



West Virginia Environmental Council's

GREEN Legislative Update

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Under the Dome

By Donald S. Garvin, Jr., WVEC Legislative Coordinator

Week 7 – Green Buildings Act!!!

A miracle occurred at the Capitol this week.

A “Green Buildings Act” mysteriously arose from the ashes and is about to reach final passage in the Senate.

Now, the West Virginia Environmental Council has been pushing for five years for public buildings in the state to be built to “green” building standards, with no success.

It all began in 2008 when Del. Barbara Fleischauer (D-Monongalia) introduced a bill that would have required all new or renovated state buildings over 5,000 square feet in size to meet the LEED silver standard, at a minimum.

LEED – the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System – encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria. Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council in 1998, the LEED system provides a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction.

The WV Department of Environmental Protection’s office building in Kanawha City, for example, is built to the LEED silver standard.

However, the LEED program is expensive, and we found over the next three years considerable opposition to mandating LEEDs – not from the State – but from industry groups such as the WV Forestry Association, the WV Homebuilders Association, and the WV Manufacturer’s Association.

However, there are other “green building” rating systems out there. So for the next three years or so we focused in the House on working with these other stakeholders to come up with a compromise – still with no success.

Meanwhile, over in the Senate, Sen. John Unger (D-Berkeley) quietly introduced his own version of a “green buildings act” several years ago. It was never taken up by committee.

So imagine our surprise this week when SB 76 appeared on the agenda of the Senate Government Organization Committee. The bill passed out of committee to Senate Finance, with little or no discussion.

Then imagine our surprise when Senate Finance committee took up the bill two days later and passed it, again with little or no discussion! The bill is now about to pass the full Senate.

Sen. Unger is the only sponsor of SB 76. The bill requires new facility projects of public agencies and projects receiving state funds, to be designed and constructed complying with the International Energy Conservation Code adopted by the State Fire Marshall and the ANSI/ASHRAE/IESNA Standard 90.1-2007 (green building standards codes).

So, while this is not LEEDs, it’s a great compromise. And it appears to allow the State Fire Marshall to update our building codes to the ICC 2009 Energy Code.

Here’s hoping this bill passes the full Legislature this session.

Wintry weather is still in the forecast, so please remember to keep your bird feeders full.

If Coal’s the Cheapest Fuel, Then What’s the Problem?

The Power Line Blog, February 23, 2012

By Bill Howley, Coalition For Reliable Power

SB162, which would require WV power companies to submit least cost plans to the WV PSC every two years, is being held up in the Senate Judiciary Committee. HB4646, the same bill that was introduced in the House, is also being held up in the House Government Organization Committee.

What’s the hold up? We have learned from legislators that AEP’s lobbyists and FirstEnergy’s lobbyists have started a whispering campaign claiming that having to identify the lowest system cost among various ways of supplying power to WV would result in coal miners losing jobs and the power companies’ coal fired plants closing down.

Really? Would a plan, produced by power companies themselves, submitted to the PSC with no requirement that the PSC do anything in response cause power companies and coal companies to fire the people who work for them?

But I don't understand. Just two days ago, the Wheeling Intelligencer wrote this in an editorial:

But as matters stand, coal is the most economical method of generating electricity. President Barack Obama's administration is pressuring utilities to abandon it in favor of other fuels – preferably “alternatives” such as wind and solar power.

Some utilities, including Appalachian's parent, AEP, already have plans to close some coal-fired plants and convert to other fuels.

Once that happens, power prices will explode – making Appalachian's current worry over coal prices seem like a fond memory.

The Intelligencer says that coal is “the most economical method of generating electricity.” The Intelligencer's editors go on to say that the power companies themselves are closing coal fired power plants. As for “power prices explod[ing],” I think a 50% increase in four years is already “exploding” without a single WV power plant closing. Those exploding rate increases are memories at this point, but no one is recalling them “fondly.”

I'm very confused. Why should AEP and FirstEnergy lobbyists be telling our legislators that least cost planning will cause them to close coal fired power plants, when they are already doing that? Why should power company lobbyists be opposing a requirement that they identify the power generating methods with the lowest system cost if coal is “the most economical method of generating electricity?”

I have actually had several legislators repeat the claim that coal fired power is the cheapest power to produce. Well, if that is the case, then there should be no problem with passing SB162, because least cost planning will boost the use of coal fired power in WV. Right?

