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NAM Campaign Lambastes EPA's Clean Power Plan

By Rich Christianson

While the Obama Administration trumpeted the EPA's new Clean Power Plan as a "historic action on climate change," the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) singled it out as the "costliest regulation in history."

In announcing the final rule on Aug. 3, EPA said the [Clean Power Plan](#) "will cut U.S. carbon pollution from the power sector by 870 million tons, or 32 percent below 2005 levels, in 2030." The new rule is the first to set national limits on carbon pollution. EPA said cleaner air will reduce health risks and spur clean energy investments.

[EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy touts the plan in a video](#), stating it is "a major step forward" that will fight climate change, protect the public and be "achievable."

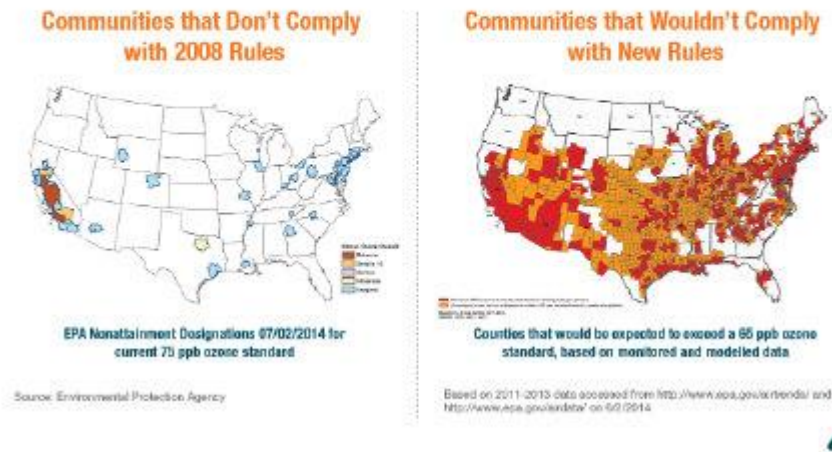
NAM countered that EPA should focus on enforcing its 2008 ozone rules, some which have not been implemented yet. The association said current ozone standards have been effective in dramatically curbing air pollution and that the cleaner air trend would continue by simply staying the course.

"New ozone regulations being proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will cause hundreds of counties across the country to be in violation of air laws," NAM said. "Out of compliance on ozone means less development, fewer jobs and the potential for significant and long-term damage to our economy."

[NAM noted that the new rules would reduce the current standard for ground-level ozone, set in 2008, of 75 parts per billion \(ppb\) to 65-70 ppb.](#) States and counties failing to achieve the new targets risk economic and bureaucratic sanctions, including the loss of federal highway money. NAM said a study it conducted earlier this year concluded that the new standard would reduce

U.S. gross domestic product by \$140 billion per year and could translate into 1.4 million fewer jobs annually.

Bad to Worse: New Ozone Regulations Could Throw Even More (*Many More*) Communities Into Non-Compliance



The [American Forest and Paper Association \(AFPA\)](#) also criticized the EPA's new rule on how it will impact wood bioenergy. "While the final Clean Power Plan and proposed Federal Plan reaffirm the carbon benefits of bioenergy and forest products manufacturing residuals, EPA missed an important opportunity to clarify how biomass energy can be practically used by states to meet emission reduction goals," said Donna Harmon, president and CEO of AF&PA.

Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) chimed in as well, labeling the EPA Clean Power Plan as "regressive regulations" during an [Aug. 3 Senate Session](#). "They are projected to cost literally billions. They threaten to ship good middle-class jobs overseas and will likely make it harder to maintain reliable sources of energy to meet demand. They will also likely result in higher energy bills for those who can least afford them, potentially raising electricity rates by double digits for people I represent. "All of this, and for what?" McConnell queried. "Not only will these massive regulations fail to meaningfully affect the global climate, but they could actually end up harming the environment by outsourcing the energy production to countries with poorer environmental records like India and China."

