This week's edition includes:
If you need older URLs contact George at ghh@att.net.
Please Note: This newsletter contains articles that offer differing points of view regarding climate change, energy and other environmental issues. Any opinions expressed in this publication are the responses of the readers alone and do not represent the positions of the Environmental Engineering Division or the ASME.

George Holliday

This week's edition includes:

1. ENVIRONMENT A: EMAILS REVEAL EPA COLLABORATION WITH ACTIVIST GROUPS
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency routinely collaborates with environmental activist groups to develop stringent regulatory policies and strategies, according to emails obtained under the Freedom of Information Act. The emails confirm longstanding suspicions that EPA pursues hidden agendas on behalf of environmental activist groups.

Avoiding Sign-In Sheets
The Energy and Environment Legal Institute (E&E Legal) obtained emails showing the Starbucks located in the J.W. Marriott Hotel near EPA’s Washington DC headquarters serve as a convenient “off campus” meeting place, where EPA officials and environmental activists plot strategy. By sitting down with government regulators at the local Starbucks rather than EPA headquarters, environmental activists can avoid signing in at EPA headquarters and thus keep the meetings secret.

http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2014/02/11/emails-reveal-epa-collaboration-activist-groups

B. ENERGY ALLIANCE CHALLENGES BLM ON LAST-MINUTE LEASE-SALE CANCELLATION
Western Energy Alliance, an organization of energy producers in the western United States, is challenging the U.S. Bureau of Land Management’s last-minute decision to remove 57 parcels of land from an oil and natural gas lease sale. The energy group argues BLM violated federal law and federal administrative procedures to remove the parcels just five days before the scheduled sale.

Last-Minute Letter Blocks Sale
On August 16, 2013, BLM issued a Notice of Competitive Lease Sale for 82 parcels BLM manages in Utah. On November 14, BLM Utah State Office director Juan Palma removed 57 of the parcels from the planned November 19 sale despite a federal environmental assessment
supporting the lease sale. Palma said he removed the parcels in response to a letter sent on November 7 by the Utah Rock Art Research Association opposing the sale.

http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2014/02/14/energy-alliance-challenges-blm-last-minute-lease-sale-cancellation

C. Utility Petitions U.S. Supreme Court to Review Clean Air Act Nuisance Decision

On February 20, 2014, GenOn Power Midwest, L.P. filed a petition for a writ of certiorari in the U.S. Supreme Court presenting the question of whether the federal Clean Air Act (“CAA”) preempts state common law nuisance claims. GenOn seeks to overturn an August 2013 U.S. appeals court decision in the Third Circuit holding that state common law nuisance claims arising from its operation of the coal-fired Cheswick Generating Station were not preempted by the federal CAA, even when the Cheswick facility was operating in full compliance with its state and federal CAA permits. See TIP 2013-142.

According to the petition, three reasons compel a grant of the petition. First, GenOn claims that state "judicial common lawmaking" will undermine the CAA's goals of "uniformity and predictability" and threaten economic investment. Pet. at 15. Second, it notes that the Third Circuit's decision deepens a split in the U.S. courts of appeals, and that courts will remain divided as an increasing number of nuisance suits arise. Pet. at 22. Finally, GenOn argues that the Third Circuit's decision is in conflict with U.S. Supreme Court precedent concluding that similar federal common law suits are preempted. Pet. at 22-23.

A copy of the petition is attached.

Env130317
Roger Zymunt

2. Health A Hepatitis C - USA (02): (MINNESOTA)

A small number of children in California have come down with polio-like illnesses since 2012 -- suffering paralysis in one or more limbs and other symptoms -- and physicians and public health officials do not yet know why.

A virus may play a role, said Dr Carol Glaser, leader of a California Department of Public Health team investigating the illnesses, which are occurring sporadically throughout the state. The afflicted kids suffer severe weakness or paralysis, which strikes rapidly -- sometimes after a mild respiratory illness. Scans of the patients' spinal cords show patterns of damage similar to that found in polio sufferers, Glaser said. 2 of the affected children tested positive for enterovirus 68, a virus that is usually associated with respiratory illness but which has been linked to polio-like illnesses as well.

Health 140317

3. Safety A. Get to the Root of Accidents

Systems thinking can provide insights on underlying issues not just their symptoms

By Nancy Leveson, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Sidney Dekker, Griffith University

An often-claimed "fact" is that operators or maintenance workers cause 70–90% of accidents. It is certainly true that operators are blamed for 70–90%. Are we limiting what we learn from accident investigations by limiting the scope of the inquiry? By applying systems thinking to
process safety, we may enhance what we learn from accidents and incidents and, in the long run, prevent more of them.

MENTAL MODELS

Figure 1. Designers and operators necessarily view systems differently.

Systems thinking is an approach to problem solving that suggests the behavior of a system's components only can be understood by examining the context in which that behavior occurs. Viewing operator behavior in isolation from the surrounding system prevents full understanding of why an accident occurred — and thus the opportunity to learn from it.


B. CANADIAN REGULATORS SAY OIL IN TRAIN ACCIDENT WAS AS VOLATILE AS GASOLINE

Findings Highlight Risks of Shipping Crude by Rail

By Chester Dawson and Russell Gold

Canadian regulators said the crude oil on a train that derailed in a Quebec town last July and killed 47 people was as volatile as gasoline, highlighting the potential danger of crude shipments by rail.