Or maybe WV's power companies aren't really interested in keeping electric rates as low as possible. If the WV Legislature rejects least cost planning, that might also be evidence that WV's political leaders aren't really interested in keeping rates down either.

Update On Meetings With DEP Staff on Landfills and Marcellus Waste:

By Leslee McCarty, WVEC

Carol Warren of OVEC and I went to meet with DEP today (Friday). There is much for us to think about in their responses to our written questions, but one really good exchange resulted in our proposing that since DEP has appointees to *every* County Solid Waste Authority – and the environmental community should provide a roster of people willing to serve. This way DEP will have a list of our people at hand when a vacancy occurs. I hope that WVEC will take the lead on this, but meanwhile, be looking for folks in each county who will agree to serve on SWAs. It may be a hard job, but it would be great if we can find people who share our environmental concerns to agree to serve.

Solar Bills Advance

By John Christensen, WVEC

Both of our solar bills advanced this week in the House of Delegates.

HB 2740 was amended in House Judiciary Committee on Monday, and passed the full House on Friday. The bill basically prohibits subdivisions or Homeowner's Associations from enforcing covenants that restrict the installation or use of solar energy systems. The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

The second bill, **HB 2741**, was also amended in House Judiciary Committee Monday, and was referred to House Finance on second reference. This bill would tax solar energy systems at salvage value for real and personal property tax appraisals, and would be an additional incentive for residential installations. However, at this time it appears unlikely that House Finance will take up the bill.

Don't Give AEP Our Credit Card!

By Leslee McCarty, WVEC

It seems like the Legislature is worried about drug use and rising crime, but there is one area where they are willing to enable addicts to officially get into our pocketbooks – utility rate increases. The utility companies are pushing a bill (HB 4530) with legislative leaderships backing, that will allow them to float bonds to pay for their addiction to coal at any cost.

We as ratepayers need to stage an intervention for AEP and just say no to paying for this addiction. Indeed, we are trying to help them plan for lowering utility costs in the future by making them use something called Least Cost Planning, used in 27 other states. But no, they don't want to follow good suggestions in SB 162, and submit plans for how they will look for less expensive alternatives. They just want their coal fix! As a matter of fact, if HB 4530 becomes law, the utilities will be selling bonds (borrowing our credit card) to pay for buying overpriced coal. The bill for this will come later, with interest, for all of us consumers to pay.

It is time for us to refuse to fund our utilities' addiction to coal. Of course, we are an energy state and up to now, coal has been cheap and plentiful, but we are obviously not in that situation now. Otherwise, why would AEP be wanting to borrow money to pay for increases in prices for coal they have already bought? So what about using less costly alternative fuels? What about encouraging energy efficiency? What about all the Marcellus gas we have been hearing about? Plan, people, plan!

If this were our child or grandchild and we knew they were hooked on something that was not good for them, would we just ignore the problem and hand them the credit card? I should think not! I would think we would get them some help and take away the credit card – heck, we would need to get them some treatment! And part of that treatment would be making a plan for how to recover.

The utilities don't want to go to treatment. They are telling us to butt out of their lives – they know what they are doing. For my part, I think we need to pass SB 162 and make them plan for least cost alternatives and I think we need to look hard at HB 4530, which makes them able to pay for their short sightedness with our credit card. It is for their own good. And ours!

Disposal of Shale Gas Waste Poses “Special” Problems

By Amanda Pitzer, Friends of the Cheat.

In July 2010, Friends of the Cheat was warned of a proposed oil field waste landfill and propriety wastewater treatment facility for the separation and disposal of waste products from new shale gas exploration and production.

A Canadian company, CCS Midstream, is eyeing 250 acres of land situated at the confluence of Big and Little Sandy Creeks less than 2 miles outside of Bruceton Mills in Preston County for the facility. The private landfill would accept drill mud, drill cuttings, slops, and flowback pit precipitate from multiple states and companies.

The waste separation facility would handle wet deliveries and spin off water using centrifuge technology. The water would go to deep well injections and the solids into the 120 acre landfill, the bounds of which appear to be less than 500 feet from two of the watershed's best streams, in its largest subwatershed, which empties into the Cheat River main stem about eight miles from Cheat Lake.

