, March 28 at 10:00 AM - Carol Warren will speak, and Labor Council members will participate in a panel discussion of Clean Elections, in the basement conference room at the Marshall Student Center, Huntington. A continental breakfast will be provided.

Thanks for all your help - please make those calls!

*Editors note: To contact Carol directly, call:
(304)847-5121*

Think Renewable Energy

Major Bills We Are Tracking

Bill Number	Title	Committee
Senate Bills		
SB 14	Requiring jobs impact statement for proposed legislation (<i>Perennial Bad Bill</i>)	Passed Econ Dev, to Judiciary
SB 28	Public health assessment of DEP rules (<i>WVEC Bill</i>)	H&HR
SB 45	Authorizing DEP Secretary to sign NPDES permits (<i>Bad Bill</i>)	EIM
SB 79	Requiring PSC promulgate wind power project rules	Judiciary
SB 92	Eliminating timber severance tax (<i>Bad Bill</i>) (similar to HB 2931)	Finance
SB 234	Exempting fish farm sludge from DEP sludge management requirements (<i>Bad Bill</i>)	Agriculture
SB 237	Establishing returnable beverage container deposit program (<i>Bottle Bill</i>)	Nat Resources
SB 240	Repealing nuclear power plant ban (<i>Terrible Bill</i>)	Died
SB 241	Creating WV Public Campaign Financing Act (Clean Elections)	Judiciary
SB 279	Industrial accidents and emergency response regulations (think MIC)	On Third Reading
SB 289	Creating WV Innovation and Development Act	Passed Econ Dev, to Finance
SB 297	Alternative and Renewable Energy Portfolio Act (Governor's Bill)	Judiciary
SB 301	Creating Green Buildings Act (WVEC Bill)	Transportation
SB 325	Creating WV Energy Efficient Buildings Program Act	Transportation
SB 371	Creating Energy Efficient Building Act	Transportation
SB 374	Creating Oil and Gas Surface Owner's Bill of Rights (SORO Bill)	EIM
SB 375	Relating to Office of Coalfield Community Development (Governor's Bill)	Passed Senate, to House EIL
SB 396	Regulating carbon dioxide sequestration and storage (Governor's Bill)	EIM
SB 461	Extending selenium effluent limits compliance time (<i>Terrible Bill</i>)	Passed EIM, to Judiciary
SB 478	Creating Surface Owners Protection Act (Committee Bill)	EIM
SB 505	Imposing tax on electricity transmission lines (Governor's Bill)	Finance
SB 518	Granting DEP Advisory Council rule-making authority (Coal's Bill)	Judiciary
SB 568	Moratorium on slurry injection permits (<i>Great Bill</i>)	EIM
SB 608	Providing tax credit for certain solar energy systems (<i>Great Bill</i>) (same as HB 2535)	Passed Trans, to Finance
House Bills		
HB 2098	Prohibiting oil and gas operators from daylighting	EIL
HB 2133	Increasing the penalties for discarding trash on land and in streams	Passed Nat Res, to
Judiciary		
HB 2321	Extending the alternative-fuel motor vehicle tax credit (<i>Great Bill</i>)	Finance
HB 2363	Jobs Impact Statement Act (<i>Perennial Bad Bill</i>)	EIL
HB 2474	Exempting fish farm sludge from DEP sludge management requirements (<i>Bad Bill</i>)	Passed House, to Senate Ag
HB 2535	Creating a tax credit for certain solar energy systems (<i>Great Bill</i>)	Passed EIL, to Finance
HB 2565	Industrial accidents and emergency response regulations (think MIC)	EIL
HB 2682	Alternative and Renewable Energy Portfolio Act (Governor's Bill)	EIL
HB 2764	West Virginia Public Campaign Financing Act (Clean Elections)	Judiciary
HB 2860	Regulating the sequestration and storage of carbon dioxide (Governor's Bill)	Passed Judiciary, to Finance
HB 2887	PSC Reforms Act (WVEC Bill)	Judiciary
HB 2891	Renewable Portfolio Standards Sustainable Energy Act (WVEC Bill)	EIL
HB 2931	Removing timber severance tax for years 2010 through 2013 (<i>Bad Bill</i>)	Passed House, to Sen. Finance
HB 2948	Green Buildings Act (Interim Committee Bill)	Gov Org
HB 2960	Marcellus Shale water pollution control (WVEC Bill)	Gov Org
HB 2980	"West Virginia Energy Efficiency Act" (WVEC Bill)	Gov Org
HB 3000	Imposing tax on electricity transmission lines (Governor's Bill)	Judiciary Subcommittee
C		
HB 3003	Continuing special reclamation tax on coal	Judiciary
HB 3023	Creating Oil and Gas Surface Owner's Bill of Rights (SORO Bill)	EIL
HB 3033	Strengthening vehicle emission standards	EIL
HB 3037	Establishing a returnable beverage container deposit program (New Bottle Bill)	Judiciary
HB 3058	Eliminating the use of light plastic bags	EIL
HB 3081	Coal-to-Liquid Act of 2009 (<i>Terrible Tax Credits Bill</i>)	EIL
HB 3114	Loans for purchasing solar energy panels (<i>Great Bill</i>)	Banking
HB 3131	Green Buildings Act (WVEC Bill)	EIL
HB 3176	Surface Owners Protection Act (Committee Bill)	EIL
HB 3206	Authorizing DEP Secretary to sign NPDES permits (<i>Bad Bill</i>)	Gov Org
HB 3271	Creating a tax credit for certain solar energy systems text (<i>Great Bill</i>)	EIL

(NOTE: All agency rules bills have been introduced sporadically in both houses. WVEC is tracking those separately).



