



Fall Report

The battle for clean air heats up

EPA announces historic clean air standards

Recently, the Obama administration has taken great strides to reduce air pollution from power plants. And Environment Michigan has been building support for clean air every step of the way.

Last year, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed the first-ever nationwide standards for mercury emissions and other toxic pollution from power plants. Along with our allies across the country, Environment Michigan helped submit more than 800,000 comments in support of the proposed standards. In December 2011, the EPA finalized the standards, which will require power plants to reduce their mercury pollution by 90 percent.

And in March of this year, the EPA proposed historic carbon pollution standards for new power plants. Coal-fired power plants are the largest single source of carbon pollution in the U.S. Carbon pollution fuels global warming, which triggers poor air quality that contributes to thousands of asthma attacks, heart attacks and other health problems. The EPA's standards would require new power plants to meet a strict limit on carbon emissions.

Polluters try to roll back standards

Unsurprisingly, the Obama administration's efforts to clean up our air have been met with resistance from polluters and their allies in Congress.

The Senate introduced a bill that would have killed the EPA's mercury standards and allowed power plants to continue spewing toxic pollutants into our air,



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▲ A coal-fired power plant run by DTE Energy in Marysville, Michigan. Coal-fired power plants are the largest single source of carbon pollution in the U.S.

endangering 11,000 lives nationwide. But in June, the bill was rejected by a vote of 56-43—thanks in part to Sen. Tom Harkin.

The Obama administration's proposed carbon pollution standards have also come under fire from polluting special interests. Coal companies are leading the charge: The American Coalition of Clean Coal Electricity recently launched

a \$40 million campaign to defeat clean air standards.

Environment Michigan is working to convince the Obama administration to stand up to polluters and finalize the carbon pollution standards. Together with our allies across the country, we've helped submit a record-breaking 3 million comments concerning the standards.



Visuals Online

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◀ Carbon pollution can cause asthma attacks and other health issues.

The Obama administration has proposed new standards for carbon pollution from power plants. We're working to make sure the standards are finalized.



To our members

This is a crucial time for our environment.

After enduring the hottest summer on record, the urgency of addressing climate change has become undeniable. And there's a lot to be hopeful about: Renewable energy has never been more accessible; clean vehicles are poised to become the next big thing in transportation; and the Obama administration has proposed the first-ever limits on carbon pollution from power plants. All of these advances will mean major reductions in the pollution that causes global warming.

But big polluters and their anti-environmental allies in Congress aren't going to give up without a fight—they're spending millions to maintain the status quo. That's where we come in. With your help, we're building massive support across the state for clean air, clean energy and efforts to cut global warming. Thank you for making it all possible.

Sincerely,

Dan Kohler
Regional Program Director

Recent action

Building support for the Great Lakes

In April of 2011, President Barack Obama proposed much-needed clean water guidelines to protect the rivers and streams that feed and clean the Great Lakes. More than half of these vital waterways are vulnerable to toxic pollution and development—thanks to two polluter-driven Supreme Court decisions in the last decade.

Unfortunately, the long-overdue protections have yet to be finalized. Recently, they have fallen victim to partisan politics and face heavy blowback from polluters like Exxon-Mobil and Big Agriculture, which launched a major campaign in July to stop the proposed guidelines. To counter their efforts and push these protections past the finish line, this summer Environment Michigan staff and our allies mobilized broad grassroots support for clean water across the state and nationwide. In the coming months, Environment Michigan will continue to stand up to big polluters and fight to ensure that the Great Lakes are protected for generations to come.

Administration takes first step to protect U.S. from fracking

In April, the EPA finalized new national standards to curb dangerous air pollution from gas drilling operations. Environment Michigan praised the measure as an important first step in addressing the risks associated with hydraulic fracturing.

The EPA's new standards will require the industry to reduce dangerous air pollution from its gas extraction operations. Gas extraction operations are a significant source of air pollution—including cancer-causing benzene, toxic chemicals linked to acute health problems, and smog-forming pollution.

"These standards are a needed first step to protect Americans' health and environment from the dangers of fracking," said John Rumpler of Environment Michigan. "We believe there is much more work to be done for our land, our water, and our health, and we are counting on the administration to do its part to address fracking's many health and environmental risks."

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▲ The EPA recently finalized standards for air pollution from gas drilling. Above, a fracking pad in Pennsylvania.

Donald Gilliland, Patriot News Service

According to new report, electric vehicles are ready to roll

With the right policies in place, plug-in vehicles can reduce Michigan's dependence on oil by nearly two million gallons per year, according to a new report released by Environment Michigan. Nationwide, the annual oil savings would total nearly 111 million gallons.