The report by Canada's Transportation Safety Board marked the first time that government officials have reported comprehensive test results on the train's oil, which was traveling from North Dakota's Bakken Shale formation to a refinery in New Brunswick.

The safety board said the oil had a flash point, the temperature at which a fire can ignite, "similar to that of unleaded gasoline." The results confirmed a Wall Street Journal analysis published last month showing that Bakken oil contains more combustible gases than oil from elsewhere. While crude oil is generally considered hazardous, it isn't usually explosive.

The samples from the Quebec incident were taken from cars that didn't explode at the accident site, as well as from another train carrying oil of the same origin. Canadian regulators previously said that the crude was improperly labeled, and was more volatile and had a lower ignition point than had been indicated by its shippers.
The lab report said the oil tested was no different than the type of light, sweet crude that increasingly is being shipped from the Bakken on trains crisscrossing the U.S. and Canada. It found properties "consistent with those of a light, sweet crude oil, with volatility comparable to that of a condensate or gasoline product."

That highlights the potential risk posed by the boom in crude-by-rail shipments, especially those that traverse through densely populated areas. Shipments of oil have become controversial in light of disclosures about lax testing and the potential for another disaster like the one in Quebec. In response to the accident, regulators in the U.S. and Canada have mandated new testing requirements for oil transported by rail. U.S. requirements issued Feb. 25 go well beyond standard flash-point measurements, mandating testing for additional risks such as corrosiveness, hydrogen-sulfide content and vapor pressure. The U.S. Transportation Department went further still Thursday, requiring shippers to identify all the hazardous substances in their oil cargo and test frequently enough to account for how the cargo might change in transit because of temperature changes and other variables.

The Journal analysis found that oil from North Dakota and the Eagle Ford Shale in Texas had vapor-pressure readings above 8 pounds per square inch, although Bakken readings reached as high as 9.7 PSI. Louisiana Light Sweet from the Gulf of Mexico had an average vapor pressure of only 3.33 PSI.

The Canadian lab report released Thursday said vapor pressure of the oil involved in the July accident was the equivalent of 9.04 to 9.6 PSI. But it said some volatile gases likely escaped during testing, meaning the crude may have been even more volatile than the results indicated. The safety board's analysis concluded that a number of factors contributed to the magnitude of the explosion, which destroyed several buildings in the town of Lac-Mégantic. "The large quantities of spilled crude oil, the rapid rate of release, and the oil's high volatility and low viscosity were likely the major contributors to the large post-derailment fireball and pool fire," the report said.

The report appeared to rule out chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing for shale oil as a cause for the explosion, as some people had speculated. "There was no indication that the…crude oil's properties had been affected by contamination from fracturing-process fluid additives," the report said.

The safety board released its analysis as part of a larger investigation into the derailment of the train, operated by Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway Inc., that careened off the tracks on July 6 after an unexplained brake failure. The railroad filed for bankruptcy after the accident. Board spokesman Chris Krepski said that the investigation continues and that a final report will detail the agency's findings.

—Paul Vieira, Betsy Morris and David George-Cosh contributed to this article.

Safety140317, Roger Zygmunt

4. TRANSPORTATION. A. REFINERS ASK MORE TIME ON TESTING MANDATE OVER OIL TRAINS

By Jennifer A. Dlouhy

Refiners are pleading with U.S. regulators for a timeout on a new mandate forcing them to run a battery of tests on oil before loading it onto train tankers.

Uncertainty about the testing requirements outlined in the Transportation Department’s Feb. 25 emergency order could prompt some companies to stop shipping oil by rail, the American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers warned in a letter obtained by Houston Chronicle.
Because the order appears to require the tests on every shipment of oil before it rolls away, “members of the manufacturers group question whether they can continue to transport petroleum crude oil by rail,” the group’s president, Charles Drevna, told Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx.

Without changes “to provide shippers with a reasonable amount of time to complete the required testing, shippers may be forced to cease transporting petroleum crude oil by rail,” Drevna said in his letter. “This could result in shortages of transportation fuel and petrochemicals and have an immediate and significant negative impact on the nation.”

The Transportation Department laid out the emergency requirements last week, following a series of accidents involving crude-carrying trains and concerns that the light oil being extracted from North Dakota’s Bakken formation is being classified as a less-volatile hazardous material.

Regulators cited “clear evidence of an ongoing problem with classification of petroleum crude oil that is being shipped by rail,” which could translate into inadequate packaging for the material and inaccurate information for first responders during an emergency.

The directive ordered “minimal testing” of oil to determine its flash point, boiling point, corrosivity, sulfur content, vapor pressure and other characteristics. It appears to require those tests be performed prior to each rail shipment.

Companies shipping oil by rail face criminal penalties of up to 10 years in jail and civil fines of up to $175,000 a day for running afoul of the testing requirements.

Some refiners that ship oil by rail may already have been conducting similar tests, but not all were. And it’s not clear how quickly those companies can implement new testing programs and turn around the results.

Refiners, oil producers and logistics companies have had widely varying interpretations of the directive.

A load of questions

Drevna said in an interview that because of antitrust concerns, the trade group does not know if any refiners have halted shipments in light of the order. But, he said he was hearing widespread concerns and questions from members of the manufacturers group.