CCS courted the Preston County Solid Waste Authority for a Certificate of Site Approval. In July 2011 the Preston County SWA voted to not amend their 2009 Siting Plan and to not issue a Certificate of Site Approval. The public was pleased with this victory, but unfortunately the threat of the landfill has not gone away.

As reported in recent WVEC updates, this waste is currently being disposed of in several municipal waste landfills across the state - or may be buried in pits on well sites if landowners approve.

WVDEP has coined this waste “special waste” which is a subset of solid waste, despite that “other wastes or material resulting from...the exploration, development, production, storage, and recovery of coal, oil, and gas” are explicitly excluded from the definition of solid waste.

Many folks believe this waste should not be going to municipal waste facilities or, even worse, scattered in unlined, unmarked pits across the state. Research indicates that this waste can contaminate soils for over 1,600 years and that as the waste breaks down, it can increase in radioactivity. Siting of solid waste facilities is guided by SWA Siting Plans which are developed using the criteria below:

- Effect on economic development
- Transportation network

- Impact on property values
- Groundwater and surface water protection including “taking into consideration wetlands, any surface water, groundwater quality, perennial streams, floodplains, and public or private water supply wells”
- Geologic and hydrologic conditions
- Impact on existing aesthetic or environmental conditions
- Boundaries of any public parks
- Effect on historical and cultural resources
- Proximity to airports
- Present or potential land use for residential, commercial, recreational, environmental, conservation or industrial purposes
- Effect on public health, welfare, and convenience

There is no permit application, therefore, we know very little about the status of the CCS Midstream project. We were told that this company and other companies are looking at other sites for such a facility in West Virginia, one possibly in the northern panhandle, and Pennsylvania. CCS will neither confirm nor deny that the Preston County project is moving forward. If an application is received, the future of the Bruceton Mills community, its valuable natural resources, property values, and legacy will rest in the hands of the WVDEP.

Mine Safety: Up To Coal Lobbyists?

Charleston Gazette Editorial

Feb. 22, 2012

In the same week that an Upper Big Branch mine superintendent was charged with safety violations linked to the explosion death of 29 miners, news from the Legislature said coal industry lobbyists are hindering improvements in West Virginia mine safety laws.

Statehouse correspondent Phil Kabler reported that pressure from mining lobbyists caused the House Rules Committee to remove a safety bill from the active calendar - until the lobbyists hold secret meetings with legislators and others in an attempt to weaken reforms that coal corporations don't like.

Think of that: Big-money agents have power to stall legislative efforts to save lives. They can negotiate back-room deals. A Beckley teacher phoned us Wednesday to express amazement that coal lobbyists can manipulate West Virginia's lawmaking process so brazenly . . .

Delegate Mike Caputo, D-Marion, a United Mine Workers official, said coal corporation opposition could be a “deal-breaker” menacing the reforms. If no secret compromise can be reached, House Judiciary Chairman Tim Miley, D-Harrison, said “we can run the bill and fight it out on the floor.” . . .

For generations, out-of-state coal corporations have used West Virginia like a colony, bleeding away mineral wealth and leaving little behind but poverty and ravages. The industry invests heavily to sway the Legislature. Traditionally, it wielded enormous power.

But coal is fading. The number of West Virginia miners dwindled from 125,000 after World War II to around 15,000 today, as machines displaced human workers. All studies say easy-to-reach Appalachian coal is being depleted, and production will decline severely in coming years.

Under these circumstances, it's remarkable that coal lobbyists still have power to steer the Legislature, like the tail wagging the dog.

Read the entire editorial here: <http://www.wvgazette.com/Opinion/Editorials/2012022220136>

Think Renewable!

DEP Bills Would Refine Narrative Water Quality Standards

(From a Feb. 23 article by Pam Kasey in *The State Journal*)

Two bills now before the Legislature represent a next step in the standoff between the state Department of Environmental Protection and the US. Environmental Protection Agency over permitting water pollution discharges from coal mines.

SB 562 and HB 4518 more closely define the elusive biologic component of the state's narrative water quality standards.

Measuring compliance with the biologic component, the bills say, requires "evaluation of the holistic health of the aquatic ecosystem."

It also requires a determination, essentially, that a stream supports a balanced aquatic community, contains appropriate levels of fish and has enough of the right streambed bugs to support the appropriate fish.

