

Congress Should Delay New EPA Rules



**MESSAGE
FROM
MANAGER
ALAN
LESLEY**

Earlier this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began regulating emissions of greenhouse gases from stationary sources—such as power plants—as pollutants under the federal Clean Air Act. The agency determined that such gases, including carbon dioxide, pose a threat to public health and welfare. This move came despite widespread objections from congressional, state and electric industry leaders.

CECA is joining with electric co-ops nationally to ask Congress for a much-needed timeout—a two-year moratorium on the EPA’s regulation of carbon dioxide emissions. The agency’s regulation of power plant emissions under a law never intended for that purpose will certainly add costs to electricity generation and drive your bills higher.

A delay would give Congress the opportunity to fashion climate-change legislation that protects you, our consumers, and keeps electric bills affordable. You can help by contacting your elected representatives in Washington and letting them know the importance of this issue.

The EPA fashions regulations to protect the environment and safeguard public health as authorized in bills passed by Congress. Over time, its jurisdiction has grown to cover numer-

ous items that affect electric bills.

In fact, the agency is looking at regulating other aspects of power generation—including rules on sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions, coal ash, and cooling-water intake—that could add even more costs and send bills spiraling up.

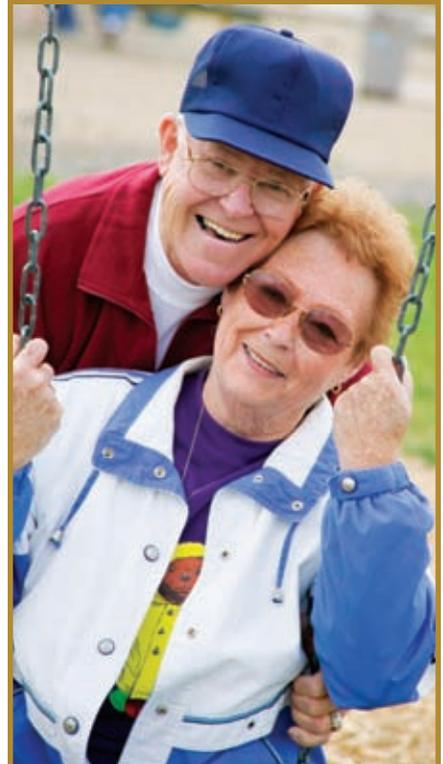
While the EPA has begun action on these costly rules, few actions have been as controversial as its move to curb greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources.

“It is the responsibility of Congress to decide this issue, not EPA,” said National Rural Electric Cooperative Association CEO Glenn English. “The Clean Air Act remains the wrong tool to handle greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources; it was designed to reduce specific pollutants on a local or regional level where proven technology existed. When it comes to controlling carbon dioxide emissions from coal- and natural gas-fired power plants, tested, commercially viable solutions are not available.”

He concluded: “In many ways, regulating carbon dioxide emissions under the law is akin to using a hammer to tighten a screw. You may eventually get the screw hammered in, but better tools are needed—ones that don’t put your electric bills at risk during these tough economic times.”

We here at CECA are committed to keeping you informed about government regulations that will increase the cost of electricity and are working to lessen their effect on your wallet. Remember, we are not here to make a profit, just to provide you, our members, with a steady supply of electricity at the lowest possible cost.

Looking Out for **YOU**



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Let There Be the Right Kind of Light

It's Lights Out for Familiar Incandescents

By this time next year, the federal government will have turned the lights out on the familiar A-shaped incandescent bulb.

Starting January 1, 2012, the traditional 100-watt and 150-watt A19 incandescent lightbulbs will not be sold anymore. The following year, the familiar 75-watt incandescent will also be history. And in 2014, Americans will wave goodbye to their beloved—albeit energy-inefficient—60- and 40-watt A-shaped incandescents.

The result: Most people will switch to more efficient compact fluorescent lightbulbs or to the brand-new, high-efficacy halogen bulbs that manufacturers have introduced in response to the “lightbulb law” in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007.

You might grumble about the considerably steeper price of the alternative bulbs—in the \$2-per-bulb range versus the 50-cent incandescent. But you could notice a difference on your electric bill once you make the switch: CFLs last around five years and use 75 percent less energy than traditional incandescents, which burn out after about seven months of normal use.