Calendar of Events



March 22: Coalfield authors discuss their nonfiction works at Taylor Books, 226 Capitol Street, Charleston. 2 PM - 5 PM. Wyoming County WV native Dr. Shirley Steward Burns ("Bringing Down the Mountains") and Harlan County KY native Bud Fultz ("Fixing the Ungodly Mess") will discuss their books and viewpoints.

Sponsored by Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (OVEC).

March 25-26: "Building A Greener Future" Conference. National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) near Shepherdstown. Homeowner sessions / weatherization & remodeling projects.

For more information: Olga Adams (304) 267-8953.

March 27 & 28: 3rd Annual Conference, "Growing a Green Generation". Oglebay Resort & Conference Center. Keynote speakers - Ruth McCully, Director of EPA's office of Health Protection and Environmental Education and Vince Meldrum, past director of Earth Force. Panel discussion on Green Schools with education, environmental, & community leaders.

For more information: 1 (800) 624-6988.

March 28: Eastern Panhandle Green Homes Tour. Sponsored by the Potomac Valley Audubon Society. Fee: \$15 (a portion applied toward purchase of renewable energy credits to offset the carbon load emitted as a result of the tour. Balance used to support Potomac Valley Audubon's environmental education programming with area school children.)

For more information: <http://www.potomacaudubon.org/>

March 28: Panel discussion on Clean Elections. Marshall University, Student Center (lower level conference room), Huntington. Begins at 10:00 AM. Carol Warren (WV Citizens for Clean Elections) will speak, and Labor Council members will participate. A continental breakfast will be provided.

For more information: (304)

April 11: Legislative Session adjourns at midnight.

April 17 & 18: Annual WV Sustainable Fair 2009 - "Green Makes \$en\$e". Stonewall Resort, Roanoke WV (exit 91 off I 79.) Jeffrey Barrie, noted filmmaker, serves as keynote speaker addressing "Kilowatt Ours - The Energy Conservation Solution". New edition of his film will be shown, followed by a question & answer period. Other Highlights: Seminars on Green Building, Slow Food WV, Fuel Cell

Technology, Solar Energy, 21st Century Collaborative, Children's Gardening; Exhibits, Demonstrations, Art Exhibit - "Sustenance for the Soul", Alternative Transportation. Gourmet Benefit Dinners: "Taste of WV - Farmers & Their Chefs" (Friday, cost \$25) and "A Sustainable Feast" (Saturday - cost \$40). Live auction Saturday evening with auctioneer Bob Stewart, of Stewart's Auction Co., Jane Lew, WV. Admission only \$5. at the door. Reservations for either or both dinners available in advance.

For more information: www.sustainablelivingforWV.com or call Denise, (304) 617-7073 - deniseap@earthlink.net

April 25: Earth Day Celebration. Folk Life Center, Pipestem WV. Features a panel discussion on wind power; live music, camping.

For more information: Shelly Turner -(304) 466-0626.

May 1: WV Citizen Action Group's Annual Spring Fundraiser. Woman's Club of Charleston - 1600 Virginia Street East. Great buffet, progressive friends, silent auction. Live Music! Tickets just \$30 a person.

For more information: WV-CAG office, (304) 346-5891.

May 30: Kanawha Valley Connections: Creating Pathways to Sustainability" Fair. Habitat for Humanity ReStore, 815 Young Street, Charleston. All day event. Sustainability themes showcased include, local foods, businesses & jobs, conservation, energy sources, recycling, health, economic development, culture, transportation, recreation. Organizers are seeking exhibitors with green or sustainable products, practices.

For more information: Will Taylor, (304) 382-1233.

June 27: 6th Annual Lavender Fair - "Just Keep Dancing!". LaPaix Herb Farm, Lewis County (just outside of Weston.) The farm is listed as a National Historic Landmark (May/Kraus Homestead.) Workshops and talks on using herbs for crafts, culinary and medicinal purposes, organic wild edibles, etc. Demonstrations, interesting booths, wood walks, gourmet food, live music and much more.

Admission: \$5/person, \$10/family (one car)

For more information: www.lapaixherbfarmproducts.com/lavender_fair_2009.htm



Support the West Virginia Environmental Council

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E-Day Review see page 4

Pictured left: Delegate Don Perdue, House Majority Leader Brent Bogg, Speaker of the House of Delegates Richard Thompson (recipient of the "Chuck Chambers Public Service" award), Don Garvin, and Beth Thompson.