NAM has produced several videos to support its position. One that has created a lot of buzz is titled "National Parks Violate Clean Air Laws." [See that video, others and learn more.](#)

Legislation & Regulation Roundup

WMMA Supports Tax Extenders & So Can You

The WMMA just signed a letter sponsored by the Broad Tax Extenders Coalition and the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). The letter petitions Congress to act immediately on a multiyear or permanent extension of more than 50 expiring IRS tax provisions signed into law by President Obama last December. Many of the tax extenders create investment incentives for businesses of all sizes. They include the R&D tax credit, bonus depreciation and direct expensing, one of the WMMA Public Policy's priority issues detailed in last month's Washington Report.

NAM and the Coalition are seeking as many associations, businesses and other organizations as possible to sign on to the letter by September 3, the week before Congress begins its fall legislative session. The

WMMA Public Policy Committee urges all members companies to take a moment to support this vital action. [To learn more and to sign on, click here.](#)

Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) has taken the lead in sponsoring [S 1946, Tax Relief Act of 2015](#). The bill was referred to the Senate Finance Committee on Aug. 5.

OSHA Updates Workplace Amputations Standard

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has updated its [National Emphasis Program on Amputations of 2006](#). According to Department of Labor Statistics data, approximately 2,000 workers suffered amputations in 2013. The number of amputation-related injuries in manufacturing represents about 1.7 in every 10,000 workers, OSHA says. This incidence rate is more than double that of private industry (0.7).

OSHA's update of the NEP on Amputations of 2006 covers any workplace where machinery or equipment likely to cause amputations are present. Inspections will include an evaluation of employee exposures during operations such as: clearing jams; cleaning, oiling or greasing machines or machine pans; and locking out machinery to prevent accidental start-up.

Manufacturers of wood cabinets, furniture, millwork, pallets plus sawmills are among the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) business types targeted by the standard. Among other things, OSHA's update revised the targeting methodology based on current data from OIS/IMIS and BLS sources. Download the updated [NEP Amputation Standard](#).

USITC to Investigate Impact of Trade Agreements

The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) initiated [a probe to determine the economic impact of all U.S. trade agreements enacted by Congress since 1984](#). Included in the review are the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Canada and all other free trade agreements ratified by Congress and signed into law since. USITC is conducting the investigation as required by the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015. The report is due to the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Committee on Finance by June 29, 2016.

Comments Sought for 2017 Economic Census

The U.S. Bureau of the Census is accepting comments through October 5, 2015 in preparation of the "electronic mail out" of the 2017 Economic Census in fall 2017. The Economic Census is conducted every five years. It represents the most comprehensive compilation of statistics about U.S. businesses and the economy. [Learn more.](#)

SBA Hearing on Unfair Regulatory Activity Set for Sept. 9

The Small Business Administration (SBA) will hold a public forum for small business owners, association leaders and others to report experiences regarding unfair or excessive federal regulatory enforcement issues. The hearing is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9 at the American Legion, Post 30, in Springerville, AZ. [Learn more.](#)

Cited & Fined

[OSHA Cites Cabinet Company for Wood Dust-Related Death](#)

Oak Creations Inc. of Columbus, MT, was cited by 27 safety and health violations by OSHA following the death of a 55-year-old cabinetmaker, who the safety agency said died from "acute exposure to wood dust during his 15 years with the company."

[Sawmill Owner Faces Lacey Act Violations for Stolen Big Leaf Maple](#)

The owner of J&L ToneWoods of Winlock, WA, a manufacturer of musical instruments, jewelry boxes and other custom wood products, faces up to 10 years in jail and a \$250,000 fine for allegedly receiving big leaf maple illegally harvested from a national forest in violation of the Lacey Act. Three other Washington state men face criminal charges of illegally cutting the trees, according to Fox 13 News.

[Florida Pallet Recycler Cited for NEP Amputation Violations](#)

OSHA Fined Pallet Recycle of Alabama Inc. of Lakeland, FL, \$71,400 for 17 serious safety violations,

including missing machine guards and excessive noise.

[Pallet Repair Company Fined \\$59,000 for Excessive Noise](#)

OSHA says Peco Pallet of Hazelton, PA, failed to implement noise reduction measures to safeguard workers.



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