A heads-up: Starting in July, lightbulb packages will carry a Lighting Facts Label, which will explain how bright the bulb is, how long it will last and how much energy it will use. Instead of saying how many watts the bulb is, it will give lumens—a measure of light output.



White walls, uncovered windows and shiny countertops lighten the room.

White Walls Can Cut Need for More Lights

If you want to save energy in the kitchen—or any other room in your house—paint the walls white.

For example, an all-white kitchen, which includes white walls, cabinets, countertops and floors, requires only half of the lighting of a darker kitchen because light surfaces reflect light, while dark ones absorb it.

Two other ways to save energy on lighting your kitchen:

- Choose highly polished countertops. They act like mirrors to reflect light. A shiny granite countertop, for example, will bounce under-cabinet lighting back up, making a little bit of light more potent.
- Let the sun shine through kitchen windows by opening curtains during the day, by decorating with valances or café curtains instead of drapes that cover the whole window, or by removing the window treatments altogether if privacy isn't an issue. The more daylight you let into the room, the less often you'll need to flip on the light switch.

A Lesson in History—and Much More

BY SHIRLEY DUKES

Imagine being blocked off from the world with no food, clothing, heat or electricity. That was exactly what happened in West Berlin in 1948 when Joseph Stalin blockaded the roads, railroads and canal routes coming in and out of the city. This is but one of the many facts you can find in your history books. But strangely enough, sometimes it is what is left out of the history books that can teach us the most.

Such was the case at Comanche Middle School when teachers came across a charming book titled *Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot*. It's a very touching children's book describing how Lt. Gail Halvorsen discovered that the chil-

dril that is lovingly recalled by Mercedes Wild, who was a young girl growing up in Berlin during that time.

The fifth-grade teachers at Comanche Middle School have taken a far-reaching approach to teaching their class about history and its long-lasting effects, taking some extra steps to incorporate that history into all aspects of the children's education.

The project began in October when Mrs. Cobb's social studies class began learning about Europe and its history after World War II. Mrs. Cobb provided each student a map and taught in-depth lessons about Europe and the surrounding countries. Students were required to label their maps using an atlas. Little did they know that this fun project was just a prelude to a classwide project that would teach them a history lesson through hands-on activities that they most likely will never forget!

Teachers Lola Barnes, Virginia Gleaton, Christy Chester and Kayla Garrett introduced Margot Theis Raven's book *Mercedes and the Chocolate Pilot* to their reading classes, where the students focused on figurative language and vocabulary. These objectives were then carried over into their language classes, taught by Becky Jones and Debbie Morrison. In these classes, they cre-



ABOVE: Each student made and decorated a parachute. Chocolate bars were attached to the parachutes and dropped from Dr. Dwayne Miller's plane, with the help of co-pilot Steven Jones, in a re-enactment of the candy drop of 1948. **RIGHT:** Fifth-grade students proudly show off their candy and parachutes after the re-enactment.



dren of West Berlin were hungry for "sweet freedom." Unable to provide the freedom they so desperately craved, Halvorsen reached deep into his pockets and came up with two sticks of gum. Although it was not nearly enough for the children at hand, he divided it among four of the children with a promise to the rest of them that he would return the next day and drop enough candy and gum from his airplane to feed all of them. Thus began a seven-month

ated posters depicting the story. Each poster had to have at least one moving part. The students also wrote poems about the story, as well as letters to wounded veterans through the PAL program.

In Guinn Smith's math class, students were required to learn about area (length x width) to construct parachutes that were cut out and assembled with strings and Hershey bars in Amy Turner's science class. Turner also guided the students as they conducted a scientific method experiment to see whether different-sized parachutes affected the rate of fall of an object. Students made bar graphs recording their data in both Smith's and Turner's classes. Music teacher Glenda Henry acquired sheet music from Steven Lange in Berlin, telling the story of the candy drop. Sharon Dollins' computer class made Power Point presentations about the Berlin children and aircraft during World War II. As you can see, the entire project was a collaborative effort of all fifth-grade classes.

