Attorney General Wrigley Places EPA On Notice Of Intent To Sue

For nearly 50 years, the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) has been promulgating and enforcing its own rules regarding the storage, treatment, and disposal of coal combustion residuals (CCR). When the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that it would allow states to apply for program primacy for regulating CCR activities, NDDEQ promptly prepared and submitted an application on September 21, 2020. After revising the application and making accommodating changes to state laws and

rules, NDDEQ submitted a final and complete application on March 10, 2023. Since the final submission in 2023, EPA has continually and explicably delayed its decision on NDDEQ's application. As an energy producing state, the regulation of the coal industry and specifically CCR is vital to North Dakota. North Dakota has now placed the EPA on notice of intent to sue, in an attempt to compel EPA to approve NDDEQ's CCR permit program and let the state continue regulating its CCR activities as it has successfully done for many years.

Rural Telehealth Sees More Policy Wins, But Only Short-Term

By Mike Moen, Prairie News Service

As the new year unfolds, rural health providers in North Dakota and other states will continue to have extra latitude in using telehealth technology. But a temporary extension of key rules still leaves uncertainty.

When Congress avoided a government shutdown in late December, it approved a funding resolution that runs through mid-March. For the next few months, that plan keeps in place relaxed telehealth regulations for people on Medicare that started during the pandemic.

Even though telehealth use has declined since the COVID emergency ended, said Brad Gibbens, deputy director of the Center for Rural Health at the University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, this option is still useful in remote areas."People can not only stay in their own community and interact with a physician or another type of provider and not have to travel," he said, "they can actually, in many cases, do this right out of their home.'

He added that because these in-

teractions are timelier, telehealth cuts down on health-care costs by reducing hospital admissions. A number of health organizations want the relaxed rules made permanent, so providers can better plan for them

and patients don't lose continuity. Telehealth access has bipartisan support, but skeptics have voiced concerns about privacy breaches and lower quality of care.

Gibbens stressed that telehealth should not be seen as a replacement for in-person visits. When the situation allows, he said, doctors still prefer having a patient come see them. "They feel they get more of a review of the patient by seeing their body language and how they react," he said, "and it's kind of the nature of medicine.'

However, Gibbens disagreed with assertions that there's a dropoff in the level of care when the visit happens online. He said that for patients in areas with very limited provider access or transportation gaps, telehealth is better than no care at all. He added that broadband investments have helped smaller clinics overcome technology barriers in enhancing online appointments.

Powers Lake News

Eunice writes: I managed to organize a Musical Christmas Program on Friday, December 6, at our local Senior Center. This was our 4th year. The group consisted of four adults with six young ladies ages 8 to 11, who have been doing the program for the past 4 years. We added a young man this year. He is Colton, 7-years-old and his two older sisters are two of the six young ladies. I did not have the heart to tell him "no" as he was so interested in performing. So, there were four adults and seven

This was the most difficult year of them all. I was not feeling well much of the time and these young ladies are involved in so many activities we had very limited practice time. Many times, I was ready to give it up and not have the program. I was satisfied with the performance even though there were three areas I would have liked to have performed better. What I enjoy the most is how these young ones love to perform and how fun they are to work with and what tremendous experience their performing is giving them at such a young age.

The one area that I am writing about, now that I think about it, I would not change for anything as what I gleaned from a goof up! The young ones who were to sing the song, "Litter Drummer Boy." Singing it to canned music. The song was correct but not the version they had used for practice, it was totally unfamiliar and they were bewildered. This performance was recorded and when looking at the recording, I was totally amazed at how they handled

They looked bewildered but they carried on trying to do their best and handle it so well! Not like I would imagine their age group but more like adults! At no time did they lose control! The maturity they exhibited for their age was unbelievable. To me, this recording is priceless and as they get older and look at it the more it will mean to them. I could not be more proud of how they handled this and the parents should also be proud of them. They behaved like professionals and not like children. It certainly was a life lesson for me.