That is more definition than before, but still seems vague. How would DEP use it to decide if a coal mine operator is discharging too much pollution?

"DEP would have to come up with a rule, a formula," said DEP Secretary Randy Huffman. "And we've already been working on that."

. . . Huffman expects that DEP would have a formula before the Legislature in 2014.

Read the rest of this article here: <http://www.statejournal.com/story/17005194/dep-bills-would-refine-narrative-water-quality-standards>

Shameless Plea - Your Lobby Team Needs You

Now is the perfect time to come to the aid of the E-Council lobby team. Your generous dollars directly translate into us completing the 2012 legislative session with adequate funding.

We have no doubt you are aware of the significance of our mission to be at the State Capitol doing everything possible to protect and defend West Virginia's environment through policy making. And we know you are aware of the difficulty we face in this legislative climate.

This shameless plea is to convey to our supporters something you may not be aware of - funding to enable the WVEC lobbying effort is a struggle. We have generous support from several membership organizations and individuals (and we are grateful to each and every one of you), however to field the lobby team takes additional funding beyond our usual support. We are continually in a position of creating ways to raise much needed dollars.

So here we are, asking once again if you are able to send in additional donations to WVEC. If you can, please do, as these next two weeks are critical for us. Anything you can afford to send in will help. No amount is considered too small – it all adds up ☺

Campaign Finance Reform – “In Memoriam”

By Carol Warren, OVEC

The extension of the **Supreme Court Public Financing Pilot** finally began to move, and then stalled this week. The original bill to extend the program, House Bill 4416, was passed over in favor of a broader funding bill from last year, HB 4016, that could contain language to strike the matching fund provisions that had been declared unconstitutional. The strike and insert bill was taken up in House Judiciary on Monday afternoon. There were a few questions about whether any new funding was included, which there was not. The bill eliminated the matching fund provision and extended the program through the 2016 election cycle.

The bill was referred on to House Finance. In discussion with one of the committee members, it was suggested that the main obstacle in the committee could likely be that the legislators are actively looking for additional revenue, and if this program is allowed to expire, the associated funding might be taken for the General Fund. By Friday afternoon, the bill had not been placed on the Finance Committee agenda, and so will not likely be taken up. A source in the Secretary of State's Office stated that election bills in general were not being considered by the Finance Committee. This is a very disappointing outcome, but we may have one more shot next session to gain a bill extending the Pilot Project before it sunsets.



