



Winter Report

Photo: sugargliding, Flickr

Historic victory to tackle global warming

Pushing clean cars across the finish line

For years, America's gas-guzzling vehicles have polluted our air, continued our dependence on oil, and fueled global warming. The great news is that the Obama administration recently finalized a historic new standard for vehicle fuel efficiency. This is the single largest step America has ever taken to cut our global warming pollution and end our dependence on oil, and Environment Maryland played a critical role in bringing about this victory.

The new standards will require vehicles to meet a 54.5 mile-per-gallon standard by 2030, doubling today's requirements. This step will cut pollution by 5.7 million tons—the equivalent of taking 860,000 of today's vehicles off the road in Maryland—and save the state 480 million gallons of fuel.

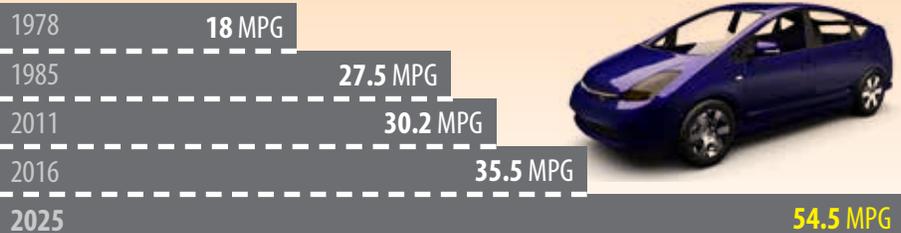
These standards were put into effect after years of hard work by Environment Maryland's members, our allies in the environmental and faith communities, and supportive elected officials.

Clean cars: from the states to the beltway

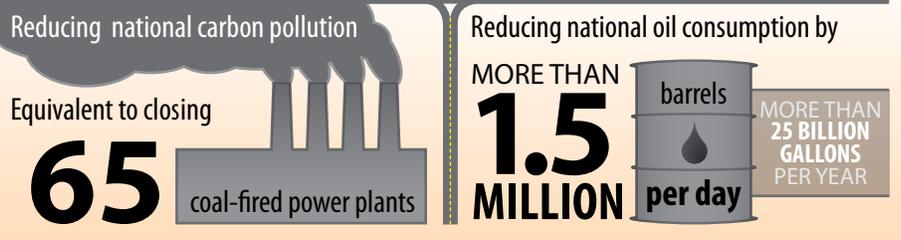
Long before the Obama administration took office, Maryland and 13 other states were developing and implementing their own state-level clean car standards. This charted a path for pollution reductions for those states, and pushed automakers to begin developing cleaner cars.

Environment Maryland helped ensure that the state adopted its standard in 2007 by working with groups like the American Lung Association and the Sierra Club in

A look at national fuel-economy standards



What will the new standards mean for our environment?



order to demonstrate broad support for the standard. Tens of thousands of citizens signed petitions backing our position.

To help win the national victory, Environment Maryland shifted its attention to President Obama. Environment Maryland worked with Gov. O'Malley to write a letter directly to President Obama calling for strong national standards, which the

president finalized last August.

In addition, Environment Maryland released two clean car reports in the months leading up to the announcement, and we helped generate thousands of public comments to the White House in support of a strong 2025 standard.



Photo: the White House

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Environment Maryland Federal Global Warming Program Director Nathan Willcox was invited to attend the historic proposal of the new clean cars standard with President Obama.

Learn more on our website: www.EnvironmentMaryland.org



To our members

There's no denying that 2012 was a challenging year for Marylanders and for our environment. My personal experience was undoubtedly like many of yours—I lost power during the “derecho” storm for a series of very hot days, and then Superstorm Sandy flooded my basement as it simultaneously caused devastating damage along the Atlantic coast.

Extreme weather like we experienced this year is a very real reminder of the need for immediate, dedicated action to reduce global warming pollution—and at Environment Maryland we plan to redouble our efforts to cut carbon pollution in 2013.

I'm deeply grateful for your support of our critical work to cut down on global warming pollution and other crucial issues like cleaning up the Bay. This year will be an important year to build on the progress we've made, and I look forward to working together with you to win the changes we need for Maryland's environment.

Sincerely,

Tommy Landers, Director

Recent action

Heeding Sandy's wake-up call

When Superstorm Sandy slammed the Mid-Atlantic in late October, it claimed dozens of lives and caused tens of billions of dollars in damage. It also brought more attention to scientists' warnings that global warming will cause intense storms like Sandy to become more frequent.

To slow this trend, it is critical that we stop creating the carbon pollution that fuels global warming. The Obama administration is on the verge of taking a critical step in that direction. The Environmental Protection Agency is expected to soon finalize the first-ever carbon pollution standards for new coal-fired power plants. Environment Maryland and our advocates on Capitol Hill have helped demonstrate historic support for these standards, and will continue to push to limit carbon for existing plants as well.

Clean energy solutions to global warming

Environment Maryland recently released our latest report on wind energy entitled “Wind Power for a Cleaner America,” which outlines the core environmental and economic benefits that more wind power could bring to Maryland.

America has more than doubled its use of wind power since the beginning of 2008, and we are already reaping the environmental rewards. Land based wind energy now displaces about as much global warming pollution as is produced by 35,000 cars in Maryland.

“I am convinced that expanded access to wind power is essential to our future. We have the capability to achieve cleaner air, better jobs and reduced dependence upon foreign oil,” said U.S. Representative Elijah Cummings, a Democrat from Maryland's 7th Congressional district.