Early December, Eunice Ryan had a surprise visit from Pastor Chuck Kranz, our Bethel Baptist Church minister, who delivered her a fresh pine, Christmas Tree Wreath. The wreath has adorned her front door the whole Christmas Season. With it being outdoors it could very well last the whole winter season. Besides the wreath, he took time to have a visit. The wreath and the visit was so inviting and so appreciated. What a nice gesture the church pro-

vided this Christmas season! Pastor Pauline and her mother, Linda Nygard, who was visiting here from the twin cities, visited Eunice Ryan, having coffee and fruitcake. Eunice was able to use her Ida Breding china now for the second time for Pastor Pauline. The dishes were given to Eunice from Karen Knudsen. Aunt Ida was Eunice's neighbor friend from the time

Eunice was a young girl! This is so special because Ida Breding was a missionary before coming here and marrying the first Baptist minister here, Olaf Breding. Pastor Pauline was brought up in the mission field in Africa where her parents, the Nygards served for many years.

Eunice Ryan had a nice surprise when Pastor Pauline brought her Confirmation group over to sing carols and to pray. We were able to pray the Lord's Prayer together. This was the night it started storming. The wind picked up and it was pretty cold out. The nice part of this is the group could all be inside in the back laundry room during this time. They also brought a plate of baked goodies from their Lutheran Ladies

This brought back memories from when Eunice was probably preteen and went caroling with the Baptist church youth group and we went to Donald, we called him Donnie Lorentzen's home after caroling for hot chocolate! This Lorentzen home was on the hill where the Seth Wisthoff home is located now.

Another nice surprise, late one afternoon, an unknown car drove up in the driveway. Two young girls, who I did not recognize, were coming to my back door. I had everything locked for the night. I managed to get to my dining room window to let them know I was home but had to unlock the door. I knew neither girl. They were representing their girls High School basketball team, Jensen and Jorgenson. Granddaughter of Lowell (Barney) Jorgenson. I told her that I had known Barney for years and knew him when he was a teenager like she was now. Their visit actually brought tears to my eyes. They brought baked goodies for me. I have never attended any of their games and how did they choose me to visit and bring goodies? Again, this act of kindness makes me so proud of the people in this community. Makes me happy that I chose to come home and spend the last days of my life. I am constantly reminded of the special people who inhabit this community!

I have much to be thankful for. This elderly lady could have had a catastrophe this past week. I pulled an act, probably many people my age pull. I turned the wrong electric burner on my stove! Fortunately, it was put on low. I had a paper plate with some baked goodies inside a thick plastic bag and went off and sat down in my living room. Went back into the kitchen and the heat was melting the plastic bag and this plastic was smoking like crazy. It was not all on fire, no flames, only horrible smelling smoke. It certainly was a miracle. Needless to say, I could have had a house fire. Lesson learned, do not trust yourself to set anything other than pans that don't burn on electric burners! Interesting that my sister had sent me a burn blanket for Christmas this year. Hopefully I will never have to use it. Moral of the story is... no matter our

age, there are still lessons to learn.

2025 To Bring Third Straight Yearly Decline In Gas Prices

GasBuddy, a PDI company, recently released its 2025 Fuel Price Outlook, forecasting a third consecutive year of lower gas and diesel prices. The outlook highlights key trends in gasoline and diesel prices utilizing specific inputs, potential impacts on production, supply and demand changes and a change in leadership in Washington.

GasBuddy projects that the yearnational average for gasoline in 2025 will decline to \$3.22 per gallon, down from \$3.33 in 2024 and significantly below the record highs of 2022. This decline represents continued relief for American drivers, but comes amid emerging uncertainties surrounding geopolitical tensions, potential tariffs and a change in energy policies that add risk to this year's forecast.

Highlights from GasBuddy's 2025 Fuel Outlook:

• Lowest Monthly Average in December: The national average price of gasoline is expected to hit its low-

ND Game And Fish News

Game and Fish Fills Leadership Positions

Bruce Kreft and Brian Hosek have filled division chief positions for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

Kreft, conservation section leader since 2023, was promoted to conservation and communications chief when Greg Link retired after 45 years with the agency.