Bills We Are Tracking

Bill Number	Title	Committee
Senate Bills		
SB 8	Creating Creative Communities Development Pilot Program	To Finance
SB 15	Energy Efficient Building Act	Gov Org
SB 25	Public health assessment of DEP rules (<i>WVEC Bill</i>)	Judiciary
SB 40	Composting tax credit	To Finance
SB 57	Additional regulation of timbering on public lands (<i>GREAT Bill</i>)	Nat Res
SB 76	Green Buildings Act (<i>GREAT Bill</i>)	On 2nd Reading
SB 88	Jobs Impact Statement Act (<i>Devil in the Details</i>)	Econ Dev
SB 157	Dedicating portion of oil and gas severance tax to county of origin	To Finance
SB 162	Requiring "least-cost" planning by electric utilities (<i>EEWV Bill</i>)	Judiciary
SB 180	Granting surface owner right of first refusal to purchase mineral estate	EIM
SB 182	Creating West Virginia Future Fund	Econ Dev
SB 200	Eliminating timber severance tax for additional three years	EIM
SB 202	Permitting Div. of Forestry to enter into stewardship contracts with US Forest Service	House Judiciary
SB 220	Management of Coopers Rock State Forest (<i>GREAT Bill</i>)	Nat Res
SB 348	Quality Control Procedure for Agency Rules Act (<i>Terrible Bill</i>)	Gov Org
SB 387	Requiring training of floodplain managers	On 1st Reading
SB 391	Reduced utility rates for low-income residential customers	To Finance
SB 402	Streamlining legislative rule-making review process (<i>Devil in the Details</i>)	Judiciary
SB 466	Creating Alternative Coal Slurry Disposal Act (<i>Incentives Only</i>)	To Finance
SB 496	Modifying DEP requirement of greenhouse gas emissions inventory	On 3rd Reading
SB 497	Awarding attorney fees and costs in mining permit appeals (<i>DEP Bill</i>)	House Judiciary
SB 522	Creating WVU Shale Research Center	To Finance
SB 529	Compliance credit requirements for alternative and renewable energy sources	EIM
SB 537	Creating WV Sustainable Wealth Fund	Econ Dev
SB 552	Creating WV Land Stewardship Corporation Act (<i>Devil in the Details</i>)	On 1st Reading
SB 562	Regarding DEP narrative water quality standard	On 1st Reading
SB 570	Requiring DEP maintain Office of Internal Auditing	Gov Org
SB 579	Increasing special reclamation tax on clean coal mined (<i>Good Bill</i>)	On 2nd Reading
SB 584	Authorizing PSC issue consumer rate relief bonds	Judiciary
SB 592	Requiring public construction projects comply with International Energy Code	Gov Org
SB 604	Authorizing legislative rules relating to green plumbing	Gov Org
SB 609	"Complete Streets" Bill	Transportation
SB 615	Conforming WV Water Pollution Control Act with federal Clean Water Act (<i>Bad Bill</i>)	On 1st Reading
SB 624	Permitting transfer of alternative-fuel motor vehicles tax credit	To Finance
SB 645	Authorizing DEP grant counties and municipalities certain litter disposal exemptions	Gov Org
SB 653	Creating WV Innovation and Development Act	Econ Dev
SB 654	Creating coal severance tax credit	EIM
SB 658	Creating Energy Intensive Industrial Consumers Revitalization Tax Credit	Econ Dev
House Bills		
HB 2024	Green Buildings Act (<i>WVEC Bill</i>)	Gov Org
HB 2025	West Virginia Energy Efficiency Act (<i>WVEC Bill</i>)	Gov Org
HB 2030	Additional severance tax for Surface Mine Reclamation Fund (<i>Great Bill</i>)	EIL
HB 2056	West Virginia Renewable Energy Act (<i>Great Bill</i>)	EIL
HB 2136	Plastic Shopping Bag Excise Tax Act (<i>Good Idea</i>)	Finance
HB 2153	Requiring DEP to remediate waste tire piles (<i>Failed Last Year</i>)	Judiciary
HB 2219	Verifiable Science Act (<i>Perennial Terrible Bill</i>)	Gov Org
HB 2232	Allowing planning and zoning restrictions for mining and manufacturing activities	EIL
HB 2401	Renewable Portfolio Standards Sustainable Energy Act (<i>WVEC Bill</i>)	EIL
HB 2740	Preventing covenants restricting the use of solar energy systems (<i>WVEC Bill</i>)	Passed House
HB 2741	Exempting active solar energy systems from taxation (<i>WVEC Bill</i>)	To Finance
HB 2795	Jobs Impact Statement Act (<i>Devil in the Details</i>)	EIL
HB 2814	Bottle Bill (<i>Great Bill Again</i>)	Judiciary
HB 2851	Permitting surface owners purchase the mineral interests at tax sales (<i>In Subcommittee</i>)	EIL
HB 2940	Requiring liners in all new surface coal-waste impoundments	EIL