He stressed that there is “a combined effort” among the railroads, the oil shippers, the Transportation Department and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration to boost the safety of transporting crude by trains.

“We appreciate the secretary’s desire and we want to work with them,” Drevna said.

Some of the tests may not be warranted on every single crude shipment, Drevna said. For instance, the corrosivity of crude cargoes is unlikely to radically change from shipment to shipment. It’s also “not going to cause whether a train explodes if it derails,” Drevna said.

Awaiting clarification

According to the trade group’s letter, refiners are still waiting for “the testing methodologies” to be clarified.

In North Dakota and Alberta, Canada, in particular, railroads increasingly are filling in where oil pipelines don’t exist to carry out crude.

The Association of American Railroads has voluntarily agreed to conduct more train track inspections and slow down some crude-carrying trains near big cities. Federal regulators also are working to develop stiffer standards for the tankers that carry oil.

‘Quite restrained’
Jason Bordoff, founding director of Columbia University’s Center on Global Energy Policy, said regulators, railroads and the oil industry have responded prudently.

“It’s easy to see where the government could have overreacted to some of the large accidents,” Bordoff said at the IHS CERAWeek energy summit in Houston. “I actually think they’ve been quite restrained in saying ‘we do want to understand this,’ in recognizing there are trade-offs here in terms of new regulations and what costs they impose and what that might mean for the cost of transporting oil.”

Bordoff also praised the industry for “aggressively” moving to get in front of the issue, in recognition they could face a backlash if they don’t deal with it appropriately.

**COMMENTS:**

**A. THE WEEK THAT WAS: 2014-03-08 (MARCH, 8 2014)**

**Challenging the Orthodoxy:** Two major papers came out, severely questioning and contradicting the latest work of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), especially the Summary for Policymakers. One paper “Bounding GHG Climate Sensitivity for Use in Regulatory Decisions’, was produced by The Right Climate Stuff (TRCS) research team – “a volunteer group composed primarily of more than 25 retired NASA Apollo Program veterans, who joined together in February 2012 to perform an objective, independent study of scientific claims of significant Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW).” They put their distinguished reputations on the line in performing this volunteer work, without compensation from government, private interests, etc. This paper will be discussed below.

The second paper is “A Sensitive Matter: How The IPCC Hid The Good News On Global Warming” by Nicholas Lewis and Marcel Crok with a foreword by Judith Curry. It was published by the Global Warming Policy Foundation. The paper details the enormous disconnect between the Summary for Policymakers and the Scientific Report (WGI) in the IPCC’s Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). The summary is alarmist, but the scientific report does not justify alarm. This paper will be discussed next week. Patrick Michaels and “Chip” Knappenberger had two articles discussing the Lewis & Crok report, emphasizing that the IPCC exaggerated the influence of carbon dioxide (CO2) on temperatures; without such exaggeration there would be little cause for alarm about global warming/climate change. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

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**TRCS:** As discussed in the October 5, 2013 TWTW, the IPCC scientific report and summary had many weaknesses, not the least of which was exposed by Nir Shaviv. On his web site, Shaviv produced what he called the most boring graph he ever plotted. Starting with the1979 Charney report, supported by the US National Research Council, “likely equilibrium range of sensitivity "to a doubling of CO2 remained at 1.5 to 4.5°C, except for a slight narrowing of 2 to 4.5°C in the IPCC’s Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) (2007). AR5 contained the more traditional estimate of 1.5 to 4.5°C. It is incredible that after 35 years of research and tens of billions of dollars spent, the Climate Establishment has not been able to improve on the estimates in the 1979 Charney report.

The current TRCS report contains an analysis of the upper bound, the worst-case scenario, of a temperature increase by 2100, without any regulatory limit on fossil fuel use. The Climate Establishment should have done this decades ago.

The TRCS team analysis is data driven, not model driven. They chose the Hadley Center – Climatic Research Unit (HadCRU4) surface data that goes back to 1850. The satellite data,
independently confirmed by weather balloons, is better, but it starts in December 1978, too short for the purpose. The data reveal an approximately 62-year cycle, peaking about 2013. The causes of the cycle are not clear. According to its summary, IPCC estimates are based on warming since 1950, thereby fail to account for this cycle.

The critical estimate of maximum temperature increase by 2100 is 1°C above today’s temperatures, or about 1.8°C increase since 1850, well below the contrived 2°C that IPCC supporters and some politicians claim must be prevented. In short, the demand for drastic, economically destructive emissions controls is not justified. Also, the overall warming trend may be in part due to a rebound from the Little Ice Age, and the total warming to 2100 may be significantly less than 1°C. The 1850 atmospheric CO2 concentration was about that of the pre-industrial concentrations of about 280 parts per million (ppm).

The TRCS team asserts that the IPCC and its followers, calculate the wrong metric, standard of measurement. The team uses transient climate sensitivity (the effect of current atmospheric CO2). The IPCC and its followers use equilibrium climate sensitivity and fail to account for the absorption of CO2 by the biosphere, which is clearly shown by satellite photos over the past three decades.

The TRCS team report contains an extensive discussion on the calculation of the Social Cost of Carbon (SCC) and why the team believes that the current calculations should not be used as a justification for government policies. Further, drawing on their experience from intense, independent examination following the Challenger and Discovery disasters, the team calls for the formation of an independent and objective scientific review board to review the methodologies being used to calculate SCC.

