

Gas costs expected to be high this summer

By H. Josef Hebert,, Associated Press Writer
In the Fresno Bee, Tuesday, April 11, 2006

<http://www.fresnobee.com/24hour/front/story/WASHINGTON> (AP) - Pump prices for gasoline are rising and likely will average about a 25 cents a gallon more than last summer, but not enough to keep people home.

The Energy Department's new "seasonal outlook," released Tuesday, projects that the price for regular grade gasoline will average \$2.62 a gallon, barring any unexpected supply disruptions. Gasoline prices have soared since February.

Last week motorists paid on average \$2.68 a gallon nationwide for regular, an 18-cent increase in two weeks and 40 cents higher than the national average a year ago.

Growing demand, high crude oil costs, requirements for low-sulfur gasoline and greater demand for corn-based ethanol as an additive all "are expected to keep consumer prices for motor fuels ... high in 2006," said the report by the department's Energy Information Administration.

The high prices are not expected to dampen demand during the April-September heavy driving season. Motorists are expected to use an average 9.4 million barrels of gasoline a day, or 1.5 percent more than last summer, according to the Energy Department agency.

The agency cautioned that prices can vary by 27 cents to 50 cents a gallon between different regions of the country and that prices could spike higher if there are unexpected supply disruptions caused by the weather or refinery problems.

Some analysts said gasoline could return to \$3 a gallon or more if crude oil prices increase sharply or there is concern about hurricane damage to producers in the Gulf of Mexico.

The markets are likely to be more jittery about the weather this summer in light of the widespread disruption of Gulf oil and gasoline production caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita last year. Gasoline spiked to a national average of \$3.07 a gallon - and considerably higher in some areas - after last year's hurricanes.

"News of any developing hurricanes and tropical storms with a potential to cause significant new outages could add to (price) volatility ... in the latter part of the summer," said report said. Prices at the pump have been climbing since February when the national average for the month was \$2.25 a gallon.

High crude oil costs are partly to blame. Light, sweet crude for May delivery rose 61 cents to \$69.35 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange by midday Tuesday in Europe. The contract rose \$1.35 to settle at \$68.74 on Monday.

The Energy Department's report said that crude oil is expected to remain high, averaging \$65 a barrel for the year. But it said gasoline costs are expected to outstrip crude prices as demand for gasoline remains high and refiners assume additional costs because of new low-sulfur requirements and the phaseout of a clean-air additive known as MTBE.

Three of the biggest refiners - Valero Energy Corp., Exxon Mobil Corp. and Shell Oil Co. - said they will stop putting the additive into gasoline beginning May 5. Valero estimates that will shrink the nation's gasoline supply by 145,000 barrels a day.

At a congressional hearing last month, Guy Caruso, head of the Energy Information Administration, said about 130,000 barrels of ethanol, a substitute additive for MTBE, will be needed. That's about 50 percent of current output.

The demand for more ethanol has caused the price of the corn-based additive to surge to about \$2.75 a gallon, an increase of about 50 cents a gallon.

The additives account for about 10 percent of gasoline volume in areas where they are used, so a 50-cent increase in ethanol translates into about a nickel a gallon boost in the fuel's cost to motorists.

Bob Dinneen, president of the Renewable Fuels Association, a trade group that represents the ethanol industry, told a Senate hearing last month that the industry will be able to meet ethanol demand even as refiners move away from using the additive.

He said the industry is filling East Coast ethanol storage tanks and contracting barges that can ship ethanol down the Mississippi River to Gulf Coast refiners and up the Atlantic seaboard. "The market is responding," he said. But he also said it was the oil industry's decision to stop using MTBE this soon.

Last year, Congress as part of broad energy legislation lifted the requirement that refiners include 2 percent oxygenate - ethanol - in gasoline sold in areas having [clean air problems](#), clearing the way for refiners to stop using the additive.

Web site names local pollution sources

By Jonathan Partridge

Patterson Irrigator, Saturday, April 8, 2006

While protesters made their voices heard loud and clear outside Covanta Energy last week, a Web site says several other West Side businesses contribute to pollution.

Scorecard.org, which bills itself as "The Pollution Information Site," reports that Newman-based F&A Dairy of California was in the top 10 percent of polluters nationwide four years ago. It also notes that Patterson Frozen Foods emits pollutants into the air, though its record has improved over the years.

The site's most recent data, from 2002, also named the former Modesto Energy Limited Partnership tire incineration plant in Westley and a fuel pipeline as top West Side polluters.

According to the site, F&A Dairy of California released 315,000 pounds of nitrates into the air in 2002 and transferred another 443,315 pounds offsite. Nitrates are a suspected cardiovascular and blood toxin.

Officials with the cheese producer could not be reached for comment this week.

The Web site stated that Patterson Frozen Foods released 3,400 pounds of ammonia into the air in 2002, while placing 6,906 pounds of the chemical into holding ponds and applying another 767 pounds to the soil.

Paul Fanelli, vice president of human resources for Patterson Frozen Foods, said the company uses ammonia as a refrigerant, and occasionally, leaks send the chemical into the atmosphere.

He noted that the firm has made great strides since 1988, when 136,000 pounds of ammonia were released into the air. The firm has taken precautions to prevent leakages, particularly because the company is in the middle of town, he said.

