

LED bulbs: We test the new products to find out who has the bright stuff

Some months into the new year, you will notice a big change in the lighting aisle of your local retailer or big-box store. The supply of 40- and 60-watt incandescent bulbs that accounted for 80 percent of the residential lighting market in the United States and occupied the most shelf space will be low. Their production will cease on Jan. 1. Once the existing inventory is sold out, it will be gone for good. (www.washingtonpost.com Dec 19, 2013)

Germany's Energy Goes Kaput, Threatening Economic Stability

If you want to do something big, you have to start small; and German innovation is well known around the world. Yet when it comes to energy policy, the country looks to have placed the cart before the horse. Germany has led much of Europe with 'Energiewende' or the renewable energy transition. Germany's headlong pursuit of an all-renewable energy future has, however, left the county in desperate need of affordable energy. (www.forbes.com Dec. 30, 2013)

Lineman program putting former coal miners back to work

After more than 6,000 layoffs in the Eastern Kentucky coalfields have been reported since 2011, it would seem that for many in the industry night has come to the region. However, a program for out-of-work miners in the area provided with funds through the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) may be helping the region find its way through the dark. The first graduating class of the lineman training program at Hazard Community and Technical College (HCTC) received certificates Friday morning at the college's technical campus. (www.floydcountytimes.com Dec. 26, 2013)

Home Electricity Use in US Falling to 2001 Levels

The average amount of electricity consumed in U.S. homes has fallen to levels last seen more than a decade ago, back when the smartest device in people's pockets was a Palm pilot and anyone talking about a tablet was probably an archaeologist or a preacher. Because of more energy-efficient housing, appliances and gadgets, power usage is on track to decline in 2013 for the third year in a row, to 10,819 kilowatt-hours per household, according to the Energy Information Administration. (www.abcnews.go.com Dec. 30, 2013)

Indiana Supreme Court clears way for Rockport plant

The Indiana Supreme Court cleared the way Tuesday for construction of a \$2.8 billion coal-gasification plant in southwestern Indiana, deciding unanimously that a contract with the state was still valid. The justices ruled 5-0 that changes made by Indiana Gasification, the plant developer, and the Indiana Finance Authority were not substantial enough to invalidate the contract. Opponents, including a regional power company and Indiana environmentalists, had argued that a change affecting industrial users would require a new contract to be drawn up and reviewed by state regulators. (www.courier-journal.com Dec. 17, 2013)

Kentucky Power's coal capacity to fall from 99% to 71% by 2028

Kentucky Power's reliance on coal for electric generation is expected to fall from 99% in 2013 to 71% in 2028, according to a report the company submitted Monday to the Kentucky Public Service Commission. In its latest integrated resource plan report, the American Electric Power subsidiary said it has no plans to construct any new baseload capacity over the next 15 years. But it does plan to purchase 100 MW of wind energy and add about 90 MW of solar capacity over the period. (www.platts.com Dec. 23, 2013)

Motor fuels tax rate to decline by 1.5 cents per gallon on Jan. 1

Kentucky's "gas tax" on sales of gasoline, diesel and ethanol motor fuels will decrease by 1.5 cents per gallon on New Year's Day, reflecting a drop in the calculated average wholesale fuel price. The decrease would result in a loss to the Kentucky Road Fund of about \$45 million on an annualized basis. "The Road Fund is our source of revenue for building, improving and maintaining Kentucky roads and bridges, so any loss of revenue is concerning," Kentucky Transportation Secretary Mike Hancock said Thursday. (www.migration.kentucky.gov Dec. 19, 2013)

Report: Indiana electricity demand flat, rates to rise 32 percent

Analysts are predicting a 32 percent increase in electricity rates for Indiana by 2023 and an unprecedented stagnation in electricity demand over the next two decades. "This is something we've never seen before: essentially no growth in electricity for the rest of the decade," said Douglas Gotham, director of the State Utility Forecasting Group (SUF), a state-funded panel of researchers based at Purdue University. Electricity demand is projected to grow at an annual average rate of 0.74 percent over the next 20 years. (www.purdue.edu Dec. 30, 2013)

Kentucky Retail Fuel Prices (Dollars per gallon)

Product	1/2/2014	12/19/2013	12/12/2013	12/5/2013	Year Ago
Gasoline (State avg.)	\$ 3.35	\$ 3.16	\$ 3.25	\$ 3.23	\$ 3.30
Ashland	\$ 3.41	\$ 3.21	\$ 3.28	\$ 3.23	\$ 3.36
Covington	\$ 3.38	\$ 3.19	\$ 3.24	\$ 3.23	\$ 3.36
Lexington	\$ 3.34	\$ 3.10	\$ 3.22	\$ 3.17	\$ 3.29
Louisville	\$ 3.41	\$ 3.24	\$ 3.36	\$ 3.28	\$ 3.34
Owensboro	\$ 3.29	\$ 3.12	\$ 3.20	\$ 3.21	\$ 3.22
Diesel (State avg.)	\$ 3.85	\$ 3.84	\$ 3.86	\$ 3.86	\$ 3.94
Ashland	\$ 3.89	\$ 3.87	\$ 3.91	\$ 3.91	\$ 3.97
Covington	\$ 3.87	\$ 3.87	\$ 3.87	\$ 3.89	\$ 4.01
Lexington	\$ 3.83	\$ 3.84	\$ 3.85	\$ 3.86	\$ 3.96
Louisville	\$ 3.83	\$ 3.82	\$ 3.83	\$ 3.84	\$ 3.94
Owensboro	\$ 3.88	\$ 3.88	\$ 3.90	\$ 3.89	\$ 3.98

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	12/23/2013	12/16/2013	12/9/2013	12/2/2013	Year Ago
Heating Oil (dollars per gallon)	\$ 3.48	\$ 3.46	\$ 3.49	\$ 3.52	\$ 3.56
Propane (dollars per gallon)	\$ 2.43	\$ 2.38	\$ 2.30	\$ 2.26	\$ 2.07

Spot Prices	12/31/2013	12/18/2013	12/11/2013	12/4/2013	Year Ago
Crude Oil (Dollars per barrel) <i>West Texas Intermediate, fob</i>	\$ 96.45	\$ 98.83	\$ 97.64	\$ 97.63	\$ 93.12
Natural Gas (Dollars per MMBtu) <i>Henry-Hub</i>	\$ 4.32	\$ 4.26	\$ 4.23	\$ 3.93	\$ 3.40

Source: the Wall Street Journal

Futures		February 2014	March 2014	April 2014
Crude Oil (Dollars per barrel) <i>Light Sweet Crude Oil</i>	12/31/2013	\$ 98.42	\$ 98.55	\$ 98.44
Natural Gas (Dollars per MMBtu) <i>Henry-Hub</i>	12/31/2013	\$ 4.23	\$ 4.19	\$ 4.11
Propane (Dollars per gallon) <i>Mt Belvieu (OPIS)</i>	12/31/2013	\$ 1.23	\$ 1.14	\$ 1.08
Coal (Dollars per ton) <i>Central Appalachian</i>	12/31/2013	\$ 57.44	\$ 57.16	\$ 58.04

Source: CME Group

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