Some may disagree with timing of maximum use of fossil fuels before market-driven transitioning to alternative energy sources. However, that is minor compared with the rigorous effort of trying to put an upper bound on the potential warming from fossil fuel use and associated CO2 emissions. The analysis clearly shows that we have more than sufficient time to get the science of climate change right and that we should not be panicked into adopting dangerous and economically destructive policies.

Why the Climate Establishment has failed to perform such a desperately needed analysis was, perhaps, best answered by Nir Shaviv. “If you have a theory which is correct, then as progressively more data comes in, the agreement becomes better... However, if the basic premises of a theory are wrong, then there is no improved agreement as more data is collected. In fact, it is usually the opposite that takes place, the disagreement increases.”


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Arctic Ice Melt: There is little question that the Arctic has been warming for the past three decades. Based on satellite observations, that is the only major region of the earth that has had pronounced warming. An examination of a collection of 27 high-quality proxy data shows that the temperatures of the Atlantic portion of the Arctic may have been as warm or warmer during the Roman Warm Period and the Medieval Warm Period.

Another study suggests that the greater inflow of warmer water from the rivers in the Arctic may be responsible for the late summer ice melt that has been observed in recent years, 2013 excluded. See links under Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC, Changing Cryospherehttp://nsstc.uah.edu/climate/2012/november/trend_Dec78_NV12_alt.png.

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Uncertainty: In Climate Etc., Judith Curry posted her power-point presentation used during her talk “Causes and implications of the pause” at a workshop by American Physical Society, the purpose of which was to explore changing the APS climate change statement. The slides include those showing the significant divergence between model projections and observations. She explores some of the explanations for this divergence. The summary of the major uncertainties is particularly useful, especially the unknowns. If the leadership of APS performed the same analysis as the TRCS team did, the APS climate change statement would be radically altered. See link under Seeking a Common Ground.

Extreme Weather: Last week Secretary of State John Kerry told students and government officials of Indonesia that climate change is a weapon of mass destruction and Indonesia should not use its resources in fostering economic growth. Further, he and President Obama do not have time to talk to global warming skeptics, calling their science shoddy. Not to be outdone, the president’s science advisor, John Holdren attacked Roger Pielke Jr. for his testimony to Congress that climate change has not increased extreme weather. Pielke directly rebutted Holdren’s claims in a letter, in his posts, and in an article he wrote. Further Pielke is a co-author of a new paper based on the financial records of the large re-insurance entity, Munich Re. The bottom line here is that a signal of greenhouse gas emissions cannot be found in the aggregate loss data from Munich Re.

As if to buttress Pielke’s findings, Warren Buffett, whose holding company owns a large insurance company, stated in an interview: "The public has the impression that because there's been so much talk about climate that events of the last 10 years from an insured standpoint and climate have been unusual," he continued. "The answer is they haven’t." "I love apocalyptic predictions" on climate change, Buffett told CNBC on Monday, because they probably do affect rates.

Further, as if to counter the wealthy John Kerry, Pielke has an article on “What Does It Mean to be Anti-Growth?” The reality is that to be anti-growth today is actually to be anti-growth with respect to poor countries…. So when you encounter an anti-growth advocate, ask him or her, which kind are you, Neo-Malthusian, Peak Earther, or Luddite? See links under Changing Weather and Environmental Industry.

Defense Review: Every four years the US Department of Defense produces its Quadrennial Defense Review. The Chapter on Future Security Environment has an extensive paragraph on the dangers of global warming/climate change: “The pressures caused by climate change will influence resource competition while placing additional burdens on economies, societies, and governance institutions around the world. These effects are threat multipliers that will aggravate stressors abroad such as poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and social tensions –conditions that can enable terrorist activity and other forms of violence.” The chapter does not mention the possibility of Russia seizing military control of a portion of a European country as it did by seizing control of the Crimea in the Ukraine. See links under Expanding the Orthodoxy.

US Energy: Some commentators have suggested that President Obama use the new-found US energy prowess to counter Russian influence over the Ukraine and Eastern Europe. Many of these commentators seem to have little understanding of the long time-frame involved and the costs of transporting liquefied natural gas, a frequently mentioned fuel. Use of fossil fuels would
be contrary to the observed policy of the Administration of suppressing the use of fossil fuels. If Obama did as the commentators suggest, would Secretary of State Kerry accuse the President of using a weapon of mass destruction? See links under Energy Issues –US.

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The Grid Experiment: The North American Electric Reliability Corporation and the California Independent System Operation Corporation have produced a report on issues faced by grid operators when politicians insist that unreliable wind and solar be integrated into the electrical grid. The load must be balanced, or the grid will fail. The operating characteristics of VERs [variable energy resources] —not just the energy or capacity being provided—will fundamentally change the basic composition of essential reliability services. The system must continue to work reliably. California may become a very expensive test site. See link under California Dreaming.

