



# ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS SUMMARY

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## LAND USE

In 211-204 vote, House defeats rule for debate on land use planning bill, virtually killing all prospects for legislation this year (Wash. Post, 6/12/74, N.Y. Times, 6/12/74, Wall St. Journal, 6/12/74). The bill, passed by the Senate and recently reported out of the House Rules Comm., would have given states \$800 million over 8 years to develop comprehensive land use programs. Sponsor, Rep. Morris Udall (D-Ariz.) and supporters attributed the defeat to "impeachment politics"--the shifting of Administration support to weaker Rhodes-Steiger substitute as a means of currying conservative support. Defeat came largely from conservative Republicans and rural Democrats who were under intense lobbying by U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American Farm Bureau Federation, cattle, soil, and timber groups, who saw the bill as an inhibition to growth and development, a threat to ownership of private property and an infringement on states' rights. Proponents of the bill included the AFL-CIO, United Auto Workers, National League of Cities, U.S. Conference of Mayors, Governors' Conference, National Association of Counties, Nat'l Assoc. of Realtors, and all major environmental groups (Wash. Post, 6/12/74).

## AIR

House, Senate-passed bill to amend the Clean Air Act (HR 14368, Energy Supply and Coordination Act) reported by House, Senate conference committee June 6 (Air/Water Pollution Report, 6/10/74). Committee agreed to provision--included in both House and Senate versions--extending all '75 interim auto emissions standards through 1976, and set standards by which FEA could order power-plant conversions from oil to coal. EPA will be allowed to temporarily suspend emission limitations for utilities unable to get clean fuel, or given FEA-ordered variance. EPA will also be allowed to void FEA variance if significant health risk is determined, provision hailed by environmentalists as defeat for coal, electric-utilities industries (Wash. Post, 6/10/74). The Senate cleared the bill for the President's signature on June 12 (Wash. Post, 6/13/74).

In testimony during Senate Public Works Subcomm. hearings on CAA oversight, EPA Administrator Russell Train reaffirms that "...clean air need not be sacrificed to meet energy, economic or social goals, although 2-3-month variances may have to be granted in cases of fuel shortages." Regarding scrubber issue, Train says there can be no arbitration: "If a state implementation plan requires the use of scrubbers in order to meet standards...scrubbers must be used" (A/W Poll. Rpt., 6/10/74). Train also states that "a relative few communities" so heavily impacted with air pollution that impossible to meet clean-air deadlines under transportation control strategies, may be granted extensions, providing they have "adopted all reasonable control measures" (Wash. Post, 6/4/74, A/W Poll. Rpt., 6/10/74). Comm. also heard testimony favoring and opposing extension of the Act. Chairman of NAS panel on SO<sub>2</sub>, Dr. Bertram Carrow, called use of intermittent controls (tall stacks) an "epidemiological gamble," possibly forming clouds of harmful pollutants over heavily-populated areas. Natural Resource Defense Council spokesman attacks utilities on scrubber position (Sierra Club National News Report, 5/24/74). Oil industry executives, developers call for overhauling of CAA, ask primary, secondary standards be postponed until economically and technologically feasible (A/W Poll. Rpt., 5/27/74). Rpt. finds little sympathy for industry position among panel members.

IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS, Train also gave the subcommittee draft proposal on regulations to prevent "significant deterioration" of air already cleaner than federal stan-

dards require (A/W Poll. Rpt, 6/10/74). Regulations will include zone system of allowable deterioration dependent on economic, social factors and present air quality, and, since related to land-use planning procedures, decisions will be left to states. EPA should establish guidelines, insure proper policy-making and implementation procedures. ....EPA begins enforcement proceedings on 3 electric utilities which have plants violating sulfur oxide emission standards, endangering human health (Wall St. Journal, 6/10/74, Wash. Post, 6/8/74). Currently, there are 90 power plants in the country violating SO<sub>x</sub> standards. .... Environmental Health Letter (6/1/74) says Train has urged electric utilities to pass costs of sulfur oxide removal on to customer, esp. costs of scrubber and other flue-gas desulfurization equipment. .... U.S. News & World Report (6/17/74) features story on Chattanooga, Tenn., once most polluted industrial city in U.S., now one of cleanest, using baghouse, scrubber technology to clean up industrial emissions. .... Train, in speech to New York Board of Trade, reiterates feasibility of scrubber technology, condemns American Electric Power System anti-scrubber ads, notes FEA's John Sawhill has also asked AEPS to "cease this kind of advertising...[which] gives the incorrect impression that conservation implies strongly negative economic impacts" (Journal, 6/10/74).

