



West Virginia Environmental Council

www.wvecouncil.org

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2009 Legislative Priorities

Renewable Energy: WVEC will continue its Renewable Energy Campaign, which was initiated almost six years ago. WVEC's positions on energy use/development and climate change are in our Citizens' Energy Plan released in 2008- http://www.wvecouncil.org/issues/renewable_energy/WVEC_Citizen_Energy_Plan_2008.pdf.

WVEC will continue to support funding and a wide array of incentives for renewable energy development, including "green jobs" initiatives. We will push for the adoption of a **renewable energy standard** to mandate utilities use 20 % renewable energy by 2020, as well as a utility **energy efficiency standard** to reduce electricity use by 15 % by 2015. We support legislation that mandates that all state buildings are constructed using "**green building**" codes. And we seek legislation to **reform electric transmission line siting** to require landowner notification, protect environmental values, and consider less damaging alternatives.

"Clean Coal" and Coal-to-Liquids: WVEC will continue its opposition to coal-to-liquids and other so-called "clean coal" projects because they are too expensive, dirty, and dangerous, and because they can not reduce the adverse environmental impacts of coal quickly enough to be meaningful.

Coal Sludge Injection and Impoundments: WVEC will continue to push the Department of Environmental Protection to report to the Legislature on the coal slurry study, and will continue to push the Department of Health and Human Resources to provide a thorough and accurate analysis of the health impacts from slurry injection and sludge impoundments as authorized by the Legislature. WVEC will support initiatives to provide clean and safe drinking water for coalfield communities.

Oil and Gas Issues: WVEC member groups and individual members are concerned about water quantity and water quality issues evolving from the recent drilling of Marcellus shale gas wells. Marcellus shale wells incorporate drilling and "fracturing" techniques that use large amounts of fresh water and create large quantities of wastewater. Additionally, this new "boom" in drilling is stressing the DEP's inspection capabilities. WVEC will support initiatives to adequately regulate oil and gas drilling operations.

WVEC will also continue its support for a Surface Owners Bill of Rights, which would provide additional land protections to surface owners who do not own the minerals under their land. The efforts for this legislation are being led by the Surface Owners Rights Organization, a project of WV Citizens Action Group.

Clean Elections: As a member of the West Virginia People's Election Reform Coalition (PERC-WV), WVEC will continue to support legislation that would provide public funding for election campaigns. This is the one reform that would make all other reform possible.

Bottle Bill/Recycling: WVEC will continue to support legislation establishing a refundable deposit on beverage containers, and other recycling and waste reduction initiatives.

Public Health Impact Bill: WVEC will continue to support legislation that would require the Bureau of Public Health to provide an assessment of the public health impacts of DEP proposals to change water quality or air quality standards.

Toxic Chemicals: WVEC supports the efforts of People Concerned about MIC (methyl isocyanate -- the same chemical that killed and injured thousands in the Bhopal disaster) to require industry to release an inventory of what hazardous chemicals are being stored at their plants.

**Representing West Virginia "Special Interests":
People Who Want to Breathe Clean Air and Drink Clean Water**