As Environment Maryland pushes for more land-based wind, we are continuing our campaign for Maryland's first wind farm off the coast of Ocean City. In 2013, we have our best shot to win this campaign, thanks to years of action by our members and supporters.

The climate is changing – are your investments?

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▲ A satellite view of Superstorm Sandy over North America.

Dollars drained and water tainted by dirty drilling

Photo: B. Mark Schmerling

With the oil and gas industry pressing to open up western Maryland to gas drilling, and statewide concern growing about the threat of the controversial gas drilling process known as “fracking,” Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center released a new study showing the negative economic impacts that drilling could have on the state. The new study, “The Cost of Fracking,” was released by Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center’s Tommy Landers, who was joined by state Delegate Shane Robinson (D-39), as well as a registered nurse, and the group Food and Water Watch.

Over the past few years, the oil and gas industry has used a controversial process to drill for fossil fuels in underground rock formations across the United States. “Fracking” has spread rapidly, leaving a trail of contaminated water, polluted air, and marred landscapes in its wake. In fact, a growing body of data indicates that fracking is an environmental and public health disaster in the making.

However, the true toll of fracking does not end there. Fracking’s negative impacts on our environment and health come with heavy dollars and cents costs as well, as documented in Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center’s new report. These costs, ranging from cleaning up contaminated water to repairing ruined roads and beyond, would likely be borne by Maryland taxpayers rather than the oil and gas industry, the report showed.

Fracking could cost Marylanders millions

The harmful effects of fracking in states like Pennsylvania, Texas and Wyoming have demonstrated that gas drilling is dangerous business. If drilling were to come to Maryland, this could mean millions of gallons of toxic wastewater that must be treated or disposed of with a hefty price tag for Marylanders. Or it may mean more runoff pollution and illegal discharges that end up in our local streams and rivers endangering our environment and our health. In addition to water cleanup costs, the report

shows that fracking damage exacts other tolls on communities—from road repairs to healthcare costs and emergency response. Environment Maryland’s report includes the following examples of such costs:

- **Health:** In Arkansas’ Fayetteville Shale region, air pollution from fracking operations imposed healthcare costs estimated at \$9.8 million in one year. In Texas’ Barnett Shale region, those costs reach \$270,000 per day during the summer smog season.
- **Roads to Ruin:** With fracking operations requiring thousands of trips by trucks and heavy machinery, a Texas task force approved \$40 million in funding for road repairs in the Barnett Shale region.
- **Property Value:** A 2010 study in Texas concluded that houses valued at more than \$250,000 and within 1,000 feet of a well site saw their values decrease by 3 to 14 percent.

Fracking has not begun in Maryland, but the oil and gas industry has already leased thousands of well sites in Maryland. While Gov. Martin O’Malley has put fracking on hold for now, there’s currently no law keeping Maryland safe from this dirty and dangerous practice. So Environment Maryland is working to put a fracking law in place that will protect Maryland’s environment, health, and communities.



Photo: B. Mark Schmerling

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▲ *Drinking water contaminated by fracking in Pennsylvania*

Read the full report online at:
www.EnvironmentMaryland.org



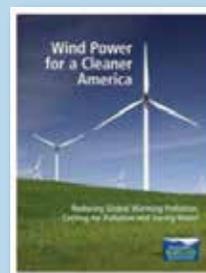
Photo: NASA

Momentum builds for offshore wind

Legislators returned to Annapolis in January with more momentum than ever behind the issue of offshore wind power, a top priority for Environment Maryland in the past. Gov. O’Malley has included an offshore wind bill in his 2013 legislative package, and Environment Maryland is working with our allies to ensure the legislature passes this proposal this spring.

Just one example of the increased momentum behind offshore wind power was that Congress renewed a tax credit critical to the development of offshore wind. As part of the “fiscal cliff” negotiations, Congress extended the offshore wind Investment Tax Credit through the end of 2013, allowing for continued growth of American wind power. For months Environment Maryland had campaigned for the renewal of this tax credit.

“We applaud our leaders for recognizing the tremendous benefits to our health and environment provided by clean, renewable energy and for acting to ensure the continued development of pollution-free offshore wind energy,” said Tommy Landers, director of Environment Maryland.



Read our full report online at:
www.EnvironmentMaryland.org

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Environment Maryland

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 Maryland. We focus exclusively on protecting Maryland'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.

Demonstrating broad support for a cleaner Bay

Environment Maryland helped mobilize more than 35,000 residents from Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and other states to sign a petition calling on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to set strong limits on factory farm pollution in order to protect the Chesapeake Bay and waterways across the country.

The EPA has estimated that one quarter of the nitrogen and phosphorus in the Chesapeake Bay comes from animal manure. "We can't let corporate agribusiness treat the Chesapeake Bay and waterways around the country like their personal sewer," said Environment Maryland's Clean Water Advocate Meg Cronin.

Building on this work, Environment Maryland will continue advocating for stronger standards on industrial agriculture operations, both at the federal and state levels. For instance, we will build on progress we've made to restrict the amount of manure allowed on lands, since excess manure application contributes significantly to the Bay's dead zones.



Photo: Staff

◀ *Environment Maryland's Tommy Landers is working to win strong limits on pollution in the Bay.*

After months of advocacy, we helped put in place a promising new plan to crack down on the Bay's worst polluters.