#### VINYL CHLORIDE

EPA announces air emissions from vinyl chloride-producing plants do not pose an "imminent hazard," but feels efforts must be made to keep emissions at lowest possible levels (Wash. Post, 6/12/74, Wall St. Journal, 6/12/74). Atmospheric sampling around various plants generally ranged from 0.5 ppm PVC to 3.4 ppm, well under Occupational Health and Safety Administration allowable level of 50 ppm. Wall St. Journal (6/3/74) says EPA considering possible imposition of vinyl chloride emissions limits.

IN RELATED DEVELOPMENTS, Houston Post (5/31/74) reports EPA no longer considering criminal prosecution of chemical industries releasing vinyl chloride into air, as earlier reported (see 5/31/74 News Summary). Amid charges that EPA violating Clean Air Act by withholding the sampling data, EPA says data soon to be released without further action since "no emission standards exist for vinyl chloride." .... EPA takes more pesticide sprays containing vinyl chloride off the market (Wash. Post, 5/29/74), while Consumer Product Safety Commission asks for ban on other household sprays containing the chemical (Wall St. Journal, 5/31/74). .... N.Y. Times (6/1/74) reports further case studies on angiosarcoma cancer patients show vinyl chloride link.

#### ATOMIC ENERGY

Wash. Post (6/11/74) reports Joint Comm. on Atomic Energy meets in sudden, "unseemly haste" to reconsider new limits of nuclear damage liability payments, one month before completion of reactor safety study. Nuclear power industry and AEC want present liability payments limit extended to 1997. Opponents of legislation feel haste may be due to retirement this year of some committee members sympathetic to nuclear energy.

In response to growing reports on nuclear theft possibilities, AEC has set up a new Division of Safeguards and Security concerned solely with protection of fissionable materials (Wash. Post, 6/4/74). Responsibilities will include research & development on protection techniques, and security procedures to protect nuclear plants and uranium and plutonium-carrying transportation. .... Legislation to split the AEC into 2 separate agencies, an Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA), and a Nuclear Safety and Licensing Commission (NSLC), is reported out of Senate Government Operations Comm. to Senate floor (Wash. Post, 5/30/74). Included in the NSLC will be an office for Nuclear Materials Security.

In other safety issues, AEC reports 861 "abnormal events" occurred at nuclear power plants nation-wide (Wash. Post, 5/29/74, Newsday, 5/29/74), with 371 rated "potentially significant," although no health hazards.

IN OTHER NUCLEAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS, U.S. News & World Report (6/17/74) says world's first floating nuclear power station will be anchored off New Jersey coast by 1980. .... U.S. News & World Report (6/10/74) also features article on "fading" reli-

ability of nuclear power plants, citing increased safety, mechanical difficulties..... N.Y. Times (5/20/74), Newsweek (6/3/74) report growing concern of radiation hazards of ordinary radio, television, radar, micro waves, even electric power lines. Evidence mounting on biological, heat-generating effects of both high and low-intensity radiation.

#### DEEPWATER PORTS

House passes by 318-9 vote, bill allowing Interior Dept. to issue permits for construction of deepwater ports to accomodate oil-carrying "supertankers" (A/W Poll. Rpt., 6/10/74, Wall St. Journal, 6/7/74). Bill gives adjacent states voice in port construction and siting, requires environmental impact statements from applicants, provides for oil-spill liability fund. A special Senate subcommittee is drawing up another version of the bill.

N.Y. Times editorial (6/4/74) deplores construction of supertankers, citing grave oil spill danger: "...ships are built to make money...not for maximum safety... have shown high-rate of structural failure, frequently breaking up in heavy storms." Calls for rigid safety standards, intensive crew training to prevent "irremediable disaster."

