

Kentucky Energy Watch

Department for Energy Development and Independence

A snapshot of state and national energy issues



Patriot coal to phase out mountaintop removal

Patriot Coal has agreed to phase out mountaintop removal and other forms of strip mining, in a move Patriot officials say is in the best interests of their company, its employees and the communities where it operates. In a deal with citizen groups and environmentalists, Patriot said it would never seek new permits for large-scale surface mining operations, according to details of the settlement that were made public in federal court Thursday afternoon. St. Louis-based Patriot can continue some existing and smaller mining projects, but must also implement a cap on surface production and eventually stop all strip mining when existing coal leases expire. (The Charleston Gazette – Nov. 16, 2012)

NASEO and ASHRAE hosted high performance building congressional caucus coalition briefing

On November 14, 2012, NASEO and ASHRAE hosted a High Performance Building Congressional Caucus Coalition (HPBCCC) briefing on “The Promise and Proof of Net-Zero Energy Schools” in Washington, D.C. The event highlighted the benefits that local communities and school districts gain from high-performance and zero-net energy capable schools, including reduced and stable energy and facility operating costs, improved stewardship of public resources, and enhanced facility resiliency. The presentations also illustrated the key role that State Energy Offices can play in facilitating high-performance and zero-net energy capable buildings. (National Association of State Energy Officials – Nov. 15, 2012)

Solar powered trash and recycling receptacles debut in downtown Louisville

In another effort to make Louisville Metro greener, the city has unveiled solar-powered trash and recycling receptacles that will be installed on several downtown streets. The receptacles are compactors and they can hold five times the capacity of regular waste containers. That’s supposed to translate to fewer collection trips, savings in fuel, and fewer man hours. They can operate even on cloudy days or at night. “As we focus on being the most sustainable city in the country, initiatives like this will not only keep our streets cleaner but greener as well,” Fischer said in a news release. “The solar-powered compactors provide our community with many economic, social and environmental benefits.” The city’s contract with Waste Management gives it 12 compactors, and the Downtown Development Corporation bought 16 more. At first, the compactors will be placed along Main, Market, and Fourth Streets. They will replace old trash cans. (WDRB.com – Nov. 18, 2012)

LG&E, KU agree to smaller electric, gas rate increases

LG&E and KU Energy has reached an agreement with nine parties, including the Kentucky Attorney General’s office, that provides for smaller power rate increases for hundreds of thousands of customers across the state. A typical residential customer of LG&E would see electricity bill increase about \$4.31 per month, or about 4.8 percent. A typical KU customer’s electric bill would increase about \$4.82 per month, or about 5.8 percent. That compares with the company’s earlier proposal for electric rate increases of roughly 7 percent for both of the company’s two utilities. The natural gas rates for a typical residential customer of LG&E will increase about \$3.53 per month, or about 7.3 percent under terms of the agreement, which is about the same as previously requested. (The Courier-Journal - Nov. 19, 2012)

Kentucky attorney general warns against winter heating scam

A program in Kentucky that provides financial assistance to low income homes in the winter may be a target for scam artists. The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, runs through mid-December. During this time, the 23 Community Action Agencies in Kentucky will take applications for home heating assistance. Attorney General Jack Conway says many consumers seeking home heating assistance are elderly or vulnerable citizens at high risk for scams. The Attorney General says it’s important to note that LIHEAP is operated solely by Community Action Agencies and applications are accepted only at their local offices. If you’re solicited by phone or email to participate in LIHEAP for a fee or by providing personal information, it’s a scam. (WKU Public Radio - npr digital network – Nov. 19, 2012)

Natural gas futures slide on outlook for moderating weather

Natural gas futures slid in New York for the second time in three days on forecasts of warmer-than normal weather that may cut heating fuel consumption. Gas dropped as much as 1.4 percent after MDA Weather Services in Gaithersburg, Maryland, said temperatures may be above normal across most of the contiguous U.S. states through Nov. 23, with normal weather the following week. Heating demand in the U.S. may be 35 percent lower than usual on Nov. 22, data from Weather Derivatives in Belton, Missouri, show. (Bloomberg – Nov. 19, 2012)

Energy Star reaches high penetration rates for homes, appliances

Energy efficiency is making great gains in both home construction and appliances, according to data from the US Energy Information Agency. Last year, 26% of all the new single-family homes in the US met voluntary Energy Star standards. When the stats are in for 2012, those numbers will be higher. This year, 400 of the biggest US home builders pledged to use newly upgraded Energy Star standards for all new construction; new multifamily high-rise residential buildings are eligible as well, for the first time. Earlier this year, EPA updated standards for home construction. (Sustainable Business.com – Nov. 8, 2012)

Kentucky Retail Fuel Prices (Dollars per gallon)

Product	11/20/2012	11/15/2012	11/8/2012	11/1/2012	Year Ago
Gasoline (State avg.)	3.299	3.348	3.358	3.363	3.277
Ashland	3.332	3.397	3.37	3.307	3.378
Covington	3.44	3.496	3.453	3.411	3.338
Lexington	3.326	3.472	3.442	3.391	3.267
Louisville	3.167	3.211	3.288	3.381	3.185
Owensboro	3.285	3.286	3.278	3.332	3.165
Diesel (State avg.)	4.02	3.966	3.961	3.972	4
Ashland	4.036	3.961	3.972	3.981	4.052
Covington	4.037	3.963	3.947	3.978	3.996
Lexington	4.051	3.968	3.968	3.967	4.022
Louisville	4.011	3.987	3.988	3.999	4.002
Owensboro	3.996	3.978	3.989	4.001	3.996

Note: The record high average price for gasoline in Kentucky is \$4.089, reported on July 10, 2008.

Source: Gasoline (unleaded regular) & Diesel: National AAA,

Product	11/12/2012	11/5/2012	10/29/2012	10/22/2012	Year Ago
Heating Oil (dollars per gallon)	3.684	3.651	3.658	3.753	3.471
Propane (dollars per gallon)	2.062	2.04	2.03	1.996	2.561

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

Wholesale Fuel Prices

Spot Prices	11/19/2012	11/14/2012	11/7/2012	10/31/2012	Year Ago
Crude Oil (Dollars per barrel) <i>West Texas Intermediate, job</i>	89.28	86.32	84.44	86.24	96.72
Natural Gas (Dollars per MMBtu) <i>Henry-Hub</i>	3.605	3.655	3.473	3.49	2.928

Source: the Wall Street Journal

Futures		12-Dec	13-Jan	11-Feb
Crude Oil (Dollars per barrel) <i>Light Sweet Crude Oil</i>	11/19/2012	86.67	89.29	89.80
	11/14/2012	86.32	86.75	87.31
	11/7/2012	84.44	84.91	85.51
Natural Gas (Dollars per MMBtu) <i>Henry-Hub</i>	11/19/2012	3.719	3.837	3.852
	11/14/2012	3.76	3.879	3.89
	11/7/2012	3.578	3.714	3.72
Propane (Dollars per gallon) <i>Mt Belvieu (OPIS)</i>	11/19/2012	0.881	0.898	0.9
	11/14/2012	0.915	0.931	0.933
	11/7/2012	0.938	0.95	0.95
Coal (Dollars per ton) <i>Central Appalachian</i>	11/19/2012	60.67	62.28	63.26
	11/14/2012	61.43	63.03	64.16
	10/31/2012	59.55	60.98	60.98

Source: CME Group



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