HB 3088 West Virginia Energy Efficiency Act	Gov Org
HB 3129 Creating Renewable Energy Expansion Fund (<i>Great Bill</i>)	Gov Org
HB 4016 Supreme Court Public Campaign Financing Fund revenues	To Finance
HB 4044 Tax credits for energy efficient buildings	Finance
HB 4049 Requiring DEP to maintain an Office of Internal Auditing	Finance
HB 4074 "Complete Streets" Bill	To Finance
HB 4086 Governor's ethane "cracker" plant tax credit bill	Signed by Governor
HB 4087 Continuing the discontinuance of timber severance tax	On 3rd Reading in Senate
HB 4094 Eliminating timber severance tax for additional three years	Finance
HB 4249 Reducing utility rates for low-income residential customers	To Finance
HB 4283 Awarding attorney fees and costs in mining permit appeals (<i>DEP Bill</i>)	Judiciary
HB 4313 Requiring that the building code be the state building code	To Judiciary
HB 4316 Prohibiting underground injection of coal slurry (<i>Sludge Safety Project Bill</i>)	EIL
HB 4319 Modifying DEP requirement of greenhouse gas emissions inventory	To Judiciary
HB 4363 Energy efficiency for electric and gas utilities (<i>EEWV Bill</i>)	Judiciary
HB 4416 Extending WV Supreme Court Public Campaign Financing Pilot Program	Judiciary
HB 4437 Permitting certain ski resorts to be limited gaming facilities	Judiciary
HB 4446 Relating to oil and gas severance taxes collected	Judiciary
HB 4457 Eliminating the real property tax on non-producing mineral estates	Judiciary
HB 4473 Dedicating a portion of natural gas severance tax proceeds	Finance
HB 4492 Requiring certain licensees to take continuing education in green building	EIL
HB 4494 Continuing education requirement of building code inspectors	To Finance
HB 4498 Compassionate Use Act for Medical Cannabis	Health
HB 4499 Relating to oil and gas severance taxes	Finance
HB 4511 Creating WVU Shale Research Center	To Finance
HB 4518 Regarding DEP narrative water quality standard	Judiciary
HB 4519 Increasing the special reclamation tax	To Finance
HB 4530 Authorizing PSC issue consumer rate relief bonds	Passed House
HB 4571 Comprehensive recycling program for electronic devices	Judiciary
HB 4598 Prohibiting the use of single-use plastic bags by stores	Judiciary
HB 4609 Clarifying that DEP does not assume a mine operator's obligations or liabilities	EIL
HB 4619 Relating to alternative fuel initiatives	EIL
HB 4624 Abolishing the Solid Waste Management Board	Gov Org
HB 4629 Permitting transfer of tax credits for purchase of alternative-fuel vehicles	To Finance
HB 4631 Relating to dual liner requirements	Judiciary
HB 4632 Creating Energy Intensive Industrial Consumers Revitalization Tax Credit	Finance
HB 4640 Establishing pilot program on the disposal of unused pharmaceuticals	Health
HB 4641 Awarding credits for use of alternative and renewable energy resources	EIL
HB 4643 Removing prohibition against disposal of electronic devices in landfills	Gov Org
HB 4646 Requiring "least-cost" planning by electric utilities (<i>EEWV Bill</i>)	Gov Org

(NOTE: SB 253, the Senate DEP rules bundle, is now before House Judiciary).

Calendar of Events

March 2: Remembering 40 Years of Blackwater: Buffalo Creek to Today. WV State Capitol. 2 – 5 PM. Memorial event. Sponsored by Sludge Safety Project.

March 5: Coal Heritage Public Lecture Series: "Violence in the Coal Fields" by Paul Rakes, former coal miner and currently on the faculty of WVU-WV Tech. He recently completed research and published an article about the early coal camps and the violence that was a way of life for coal miners. Location: Beckley Center of Concord University, Beckley WV. Room E10, Erma Byrd Higher Education Center on Airport Road. 7 PM. Free and open to the public.

March 10: Legislative Session ends.

May 19: Celebrate Huntington Sustainability Fair, Heritage Station - Huntington, WV. Activities include presentations, local foods, artisans, alternative transportation, music, small businesses, & more. Complete list of events and sponsors will be forthcoming soon and plans continue to develop.

For more information or to participate: deniseap@earthlink.net

Legislative Session 2012 Information Sources:

Legislative Reference & Information Center:

MB-27, Bld. 1 - State Capitol Complex, Charleston WV 25305

WV Legislative web-site: www.legis.state.wv.us

(For bill tracking, bulletin board (journals), legislators' e-mails.)

To Call Toll Free: 1-877-565-3447 or local Charleston area: (304) 347-4836

Listen Live: West Virginia Legislature page <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/> and click on "listen live."

WV Environmental Council Web-site: www.wvecouncil.org

WVEC Office: (304) 414-0143

Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition:

www.ohvec.org/ovec_news.html and www.ohvec.org/news_gen.html daily.

Every morning, OVEC checks scores of news sources and posts links.

Legislative Update is published by the West Virginia Environmental Council (WVEC) – a statewide organization dedicated to facilitating communication and cooperation among citizens in promoting environmental protection in West Virginia. *Legislative Update* is published weekly during the regular Legislative Session.

We welcome letters, articles, and artwork from readers and reserve the right to edit or reject submissions. Please send materials to Denise Poole, *editor* at deniseap@earthlink.net

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2206 Washington Street East, Charleston WV 25311

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