On November 22, the students presented their story, songs and posters to the parents and community at a short program, followed by a re-enactment of the candy drop. In an unprecedented event following the program, the students' handmade parachutes and candy were dropped from a plane piloted by Dr. Dwayne Miller with the assistance of his co-pilot, Steven Jones. Terry Barnes provided live coverage of the event on KYOX radio.

Through all this collaboration, the students accumulated a plethora of information in a format that will most likely stay with them for the rest of their lives. As an added benefit to the entire program, an exciting story came out that helped to tie all of this together and make it more real and modern for the students, showing them that they can be a part of history, and that it never really has an ending!

In 2001, the U.S. Air Force named an award for outstanding air transportation support in the logistics readiness career field in honor of Col. Halvorsen. Each year, the Airlift Tanker Association recognizes an air transportation specialist who has demonstrated superior leadership, made outstanding contributions to the airlift/tanker mission and provided invaluable service to their civilian communities. Only one award is given per year,



Col. Gail Halvorsen, center, with Master Sgt. Kody Pruitt, his wife, Staci, and son, Kade, after Pruitt received the Halvorsen Award in 2009.

and in 2009, that honor was given to Master Sgt. Kody D. Pruitt of De Leon. Pruitt is married to the former Staci Holland of Comanche. Staci is the daughter of Nancy Holland, PEIMS Coordinator for Comanche Middle School. This connection helped to bring it all together and made a local connection that enabled the students to see just how all the history ties together and comes back home to their small community.

As for Pruitt, he says "Colonel Halvorsen is a personal hero of mine. During a time when West Berliners were practically starving to death, he went above and beyond what was expected of him to let the children of Germany know that someone cared about them. When he first started doing the "airdrops" of candy, his superiors found out about it and he was faced with a possible court-martial. In spite of this, he continued to do what he thought was right. Media attention eventually stopped the court-martial proceedings, and he was allowed to continue dropping candy to the children of West Berlin."

Halvorsen is now 90 years old and continues to travel the globe telling his story of the Berlin Airlift. In October, Halvorsen traveled to the German air force base where Kody is stationed with his family. Mercedes Wild, the young woman whom the story is about, was also present. Kody, Staci, and their son, Kade, were able to meet and visit with both Wild and Halvorsen.

Following the air drop at the school, I asked fifth-grader Emily what she thought about the entire project.

"It was amazing and extraordinary, and I had a lot of fun," she replied. "It's not the kind of thing that just every kid gets to do!"

Kudos to the fifth-grade staff of Comanche Middle School for coming up with such a novel and unforgettable idea and to the school district for allowing them the freedom to pursue the project.



Winter Storm Safety

Winter storms are an inevitable part of the winter season that can lead to downed power lines and outages. Remember the following tips to stay safe and warm should you find yourself in the dark after a severe winter event:

- Never touch a fallen power line and assume all wires on the ground are electrically charged. Call 911 or CECA at 1-800-915-2533 to report it immediately. Avoid contact with overhead lines during cleanup and other activities.
- In the event of an outage, an alternate heating source—such as a fireplace, propane space heater or wood stove—may be needed. Extreme caution should be taken.
- Make sure carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors are working properly.
- Do not use a gas-powered oven for heating. A gas oven may go out or burn inefficiently, leading to carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Do not use a gas or charcoal grill inside the home. Do not use charcoal briquettes in the fireplace.
- If you use a portable generator to power a heating source, be sure the generator is located outside your house for proper ventilation. Do not use a generator in an attached garage. Follow the manufacturer's directions for operating the generator.
- Never connect generators to home wiring. The reverse flow of electricity can electrocute an unsuspecting utility worker.

SPECIAL FREE DRAWING!

Contribute a recipe to the new CECA cookbook and you could win a free cookbook!

CECA is compiling a members-only cookbook and we would love to include your favorite recipes. To encourage participation, we're holding a special drawing for a free copy of 60 Years of Home Cooking. This beautiful, hardcover cookbook is a collection of recipes that have appeared in Texas Co-op Power magazine over the last several decades.

To enter the drawing, simply submit a recipe (or two or three!) by February 25.

Send your submissions to:
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