A Towner native with a zoology degree from North Dakota State University, Kreft started his career with Game and Fish as a fisheries technician from 1989-90; assistant Missouri River biologist from 1990-92; central district fisheries biologist from 1992-2000; and conservation biologist from 2000-2023.

Link started his career with Game and Fish as a seasonal emplovee in 1980. In 2011, he assumed leadership of the conservation and communications division.

The conservation and communications division informs, educates and promotes fish and wildlife related opportunities; manages nongame species and species of conservation priority; and consults with developers to avoid, minimize and offset impacts to fish and wildlife esources

Hosek, longtime business operations manager, was named chief of administrative services when Kim Kary announced her retirement after twenty years with the agency.

A graduate of Emporia State University with a degree in earth and data sciences, Hosek started his Game and Fish career in 2001 as the department's GIS coordinator, and his role evolved into business operations manager during his tenure.

Kary began her career with department as the business manager in 2005, and in 2010 moved into the administrative services division chief position.

The administrative services division provides policy, planning and support services and is responsible for all game and fish licensing.

Letter To The Editor

On January 7th, the regular session of the 69th Legislative Assembly will gavel in. In North Dakota, legislative sessions only occur for up to 80 days every other year, so this is a critical time for folks across the state to engage with your gov-

The Democratic-NPL Caucus will be focused on the real issues impacting North Dakota families: lowering the cost of living, strengthening public education, reducing barriers to healthcare, growing our workforce, and reforming property taxes. To make sure we are truly representing our communities, we need to hear from you on these and other important topics.

That's why we encourage you to reach out directly to your lawmakers this session. In North Dakota, legislators don't have personal offices or private staff, so when you message a legislator, you can expect a response directly from him or her. You can find your legislators' names and contact information on the Legislative Assembly's website, www.ndlegis.gov. There, you'll also find livestreams and recordings of House and Senate floor sessions and committee hearings and important information on bills. In addition to staying in touch with your lawmakers and tracking the session online, you can actively participate in the legislative process by testifying on legislation, either in person, virtually, or in writing. We also personally invite you to join us as our guests on the House and Senate floor, where you can watch your state governnent in action

Representative democracy works best when every citizen participates. We want to and need to hear from you on the issues that matter most to vour family. When everyone gets involved, we will be able to make our great state even better!

ND Senate Minority Leader Kathy Hogan and ND House Minority Leader Zac Ista

est point in December, averaging

\$2.89 per gallon for the month. • Springtime Spike: Gas prices could peak in April at a monthly average of \$3.53 per gallon, while the daily average could top out as high as \$3.67 per gallon, driven by seasonal increases in demand and the change to summer gasoline that occurs coast to coast at a varied pace.

Regional Variations: While most major U.S. cities will see peak gas prices around \$4 per gallons, West Coast cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco could return to the mid-\$5 per gallon range due to high fuel taxes, unique fuel requirements and other state mandates.

 Lower Consumer Spending: Americans are expected to spend a combined \$410.8 billion on gasoline in 2025, an 8 percent decrease from 2024's estimated \$423.1 billion.

"While declining fuel prices in

Oil Activity Report

Hunt Oil Company, State C 156-90-3-36H-4, SWSW 3-156N-90W, Mountrail Co., 357' FSL and 513' FWL, Development, Ross, 2178' Ground, API #33-061-05461, Spacing unit: Section 36, T157N R90W, the W/2 of Section 3 and the E/2 of Section 4, T156N R90W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Hunt Oil Company, State C 156-90-3-36H-5, SWSW 3-156N-90W, Mountrail Co., 357' FSL and 543' FWL, Development, Ross, 2176' Ground, API #33-061-05462, Spacing unit: Section 36, T157N R90W, the W/2 of Section 3 and the E/2 of Section 4, T156N R90W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

EOG Resources, Inc., Wayzetta 413-0915H, NWSW 9-153N-90W, Mountrail Co., 1955' FSL and 749' FWL, Development, Parshall, 2184' Ground, API #33-061-05463, Spacing unit: Sections 9, 15 and 16, T153N R90W

Additional Information: Released from Confidential Sta-

Hess Bakken Investments II, EN-Trout-157-93-3130H-3, Lot 3 2-156N-94W, Mountrail Co., Big Butte

Hess Bakken Investments II, C, EN-Trout-157-93-3130H-2, Lot 3 2-156N-94W, Mountrail Co.,

Big Butte Approved for Confidential Sta-

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Mckenna-157-93-3328H-5, Lot 4 6-156N-93W, Mountrail Co.