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Market Crash: Christopher Monckton has an amusing post on the difference in stock index value of $100 placed in 2002 in “clean” green stocks as compared with “dirty” oil and gas stocks. See link under Energy Issues –Non-US. (See item P below)

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Un-Validated Models: TWTW has been criticized for its negative view of using climate models, which have not been validated, to make predictions far into the future. The negative view is not limited to climate models. For example, some members of SEPP were less than impressed when the White House declared that, based on its models, the “Stimulus Bill” would prevent unemployment from exceeding 8% and it would quickly go down to 6% and soon go as low as 5%. Without the bill, unemployment would reach 9%. The bill was passed, and unemployment went to 10%. After five years of expansionary fiscal and monetary policy, the unemployment rate fell slowly to a rate of 6.7%, in February, 2014. The less formal U6 unemployment rate, which includes those who seek full-time jobs, but can only find part-time jobs, and those who left the work force, stands at 12.6%, which is higher than any value prior to the “Stimulus Bill.” The calculations start in 1994. There is clearly something wrong the models. One of the major issues is the value of what is called the multiplier. What is the impact of additional government spending? The Congressional Budget Office has estimated the multiplier may range from 0.5 to 2.5. At 0.5, $100 additional spent by government would have a total economic impact of $50, or one-half of the moneys spent. Clearly the failure to validate models has significant consequences. See links under Model Issues.

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Number of the Week: 17% and 11%. A study by the Breakthrough Institute reports that for 2012, the total energy output of German wind farms was 17% of nameplate capacity (the frequently touted number used by wind promoters). According to the report, the figures come from Germany’s BdeW utility consortium, which gathers data from all electric utilities. The links are in German. The output for solar for 2012 was 11% of nameplate capacity. If the numbers are correct, then the US EIA should re-visit its estimate of a 34% production capacity for wind. [Note: TWTW does not agree with the report’s claims of adverse health effects of fossil fuels, as they apply to westernized nations using modern power plants.]

B. SOUTHERN SEA ICE AREA MINIMUM 2ND HIGHEST ON RECORD
Posted on March 1, 2014 by justthefactswuwt

Southern Sea Ice Area

Southern Hemisphere Sea Ice Area

Data provided by NSIDC: NASA SMMR and SSM/I

Southern Hemisphere Sea Ice Area reached a minimum of 2.447 Million Sq km on February 23th, 2014, which exceeded the prior 2nd highest minimum of 2.423 Million Sq km that occurred on February 22nd, 2013. The highest recorded Southern Hemisphere Sea Ice Area minimum remains 2.473 Million Sq km, which occurred on March 1st, 2003. The data from Cryosphere Today can be found here. Southern Hemisphere Sea Ice Area has now been above average for over 2 years:
The last negative anomaly recorded was on November 23rd, 2011, data here and graph below:

C. **ASME COMMITTEE ON WATER EFFICIENCY GUIDELINES SEEKS ADDITIONAL MEMBERS**

The Standards & Code Committee on Water Efficiency Guidelines (WEG) for Power and Other Industrial Facilities has recently established three subcommittees to tackle various aspects of its charter and is currently seeking additional members.

- The WEG Subcommittee on Innovative Water Conservation, Reuse, and Recovery Technologies will develop guidelines of best practices, performance assessments, and evaluation and reporting criteria in the field of innovative water conservation, reuse and recovery technologies.
- The WEG Subcommittee on Use of Fresh and Non-Fresh Water Resources will develop guidelines describing the aspects of facility development based on water
resources availability. This includes, but is not limited to, providing best practices, performance assessments, evaluation methods and reporting criteria for optimal use of fresh and non-fresh water.

- The WEG Subcommittee on Cooling Systems will develop guidelines for best practices, performance assessments, and evaluation and reporting criteria for the efficient use and conservation of water in power plant and industrial cooling systems.

There are no fees to join. The subcommittees recently held their inaugural meetings and each plans to conduct monthly one hour teleconferences in order to advance their work. For more information, or to express interest in participating, contact Frederic Constantino (+1.212.591.8684) or visit the WEG website

D. WHERE DOES THE CARBON DIOXIDE REALLY COME FROM?

Ian Rutherford Plimer is an Australian geologist, professor emeritus of earth sciences at the University of Melbourne, professor of mining geology at the University of Adelaide, and the director of multiple mineral exploration and mining companies. He has published 130 scientific papers, six books and edited the Encyclopedia of Geology.

PLIMER: "Okay, here's the bombshell. The volcanic eruption in Iceland. Since its first spewing of volcanic ash has, in just FOUR DAYS, NEGATED EVERY SINGLE EFFORT you have made in the past five years to control CO2 emissions on our planet - all of you. Of course, you know about this evil carbon dioxide that we are trying to suppress - it’s that vital chemical compound that every plant requires to live and grow and to synthesize into oxygen for us humans and all animal life.

I know....it's very disheartening to realize that all of the carbon emission savings you have accomplished while suffering the inconvenience and expense of driving Prius hybrids, buying fabric grocery bags, sitting up till midnight to finish your kids "The Green Revolution" science project, throwing out all of your non-green cleaning supplies, using only two squares of toilet paper, putting a brick in your toilet tank reservoir, selling your SUV and speedboat, vacationing at home instead of abroad, nearly getting hit every day on your bicycle, replacing all of your 50 cent light bulbs with $10.00 light bulbs ..... well, all of those things you have done have all gone down the tubes in just four days.

The volcanic ash emitted into the Earth's atmosphere in just four days - yes, FOUR DAYS - by that volcano in Iceland has totally erased every single effort you have made to reduce the evil beast, carbon. And there are around 200 active volcanoes on the planet spewing out this crud at any one time - EVERY DAY.

I don't really want to rain on your parade too much, but I should mention that when the volcano Mt. Pinatubo erupted in the Philippines in 1991, it spewed out more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than the entire human race had emitted in all its years on earth.

