



Three Tips To Find Real Environmental News, Real Fast

July 6, 2018 | [Environmental News, Environmental](#)

If your inbox is like mine, you received at least a dozen messages announcing that U.S. EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt resigned on July 5. There is sure to be a flood of news stories predicting how this may affect either the administration in general or the EPA in particular. This post isn't one of them.

I'm always interested to see popular news outlets cover environmental issues. Unfortunately, their challenge will always be telling the whole (and often complicated) story in a short amount of time. It makes sense that reports for general audiences, designed to be consumed in three minutes or less, will be less detailed than explanations from an environmental attorney or environmental health and safety (EHS) professional. But is there a way to digest the relevant details in those three minutes? The answer is "yes."

In addition to our blog, here are some other suggestions to help you understand the important environmental issues of the day.

Know the sources

The newsmakers in environmental regulation are pretty easy to figure out – they are usually the agencies responsible for making the rules. This includes the EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and state and local environmental agencies. These agencies' public information obligations are your friend.

Spend a little time exploring these agency websites and you'll find most have notifications about board meetings, presentations explaining the agencies' positions on issues, databases of agency guidance documents, and identification of actions that are open for public review and comment. Using bookmarks lets you keep a list of these helpful webpages when you find them

RELATED PRACTICE AREAS

Environmental
Environmental Crimes and Investigations

RELATED TOPICS

Environmental News
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

and name them in a way that will make it quick and easy to check on updates that occur on your priority issues. You may even want to be added to agency mailing lists to have their news delivered directly to you announcing newly adopted rules, agency meetings, and press releases, for example.

Go to the source

Want to know if there will be changes in the EPA's regulatory and deregulatory agenda following Scott Pruitt's resignation? Watch the federal [Unified Agenda of Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions](#). For every federal agency – including the EPA – the agenda identifies every rulemaking that is being considered or in process, and it is updated twice a year. While that might seem not frequent enough to be a useful update, remember that nearly every significant regulatory change follows the same path that includes notice and opportunity for public comment; this process at its most efficient takes several months, but more often can take more than a year.

The unified agenda provides the name of the rulemaking, a summary of the rule's purpose, its status, and citations that let you track down more details of the rulemaking or rule repeal.

Know the aggregators

While the agencies themselves are great resources to identify developments that can affect environmental obligations and policies, understanding the complexities of the issues can require more insight than the agencies provide. Trade associations, industry news organizations, environmental groups, and blogs (like this one!) can provide deeper analysis of those developments. Look for newsletters and sources targeted to your sector and issues that can save you time by providing researched summaries and analysis. These types of sources also may provide important information about the implementation of any new requirements or issues to consider when environmental rules shift.

Being in the know about environmental news can be a real benefit, but – as with most things – having the whole story and not just a headline allows regulated entities to make better decisions about that news. The tips above should help you get to the best sources for that story and are worth your three minutes. We hope that our blog becomes one of your favorite such sources.