Confidential Wells Plugged or Producing:

Hess Bakken Investments II, EN-Horst-154-93-0310H-8, SWSE 34-155N-93W, Mountrail Co.

Hess Bakken Investments EN-Horst-LW-154-93-LLC, SWSW 10-154N-93W, 1004H-1, Mountrail Co.

Bakken Investments Hess II, LLC, EN-Horst-LW-154-93-SWSW 10-154N-93W, 1003H-2, Mountrail Co. Hess Bakken Investments II,

EN-Horst-154-93-1003H-7, 10-154N-93W, Mountrail Co. Hess Bakken Investments II,

EN-Horst-154-93-0310H-9, SWSE 34-155N-93W, Mountrail Co. Hess Bakken Investments II,

LLC, EN-Horst-LE-154-93-03H-1, SWSE 34-155N-93W, Mountrail Co.

More information on oil activity in the state can be found online at https://www.dmr.nd.gov/oilgas/.

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2025 will provide welcome relief to American drivers and businesses, emerging risks could lead to increased volatility," said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. "Geopolitical uncertainties, potential disruptions from extreme weather, and policy shifts under the new administration could create challenges for fuel markets. Despite this, expanding global re-

fining capacity and moderating demand are expected to support lower prices for most of the year.'

Diesel prices are also forecast to decline in 2025, with a projected yearly national average of \$3.48 per gallon. This reduction will benefit industries dependent on diesel, such as freight and agriculture, offering some respite from recent cost pres-



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS City of New Town New Town, North Dakota

New Town 2025 Street & Utility **Improvements** General Notice

The City of New Town (Owner) is requesting Bids for the construction of the following Project: New Town 2025 Street & Utility

Improvements

Bids for the construction of the Project

will be received at City Hall located at 103 Soo Place, New Town, ND 58763, until Friday, January 31, 2025 at 11:00 AM local time. At that time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read.

Bids being mailed or delivered prior to January 31, 2025, can be sent to:

City of New Town c/o Eileen Zaun, City Auditor P.O. Box 309

103 Soo Place New Town, ND 58763

The Project includes the following

Contract No. 1 - BASE BID General Construction: Work generally consist of approximately 26,085 square yards of bituminous pavement removal and replacement along with sub grade and sub base improvements; 26,085 square yards of cement stabilization; 8,848 linear feet of concrete curb and gutter; 2,845 square feet of concrete valley gutter; 4,076 square feet of concrete driveway; 150 square yards of asphalt driveway; 8,278 square feet of concrete sidewalk; 1 detectable warning panel; 1,749 linear feet of open-cut 8-inch PVC sanitary sewer pipe, service connections, sanitary sewer manholes and appurtenances; 6,595 linear feet of open-cut 6-12-inch PVC water main, water service connections, fittings, hydrants, and appurtenances; 505 linear feet of open-cut 15-24 inch RCP storm sewer, storm sewer manholes, storm sewer inlets, and appurtenances; 4,605 square yards of landscaping and seeding; erosion and traffic control; temporary wa-

ter service; and sewer bypass pumping.