Yes, folks, Mt. Pinatubo was active for over one year - think about it!!!!

Of course, I shouldn't spoil this 'touchy-feely tree-hugging' moment and mention the effect of solar and cosmic activity and the well-recognized 800-year global heating and cooling cycle, which keeps happening despite our completely insignificant efforts to affect climate change. And I do wish I had a silver lining to this volcanic ash cloud, but the fact of the matter is that the bush fire season across the western USA and Australia this year alone will negate your efforts to reduce carbon in our world for the next two to three years. And it happens every year.
Just remember that your government just tried to impose a whopping carbon tax on you, on the basis of the bogus 'human-caused' climate-change scenario. Hey, isn’t it interesting how they don’t mention 'Global Warming' anymore, but just 'Climate Change' - you know why? It’s because the planet has COOLED by 0.7 degrees in the past century and these global warming bull artists got caught with their pants down. And, just keep in mind that you might yet have an Emissions Trading Scheme - that whopping new tax - imposed on you that will achieve absolutely nothing except make you poorer. It won’t stop any volcanoes from erupting, that’s for sure. But, hey, relax......give the world a hug and have a nice day!"

E. Divestment Du Jour
Obama endorses a crusade against fossil fuels

Arnie Feldman
Coal War

F. 2ND COLDEST U.S. WINTER IN 35 YEARS
March 3rd, 2014
The primary winter months of December, January, and February averaged over the contiguous 48 United States were the 2nd coldest winter in the last 35 years. The average temperature of 32.2 deg. F was barely edged out by the slightly colder winter (32.0 deg. F) of 2009-2010.
The analysis is based upon ~350 NOAA/NWS stations that measure temperatures every 6 hours (or more frequently), many located at airports. The data I use are adjusted for average spurious urban heat island (UHI) warming that increases with population density around the thermometer site. That relationship is shown at the end of this article.

The analysis starts in only 1973 since that is the first year with a large amount of quality-controlled 6-hourly temperature data archived at NOAA. The official NOAA temperature product depends upon stations which generally don’t report hourly temperatures (mostly daily max/min temperatures), and which require large (and controversial) adjustments for varying time of observation.

Note also that 6 of the last 8 winters have been below the 41-year average.

Roy Spencer

G. PERIOD OF NO GLOBAL WARMING ABOUT TO SURPASS PERIOD OF WARMING

The ongoing “pause” in global warming will soon be longer than the period of warming that preceded it, Heartland Institute Senior Fellow Peter Ferrara observed in Forbes.com. Even more troubling for global warming activists, Ferrara noted, “one-third of all CO2 added to the atmosphere since the industrial revolution occurring during this period,” yet temperatures have not risen at all.

H. WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

Financial Assurances Workshop
March 13, 2014
World Resources Institute, Washington, DC
STEP is partnering the World Resources Institute to offer a Financial Assurance Workshop, March 13, 2014, Washington, DC. The workshop will focus on specific applications of cost estimation techniques and financing instruments within the current financial assurance framework for UIC Class VI wells. Ms. Chiara Trabucchi from Industrial Economics, Inc. will lead the workshop. Registration will be available on the STEP website beginning February 15th.

Please contact Kathy Atchley (katchley@illinois.edu) for additional information.

Arnie Feldmsn

I. EPA RELEASES INTERPRETIVE MEMORANDUM ON HYDRAULIC FRACTURING UNDER THE SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released an interpretive memorandum to clarify Underground Injection Control (UIC) program requirements under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), for underground injection of diesel fuels in hydraulic fracturing (HF) for oil and gas extraction. The agency has also released technical guidance containing recommendations for EPA permit writers to consider in implementing these UIC Class II requirements. The EPA developed the memorandum and technical guidance to achieve the following objectives:
To explain that any owner or operator who injects diesel fuels in hydraulic fracturing for oil or gas extraction must obtain a UIC Class II permit before injection;

To explain the agency's interpretation of the SDWA statutory term "diesel fuels" for permitting purposes; and,

To describe existing UIC Class II program requirements for permitting underground injection of diesel fuels in hydraulic fracturing and to provide recommendations for the EPA's permit writers to consider in implementing these requirements to ensure protection of underground sources of drinking water (USDWs).

The technical recommendations in the guidance are for EPA Regional Offices to consider when permitting diesel fuels hydraulic fracturing wells. EPA permit writers have the discretion to consider alternative approaches that are consistent with statutory and regulatory requirements. The EPA technical recommendations are consistent with best practices listed in state regulations, model guidelines and voluntary standards developed by industry and stakeholders. States and tribes responsible for issuing UIC and oil and gas well permits and/or updating regulations will find the recommendations useful in improving the protection of USDWs and public health wherever hydraulic fracturing is practiced. Detailed information on the interpretive memorandum is available at http://water.epa.gov/type/groundwater/uic/class2/hydraulicfracturing/hydraulic-fracturing.cfm

J. NO GLOBAL WARMING FOR 17 YEARS, 6 MONTHS

Posted on March 4, 2014 by Anthony Watts
By Christopher Monckton of Brenchley
Seventeen and a half years. Not a flicker of global warming. The RSS satellite record, the first of the five global-temperature datasets to report its February value, shows a zero trend for an impressive 210 months. Miss Brevis, send a postcard to Mr Gore: http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/03/04/no-global-warming-for-17-years-6-months/#more-104332