#### WATER

Council on Environmental Quality releases report identifying urban rainwater runoff as more comprehensive source of toxic substances, including lead and mercury, than most waste discharges from major industries (Wash. Post, 6/9/74). Report says storm runoff, often as toxic as untreated sewage, is dumped directly into waterways, making upgrading of waste-treatment facilities "senseless" until storm sewer improvements are made. CEQ terms the problem "extremely serious," estimating that average city's annual runoff contains 100,000 to 250,000 lbs. of lead, a problem of particular note for cities where lead in automobile exhaust responsible for most atmospheric fallout. Average annual mercury runoff is 30,000 lbs., compared to allowable annual industry discharge limit of 176 lbs.

IN DRINKING-WATER DEVELOPMENTS, "Lack of quorums, oil industry lobbying, and nitpicking," is stalling drinking-water standards legislation in House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Comm., charges Ralph Nader in syndicated column (Cleveland Plain-Dealer, 5/22/74). Senate-passed bill sets federal standards, provides technical assistance to states, gives states enforcement authority with EPA follow-up. House bill contains customer/media notification of violations provision. Nader says oil lobbyists want oil-contamination provision deleted, committee members fail to attend meetings, Chmn. Staggers (D-W.Va.) refuses to show leadership. If not reported in 3 weeks, says Nader, bill "will be lost." Sylvia Porter, in nationally-syndicated column (6/7/74) urging passage of drinking-water legislation, says drinking water clean-up must be paid for at national level, if not acceptable at local level.

Drinking-water bill also contains emergency chloride allocation provision (Clean Water Report, 5/24/74). Senate Commerce Comm. also reports out emergency chloride allocation legislation, giving EPA authority to determine need for allocation. Wall St. Journal (5/16/74) predicts summer chlorine shortage of 2-15%.

IN OTHER WATER DEVELOPMENTS, House Public Works Comm. held oversight hearings on FWPCA, with controversy centering on user charges, industrial cost recovery, state/federal relations (Water Pollution Control Federation Highlights, May, 1974). EPA's John Rhett announces certain "policy changes" on these matters.....House Government Operations Comm. scores EPA for omitting small feedlots from discharge permit requirements (Air/Water Pollution Report, 5/6/74). Asks for extensive EPA feedlot survey, and revision of July, '73 regulations in line with Congressional intent.....EPA holds nation's first feedlot discharge permit hearings in Twin Falls, Idaho (AP story in N.Y. Times, Portland Oregonian, 5/24/74). Irrigation district reps ask for financial support. Nevada Gov. O'Callaghan says EPA's irrigation discharge permit regs may cause hardships, higher prices for farmers, ranchers (Las Vegas Sun, 5/22/74). Cites lack of proper EPA standard

setting procedure.....Water Newsletter (5/30/74) cites Seattle-area survey which indicates family water usage increases with rate of income, but that rate increases result in significant water consumption decrease at all income levels.

#### TOCKS ISLAND DAM

House Appropriations Comm. delays previously-authorized appropriation of \$2.5 million for one year on construction of Tocks Island Dam, a controversial, hydroelectric power, flood-control and recreation project on Delaware River, until environmental problems have been resolved (Philadelphia Inquirer, 6/4/74). The committee's decision came after 7 U.S. senators from affected states said they would oppose the legislation without the environmental review. Meanwhile, New Jersey Gov. Brendan Byrne says he will withhold approval of the project pending further evaluation (Newark Star-Ledger, 5/23/74).

#### INDUSTRY

Mc Graw-Hill's seventh annual survey of pollution control expenditures finds U.S. industry needs total of \$24.67 billion "to bring existing facilities into compliance with present air and water pollution control standards" (Clean Water Report, 5/24/74). At present rate of investment, current standards would be achieved by mid-'77. CWR notes that '77 is year best practicable technology currently available will be required to control wastewater discharges. Mc Graw-Hill finds water pollution control expenditures increasing at faster rate than those for air pollution.



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