"It's time to plug in, power up, and protect our planet because plug-in vehicles have arrived," said John Cross, federal transportation advocate with Environment Michigan.

Cutting pollution, saving money

Recent research by the Center for Automotive Research shows that more than 460,000 U.S. drivers could purchase their first plug-in vehicle within the next three years. Environment Michigan's new report, "Charging Forward," has now found that these vehicles would reduce Michigan's global warming pollution by approximately 3,656 metric tons per year. If the plug-in vehicles were powered by clean sources of electricity, these savings would rise to over 35,000 metric tons annually. Nationwide, the reduction in global warming pollution would total nearly 2 million metric tons a year.

"Thanks in part to smart policies adopted by states and the Obama administration, every major automobile manufacturer is offering a new plug-in vehicle powered primarily by electricity. For the first time, we can power our cars with clean energy," said Cross.

President Barack Obama has proposed fuel efficiency and carbon pollution standards for new vehicles that Environment Michigan credits as being the most important step ever taken to build clean, advanced technology cars that will get us off oil. His administration has also made investments in critical technologies, such as advanced batteries and high powered charging stations.

The report shows the technological innovations that have helped boost plug-

in vehicles, from advanced batteries to faster charging stations that have reduced charge times by over 90 percent.

Charging forward

Michigan already has the fourth-most electric car charging stations in the country. But we can do even better. To make plug-in vehicles a choice for more consumers, the report calls for more work to be done to build the infrastructure of the charging stations that can service these vehicles, as well as more investment in the technologies that will drive down prices. Environment Michigan also called on decision makers across the country to help plug-in vehicles achieve the greatest possible pollution reductions by adopting policies that will ensure we get more of our electricity from clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

"Electric vehicles offer all Americans hope for a cleaner, healthier future. But to make this promise a reality, continued public investment will be necessary to ensure that these vehicles are as convenient and affordable as cars powered by oil," concluded Cross.



research

Charging Forward

Read the full report online at: EnvironmentMichiganCenter.org



Green Future Fund

A new way to honor supporters

Environment Michigan is proud to announce the establishment of our Green Future Fund.

The Green Future Fund will honor a special group of our donors: those who are ensuring a greener future by remembering Environment Michigan or our sister group, Environment Michigan Research & Policy Center, in their wills, life insurance policies or retirement accounts.

These legacy donors are helping to ensure that Environment Michigan will continue to flourish—protecting the places we love and the values we share—for years to come. "We appreciate all of our supporters," said Environment Michigan's Dan Kohler. "I feel a special gratitude toward those members who have the vision and generosity to plan a gift that will protect our state's environment beyond their own lifetimes."

Establishing a legacy gift also offers donors a few advantages. Some supporters wish they could give more, but can't right now. Including Environment Michigan in your estate plan costs nothing today, while ensuring support for our mission in the future. Legacy gifts may also offer tax benefits. (Your professional advisor can help you determine any tax advantage.)

As a Green Future Fund donor, with your permission, we'll recognize your gift in our annual report and other publications, helping to inspire other members to make their own legacy gifts. Of course, you may also choose to give anonymously. Either way, any specific details you choose to provide about your gift will remain confidential.

If you'd like to become a member of the Green Future Fund, or if you just have questions, contact our planned giving coordinator, Marilyn Tesaro, at 1-800-841-7299 or PlannedGiving@EnvironmentMichigan.org.

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Environment Michigan

Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind Environment Michigan. We focus exclusively on protecting Michigan's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

A chance to boost clean energy, create local jobs

Michigan has an opportunity to drastically reduce its dirty energy use and shift to clean, renewable energy such as solar and wind. In November, an initiative to increase the state's renewable energy standard will appear on the ballot. If passed, Michigan will get 25 percent of our energy from clean, renewable sources by 2025.

This is an extraordinary chance to break our dependence on the dirty energy sources, like coal and oil, that are fueling global warming, polluting our air and water and endangering our health. An increased renewable energy standard will also provide an enormous boost to Michigan's economy: A Michigan State University study found that the 25 percent standard would create at least 74,500 local jobs, and up to 113,000 jobs.

More clean energy is a win-win for Michigan, and Environment Michigan has been talking to thousands of people across the state, building massive support for this vital ballot initiative.



take action

◀ An initiative to get 25 percent of Michigan's energy from clean, renewable sources will appear on the ballot in November. With your help, we're building the support it will take to win.

To learn more, visit:
www.EnvironmentMichigan.org