K. EXXON-MOBIL JOINS THE ‘NATIONAL CLIMATE DECLARATION’

Posted on March 3, 2014 by Anthony Watts
People send me stuff.
A dear friend sent me a PDF that contained a description of the ‘National Climate Declaration’ that had some big name company logos stamped all over it. See below: http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/03/03/exxon-mobil-joins-the-national-climate-declaration/#more-104316

L. URI OCEANOGRAPHER REFUTES CLAIMS THAT CLIMATE CHANGE IS SLOWING PACE OF GULF STREAM

Posted on March 4, 2014 by Anthony Watts
Gulf Stream from satellite Image: NOAA
20 years of data demonstrates it remains stable
NARRAGANSETT, R.I. – March 3, 2014 – Several recent studies have generated a great deal of publicity for their claims that the warming climate is slowing the pace of the Gulf Stream. They
say that the Gulf Stream is decreasing in strength as a result of rising sea levels along the East Coast. However, none of the studies include any direct measurements of the current over an extended period to prove their point. 

http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/03/04/uri-oceanographer-refutes-claims-that-climate-change-is-slowing-pace-of-gulf-stream/#more-104370

M. TWO NEW POLLS SHOW INCREASING SKEPTICISM ABOUT WARMING CRISIS

New polling data show the American public is growing increasingly skeptical of assertions about an imminent global warming crisis. A Yale University/George Mason poll and an NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll each show Americans are not very worried about global warming.

Only 15 Percent Very Worried

The Yale University Project on Climate Change Communication and the George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication released a survey showing only 15 percent of Americans are “very worried” about global warming, whereas 23 percent believe global warming is not happening at all. A plurality of Americans—38 percent—believe global warming is happening but are only “somewhat worried” about it.


N. NEW ALARMIST THEORY: WARMING SLOWDOWN IS A GIANT CONSPIRACY

More volcano activity, less solar activity, more atmospheric aerosols, El Niño patterns, and a variety of other factors are all working together to mask the rapid global warming that alarmist models predicted but is not occurring in the real world, claims a new article authored by NASA global warming alarmist Gavin Schmidt. The introduction to the paper actually uses a form of the word “conspiracy,” claiming “Climate models projected stronger warming over the past 15 years than has been seen in observations. Conspiring factors of errors in volcanic and solar inputs, representations of aerosols, and El Niño evolution, may explain most of the discrepancy.” “Here we argue that a combination of factors, by coincidence, conspired to dampen warming trends in the real world after about 1992,” the paper continues.

http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2014/2/27/the-mind-boggling-coincidence-hypothesis.html

O. WIND INDUSTRY PAPER SHOWS WIND POWER COMES AT A HIGH PRICE

The American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) published a paper illustrating nine of the 11 states with the most wind power generation have electricity prices rising at least four times as fast as the national average. For the only two leading wind power states without such skyrocketing prices, Oklahoma wind power generation occurs without the compulsion of a renewable power mandate and prices for all forms of electricity in Texas are rapidly declining in the wake of electricity deregulation. The AWEA paper presents a devastating blow to global
warming activists who claim switching to renewable power is a cost-effective way to reduce carbon dioxide emissions
http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2014/02/27/aweas-own-study-shows-skyrocketing-electricity-prices-wind-power-states

P. DON’T PUT YOUR PENSION INTO GREENS, MRS WORTHINGTON…
Posted on March 6, 2014 by Guest Blogger
Starting at the same price, there’s a 10 to 1 gap in investment performance
By Christopher Monckton of Brenchley
Don’t put your pension into Greens. “Greens” are what the City boys in red suspenders with East End accents you could cut with a machete and Porsches you could scratch with a convenient latch-key call renewable-energy stocks. See the chart:

Don’t put your pension into Greens. “Greens” are what the City boys in red suspenders with East End accents you could cut with a machete and Porsches you could scratch with a convenient latch-key call renewable-energy stocks. See the chart:

As Bjørn Lomborg points out in a recent devastating graph, if you had been scared enough by the hockey-stick fable in the IPCC’s 2001 Third Assessment Report to invest $100 in Greens in 2002, you would now be the proud owner of $28, or quite a bit less than that after inflation.
But if you had followed Monckton’s Rule of Merry and Profitable Investment – listen very carefully to what the Government tells you, do the exact opposite, wait a decade or so, then collect in spades – you would have invested your $100 in oil and gas stocks. And you would now have a billfold crammed with $238, or 1000% more than the hapless investor in Greens. These are remarkable figures. Oil and gas corporations have had to face ever higher taxes and ever tighter regulations in the name of Saving The Planet. Greens have been subsidized to levels so absurd they’re beyond Communist. Even with the millstone of taxation, regulation and ministerial hate-speech, oil and gas stocks have done well. Even with frequent epinephrine overdoses of taxpayer subsidy and paeans of official praise, Greens – as the red-suspenders brigade would put it – are down the toilet.

That is a remarkable contrast. Not the least reason for it is that all forms of so-called “renewable” energy are monstrously, irremediably inefficient. Currently, my favorite example is the sappy UK Government’s subsidies to new electric autos.

