



This Week in Review – August 23-27, 2004

(1) EPA Issues Updated Listing of Fish Advisories (August 24, 2004) – EPA issued its annual update of locally issued fish advisories and safe-eating guidelines, which is compiled from information provided by states, territories and tribes across the country. The guidelines cover a range of pollutants, including mercury, dioxin, PCBs, chlordane, DDT and others. Although total emissions of these pollutants are decreasing, the number of advisories is increasing, due in part to improved and expanded monitoring. In 2003, 48 states, the District of Columbia and American Samoa issued over 3,000 advisories, covering 35 percent of the nation's lake acres (not including the Great Lakes, which are all under advisory), 24 percent of river miles and 75 percent of the coastline. Most of the new advisories involve mercury. Since the advisories are locally developed, there is inconsistency regarding the warnings they carry. Some recommend unrestricted, limited or completely restricted consumption of fish. Those they target (e.g., pregnant women, children) also vary. [For further information: www.epa.gov/waterscience/fish or Air Web – Air Toxics Committee page]

(2) EPA Holds Workshops on Emissions Factors Revision Project (August 25-26, 2004) – EPA's Emissions Factors and Policy Applications Group (EFPAG) held workshops in Washington, DC to educate and solicit opinions from industry, state and local agency, and public interest stakeholders on the revisions to the process of developing emissions factors that are currently being planned. EPA emphasized that the agency no longer has adequate funding to develop emissions factors itself, but will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance. Over the last 30 years, industry funding of emissions factors has increased, while EPA funding has decreased correspondingly. EPA discussed the findings of a survey undertaken last fall with the assistance of STAPPA and ALAPCO, noting that many state and local agencies do not have the resources to collaborate with EPA on revising the current emissions factors process but need continued EPA involvement, including guidance on when to use emissions factors, when and how to use industry-derived test methods, and how to use emissions factors in permits and for enforcement. Moreover, EPA stated, the agency intends to: "develop tools, rules, and guidance for non-inventory applications; establish, understand and use EF data quality and uncertainty information; tap into industry-sponsored testing; develop [an] electronic clearinghouse for source test data and QA information; and standardize, streamline, and develop a checklist for [the]

overall EF development process.” [For further information: Air Web – Emissions and Modeling Committee page]

(3) Environmental Groups Call for EPA to Regulate Other Toxic Air Pollutants from Utilities (August 26, 2004) – A new study by a group of environmental organizations provides specific information about power plant emissions of toxic air pollutants besides mercury. The report, entitled, *Beyond Mercury: How the Fine Print of the Bush Administration Plan Means More Dioxin, Lead and Other Toxic Air Pollution*, was issued by Clear the Air, which is a public education project jointly run by the Clean Air Task Force, the National Environmental Trust and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. The document, which contains information about emissions of arsenic, lead, acid gases, chromium, dioxin and other organic chemicals from power plants, provides statewide totals of emissions and lists the individual plants with the most emissions. In particular, the report highlights that the EPA proposal to reduce emissions of toxic air pollution from utilities, which addresses only mercury and nickel, does not address air contaminants that should also be regulated. [For further information: www.cta.policy.net]

(4) EPA, DaimlerChrysler and UPS Announce First Full-Sized Hydrogen-Powered Vehicle (August 26, 2004) – EPA, DaimlerChrysler and United Parcel Service (UPS) announced the availability of the nation's first medium-duty fuel cell delivery vehicles in Michigan and California. Under the second phase of a multi-year fuel cell testing program, UPS will operate three large package delivery fuel cell vans in these states to provide the partners with the opportunity to test the vehicles' "performance and durability under real-world, year-round conditions." The testing program was first launched at EPA's National Vehicle and Fuel Emissions Laboratory in May 2003. Under the first phase, which began in February 2004, UPS used DaimlerChrysler's smaller "F-cell" vehicle to deliver packages in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Under the second phase the Michigan vehicle will be fueled by EPA's Ann Arbor lab, the only generally accessible hydrogen refueling station in what is expected to be a network of stations across the Midwest. The California vehicles will refuel at one of 10 refueling stations statewide. [For further information: www.epa.gov/otaq/fuelcell/].

(5) CCSP Releases Report on Recent Climate Change Research (August 25, 2004) – The U.S. Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) has issued *Our Changing Planet: The U.S. Climate Change Science Program for Fiscal Years 2004-2005*, highlighting recent research and plans for future research to assess the "risks and opportunities of changes to climate and related environmental systems." The research is organized in seven primary scientific areas: atmospheric composition, climate variability and change, the global water cycle, land use/land-cover change, global carbon cycle, ecosystems, and human contributions and responses. The report also documents how the CCSP is implementing the *Strategic Plan for the U.S. Climate Change Science Program*, which was released in July 2003. CCSP and its subsidiary the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) were established under the Global Change Research Act of 1990, and the 2001 Climate Change Research Initiative. *Our Changing Planet* is an official U.S. Government publication, submitted to Congress as a Supplement to the President's Fiscal Year 2004 and 2005

budgets. CCSP coordinates scientific research on climate and global changes supported by 13 participating departments and agencies of the federal government. [For further information: www.usgcrp.gov]