Contract No. 1 - ALTERNATE #1

General Construction: Work generally consists of the work described under BASE BID, plus the following work: approximately 3,610 square yards of bituminous pavement removal and replacement along with sub grade and sub base improvements; 3,610 square yards of cement stabilization; 1,413 linear feet of concrete curb and gutter; 672 linear feet of open-cut 8-inch PVC water main, water service connections, fittings, hydrants, and appurtenances; 630 square yards of landscaping and seeding; erosion and traffic control; and temporary

Contract No. 1 - ALTERNATE #2 General Construction: Work generally consists of the work described under BASE BID, plus the following work: approxi-mately 4,055 square yards of bituminous pavement removal and replacement along with sub grade and sub base improvements: 4,055 square yards of cement stabilization; 2,279 linear feet of concrete curb and gutter; 1,578 square feet of concrete driveway; 6,261 square feet of concrete sidewalk; 171 linear feet of open-cut 6-8-inch PVC water main, water service connections fittings, hydrants, and appurtenances; 1,086 linear feet of 6-8 inch water main pipebursting; 1,910 square yards of landscaping and seeding; erosion and traffic control; and temporary water service.

The Project has an expected duration of 8 months.

Obtaining the Bidding Documents Information and Bidding Documents for the Project can be found at the following designated website: www.questcdn.com

Bidding Documents may be downloaded from the designated website. You may download the digital plan documents for \$22.00 by inputting Quest project #9401991 on the website's Project Search page. Please contact QuestCDN.com at 952-233-1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in free membership registration.

downloading, and working with this digital

Prospective Bidders are urged to register with the designated website as a plan holder, even if Bidding Documents are obtained from a plan room or source other than the designated website in either electronic or paper format. The designated website will be updated periodically with addenda, lists of registered plan holders, reports, and other information relevant to submitting a Bid for the Project. All official notifications, addenda, and other Bidding Documents will be offered only through the designated website. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for Bidding Documents, including addenda, if any, obtained from sources other than the designated website.

The Issuing Office for the Bidding

AE2S 1815 Schafer Street, Suite 301 Bismarck, ND 58501

Prospective Bidders may obtain or examine the Bidding Documents at the Issuing Office on Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM and may obtain copies of the Bidding Documents from the Issuing Office as de-scribed below. Partial sets of Bidding Documents will not be available from the Issuing Office. Neither Owner nor Engineer will be responsible for full or partial sets of Bidding Documents, including addenda, if any, obtained from sources other than the

Issuing Office.

Bidding Documents may be purchased from the Issuing Office during the hours indicated above. Cost does not include shipping charges. Upon Issuing Office's receipt of payment, printed Bidding Documents or electronic documents on compact disk will be sent via the prospective Bidder's delivery service. The shipping charge amount will depend on the shipping method chosen. Bidding Documents are available for purchase in the following formats:

Format, Cost Bidding Documents (including Full-Size Drawings), N/A

Bidding Documents (including Half-Size Drawings), \$200.00 Compact Disc containing Bidding Documents in portable document format

Electronic download of Bidding Docu-

ents from questcdn.com, \$22.00

Pre-bid Conference

No pre-bid conference will be held for

this project. Instructions to Bidders

Bidders on this work will be required to comply with American Iron and Steel requirements of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014. The requirements for bidders and contractors under this regulation are explained in this

Bidders are required to comply with Davis-Bacon prevailing wage require-

Any lead service line replacements conducted under this project must replace the entire lead service line, not just the portion, unless a portion has already been replaced or is currently being replaced with another funding source.

Bidders on this work will be required to comply with Title 40 CFR Part 33 Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in the United States Environmental Protection Agency Programs. The requirements for bidders and contractors under this regulation concern utilization of Minority Business Enterprises (MBE), Women's Business Enterprises (WBE), and Small Business Enterprises (SBE) and are explained in the specifications.

The goal for MBE is 2% of the total dollar value of the project. The goal for WBE is 3% of the total dollar value of the project. To demonstrate a good faith effort to comply, bidders must include the MBE/WBE subcontractor solicitation form in the bid package

Bidders on this work will be required to comply with the President's Executive Order No. 11246, as amended. The requirements for bidders and contractors under this order are explained in the specifications. Bidders are required to comply with

Build America, Buy America Act Re-

For all further requirements regarding bid submittal, qualifications, procedures, and contract award, refer to the Instructions to Bidders that are included in the Bidding

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