Typical gasoline-powered auto engines are approximately 27% efficient. Typical fossil-fueled generating stations are 50% efficient, transmission to end user is 67% efficient, battery charging is 90% efficient and the auto’s electric motor is 90% efficient, so that the fuel efficiency of an electric auto is – er – also 27%. However, the electric auto requires 30% more power per mile traveled to move the mass of its batteries.

CO2 emissions from domestic transport account for 24% of UK CO2 emissions, and cars, vans, and taxis represent 90% of road transport. Assuming 80% of fuel use is by these autos, they account for 19.2% of UK CO2 emissions. Conversion to electric power, 61% of which is generated by fossil fuels in the UK, would remit 39% of 19.2%, or 7.5%, of UK CO2 emissions. However, the battery-weight penalty would be 30% of 19.2% of 61%, or 3.5%, of UK CO2 emissions. So the net saving from converting all UK cars, vans, and taxis to electricity would be just 4% of UK CO2 emissions, which are 1.72% of global CO2 emissions. Thus converting all UK autos to electricity would abate 0.07% of global CO2 emissions

http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/03/06/dont-put-your-pension-into-greens-mrs-worthington/#more-104574

Q. MORE REAX TO LEWIS AND CROK: WHAT THE IPCC KNEW BUT DIDN’T TELL US

Posted on March 6, 2014 by Anthony Watts

Climate Insensitivity: What the IPCC Knew But Didn’t Tell Us

By Patrick J. Michaels and Paul C. “Chip” Knappenberger

In a remarkable example of scientific malfeasance, it has become apparent that the IPCC knew a lot more than it revealed in its 2013 climate compendium about how low the earth’s climate sensitivity is likely to be.

The importance of this revelation cannot be overstated. If the UN had played it straight, the “urgency” of global warming would have evaporated, but, recognizing that this might cause problems, they preferred to mislead the world’s policymakers.

Strong words? Judge for yourself.

http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/03/06/more-reax-to-lewis-and-crok-what-the-ipcc-knew-but-didnt-tell-us/#more-104567
R. ROMAN AND MEDIEVAL WARMTH IN THE ARCTIC ATLANTIC REGION

Once again, another study of real-world data suggests the warmest intervals of both the Roman and Medieval Warm Periods were warmer than the warmest interval of the Current Warm Period, suggesting there is nothing unusual, unnatural, or unprecedented about the planet’s current level of warmth.

Because earlier multi-proxy climate reconstruction methods face "problems with varying temporal resolutions of the proxy data," according to Hanhijarvi et al. (2013), they set out to introduce "a new reconstruction method that uses the ordering of all pairs of proxy observations within each record to arrive at a consensus time series that best agrees with all proxy records," after which "the resulting unitless composite time series is subsequently calibrated to the instrumental record to provide an estimate of past climate." After developing and testing their new climate reconstruction method that they call PaiCo, Hanhijarvi et al. applied it to a newly-assembled collection of 27 high-quality proxy data to reconstruct the mean temperature of the Northernmost Atlantic region," which they refer to as the Arctic Atlantic. The ultimate take-home message of the three researchers work is contained in the final sentence of their paper's abstract: "The Arctic Atlantic reconstruction features temperatures during the Roman Warm Period and Medieval Climate Anomaly that are comparable [to] or even warmer than those of the twentieth century, and coldest temperatures in the middle of the nineteenth century, just prior to the onset of the recent warming trend [italics added]."

Once again, another study of real-world data suggests the warmest intervals of both the Roman and Medieval Warm Periods may have been warmer than the warmest interval of the Current Warm Period, suggesting there is nothing unusual, unnatural, or unprecedented about the planet's current level of warmth.

Reference
Hanhijarvi, S., Tingley, M.P. and Korhola, A. 2013. Pairwise comparisons to reconstruct mean temperature in the Arctic Atlantic Region over the last 2,000 years. *Climate Dynamics* 41: 2039-2060.

S. CHEVRON VS BIG GREEN: CAPITALISM FINALLY GROWS A PAIR

This week the environmental movement suffered its biggest defeat since Climategate. And at the hands of its most hated enemy: Big Oil.

Here are the reasons why the court ruling by a US federal judge that Chevron should not have to pay $9.5 billion in damages to victims of oil pollution in Ecuador is a victory for common sense and justice which we should all be celebrating

http://www.breitbart.com/Breitbart-London/2014/03/06/Chevron-v-capitalism-finally-grows-a-pair-in-the-war-on-Big-Green

T. THE FALL OF CALIFORNIA

Submitted by Doug L. Hoffman on Wed, 03/05/2014 - 15:12

Over 4,000 years ago, the Harappan Civilization of the Indus Valley faded and disappeared. Never heard of the Harappans? Theirs was a Bronze-Age civilization located where Pakistan and northwest India are today. With large, well-planned cities, municipal sewage systems and writing that has never been deciphered, they had a civilization equal to Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Greece.
But the Harappans fell victim to what most view as a modern horror—climate change. Sometime around 2,100 BC the monsoon cycle, vital to all of South Asia, faltered. The reliable rains stopped, and man's earliest civilizations fell. Now we are told that California—that progressive paradise on the Pacific—is poised on the brink of its own drought spawned disaster. So desperate have things become that one restaurant chain has threatened to stop serving guacamole and vintners are turning to witchcraft. Can the total collapse of Californian civilization be far behind? 
http://theresilienteearth.com/?q=content/fall-california

Regards
George