(6) National Park Service Releases Environmental Assessment of Snowmobiles in Yellowstone (August 24, 2004) –The National Park Service (NPS) has published an environmental assessment that considers various alternatives for a temporary winter-use plan in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. The preferred alternative “allows 720 snowmobiles per day in Yellowstone and 140 per day in Grand Teton for a period of up to three winters.” The assessment follows extensive controversy on snowmobiles in the parks, beginning with an NPS decision to phase out snowmobile use in the parks, a subsequent NPS proposal in 2003 to continue allowing snowmobile use under certain conditions, a decision in late 2003 by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia vacating the NPS decision allowing limited use, and, finally, a ruling by the Wyoming Federal District Court preventing the NPS from implementing the snowmobile phase-out. Comments on the environmental assessment must be received by NPS by September 20, 2004. [For further information: www.nps.gov/yell/planvisit/winteruse/tempwinteruseea8-18.pdf]

(7) UNEP and Central Asia Nations Agree to Strengthen Environmental Management in the Region (August 19, 2004) – The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), an intergovernmental organization representing Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to identify potential joint activities to increase the use of renewable energy and to strengthen environmental management in Central Asia. Activities would include strengthening environmental law making, enhancing environmental education and training programs, encouraging eco-friendly tourism development and improving environmental monitoring and assessment. The MOU also identifies the potential for strengthening links between the scientific community and policy makers, and for further development of the Regional Environmental Action Plan for Central Asia, which was recently developed by UNEP and the Central Asian governments. [For further information: www.unep.org/newscentre/]

(8) New Report Predicts Increasingly Severe Weather in Europe From Climate Change (August 18, 2004) – The European Energy Agency (EEA), a European agency dedicated to providing independent information on the environment to policymakers and the general public, has released a new report, *Impacts of Europe's Changing Climate: An Indicator-Based Assessment*, which predicts more severe weather problems in Europe over the next generation due to rising temperatures. The report examines the state of climate change and its impacts in Europe by using 22 indicators that fall into eight broad categories: atmosphere and climate; glaciers, snow and ice; marine systems; terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity; water; agriculture; economy; and human health. For almost all the indicators the report notes that a clear trend exists and impacts are already being observed. The report includes estimates that temperatures worldwide will increase by 1.4 - 5.8 degrees Celsius,

while temperatures in Europe could increase 2.0 - 6.3 degrees Celsius by the year 2100. Finally, the report concludes that the best first step in reversing this trend is the full implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, which requires the industrialized nations to reduce their emissions of six greenhouse gases by about 5 percent between 1990 and 2012. [For more information: reports.eea.eu.int/climate_report_2_2004/en]

(9) French Study Links Exposure to Benzene, Other HCs to Acute Childhood Leukemia (August 23, 2004) – Researchers at the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM), have linked environmental exposure to potential sources of benzene and other hydrocarbons with acute childhood leukemia. The study, which will be published next month in *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, found that children living near gas stations or auto repair shops had almost four times the risk of developing leukemia and seven times the risk of developing acute non-lymphoblastic leukemia than did children in the control group. The results showed that 17 of the 280 cancer cases related to children living in close proximity to a gas station or auto repair shop; the risks increased the longer the child lived there. Data was collected through interviews with the mothers of 280 children with acute leukemia and 285 children without the disease. Interview questions related to maternal occupational exposure to hydrocarbons during pregnancy, as well as proximity to gas stations or auto repair shops during pregnancy and after. [For more information: oem.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/abstract/61/9/773]

(10) ACEEE Releases Paper on U.S. Energy Efficiency Potential (August 23, 2004) – The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) has released a new report that assesses America's energy efficiency potential, intended for policymakers to use in gauging energy efficiency's prospective contribution to energy and economic policy. The report, entitled *The Technical, Economic, and Achievable Potential Energy Efficiency in the United States: A Meta-Analysis of Recent Studies*, provides the results of ACEEE's analysis of data from 11 recent energy studies comparing each study's estimates of technical, economic and achievable potential for electric and natural gas efficiency with actual implemented savings from efficiency programs to date. ACEEE found that a 4-percent reduction in natural gas consumption nationally could reduce wholesale prices of natural gas by almost 20 percent. The group further concluded that the median achievable savings potential for electricity is 24 percent and for natural gas is 9 percent over a 20-year period. [For further information: www.aceee.org/energy/eeassess.htm#meta]

The Week Ahead

- Congress in Recess
- "Combined Power Plant Air Pollutant Control Mega Symposium" Cosponsored by EPA, EPRI, AWMA and the National Energy Technology Laboratory, in Washington, DC – August 30-September 2, 2004

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