"It's a process," he said. "We're trying to tighten up the system."

The site said the MELP tire incinerator in Westley was the second-largest emitter in the county of PM-10 — microscopic particulate matter, such as dust and ash, that can cause breathing problems — when it was in business in 1999. However, the seven tons of PM-10 it produced still ranked it far behind Modesto-based Gallo Glass Company, which produced 273 tons of the stuff that year.

A Unocal California pipeline in Patterson, now operated by ConocoPhillips, emitted the most carbon monoxide in the county in 1999 — a total of 490.5 tons of carbon monoxide and 80.13 tons of nitrogen oxide. The MELP plant released 34 tons of carbon monoxide and 47 tons of nitrogen oxide that year, according to the Web site.

One company that was not listed on the Web site was the Covanta Energy plant near Crows Landing. The incineration plant, which burns trash items and creates electricity as a byproduct, is the only producer of dioxins in Stanislaus County, according to the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District. However, the district has deemed its emissions within safe levels and says the plant is constantly monitored and undergoes a more in-depth annual source test.

Still, Grayson Neighborhood Council leader Rosenda Mataka said she did not believe there is constant regulation of dioxins.

Erica Swinney, a community organizer for the San Francisco-based environmental advocacy group Greenaction, said last month she thought Covanta would be mentioned on Scorecard.org if more monitoring were taking place.

"Incinerators really do slide pretty well under the radar screen," Swinney said.

Mataka said Grayson Neighborhood Council also supports other groups that aim to reduce ammonia and nitrate emissions, noting that Grayson has had a problem with nitrates.

"There's pesticide use, wood burning, diesel engines — if you look at it, we're in the middle of all of that," she said.

Though protesters note that polluting industries often are placed near poor areas that predominately contain minorities, Scorecard.org indicates that Stanislaus County slightly bucks the trend.

In 2002, minorities were 1.09 times more likely to be burdened by releases of toxic chemicals, but high-income families had about the same burden as low-income families, the report said.

When it came to facilities that emit pollutants, however, low-income families were 1.42 times more likely to be burdened than high-income families during the same period.

The Web site also indicated the county was among the top 40 percent dirtiest in the nation when it came to total environmental releases. It indicated that the highest concentration of polluting industries in Stanislaus County is near Modesto.

"One thing we know is the (Central Valley) is one of the worst places for air quality in the nation," Mataka said.

Governor wants industry to cut greenhouse gases

Carbon dioxide emissions would fall dramatically in plan to be announced in S.F.

By Mark Martin, Sacramento bureau
S.F. Chronicle, Tuesday, April 11, 2006

Sacramento -- Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger will call today for restricting the amount of greenhouse gases California industries can emit, pushing California into the forefront of international efforts to combat global warming.

In a speech to be delivered in San Francisco, Schwarzenegger is expected to embrace environmental policy rejected by the Bush administration by proposing a cap on carbon dioxide emissions and the creation of market-based systems to help companies meet the new caps. While short on specifics, the speech will be the governor's strongest commitment yet to make California a leader in regulating emissions that most scientists believe are causing climate changes that could have disastrous consequences.

Schwarzenegger will call reducing greenhouse gases a great challenge that will require sacrifices, but he will urge the state to "provide an example to the rest of the world," according to an advance copy of the speech given to The Chronicle.

The governor's comments come 10 months after he set goals for the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Last week, a group of his advisers released a 110-page report detailing how the goals, which include a 25 percent reduction by 2020, could be met.

Today, at a conference he has convened for environmental activists, business groups and scientists at San Francisco City Hall, Schwarzenegger will endorse portions of the report. A key policy will be requiring power plants, manufacturers and other industries in the state to report for the first time the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases they emit, and implementing some form of what is generally considered a "cap-and-trade" system.

The system, which has been implemented in 25 countries through the Kyoto Protocol agreement, sets limits on emissions and then allows companies to buy and sell emissions credits. A business that reduced emissions below the cap, for example, would be able to sell its credit to another business.

A group of Northeastern states is also implementing a cap-and-trade system.

The report released last week also noted other, market-based programs that could be implemented, such as allowing companies to offset emissions by paying to mitigate their emissions through other means, such as planting trees.

President Bush pulled the United States out of the Kyoto Protocol discussions and has pushed for more research into alternative energy sources and voluntary greenhouse gas emissions.

Schwarzenegger will not today spell out how exactly he wants to proceed, instead calling on various stakeholders to find common ground to "create the world's best market-based system to limit and slash emissions," according to the advance copy of the speech. Agreement may prove difficult.

While some business groups, such as the oil giant BP and the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, support parts of Schwarzenegger's push, some of the governor's closest corporate allies oppose it.

"Picking on California businesses to solve a global problem we don't think is fair," said Dorothy Rothrock, vice president of the California Manufacturers and Technology Association, who suggested a "mandatory cap (on emissions) is a mandatory cap on the economy."

Rothrock and other business leaders say new state-imposed environmental regulations could backfire, leading companies to expand in other states with fewer restrictions. The result would be fewer jobs in California and no dent in global warming, according to Rothrock.

Environmentalists and some business leaders, however, argue that government-imposed restrictions will lead to new innovations as companies strive to be more energy efficient. Silicon Valley venture capitalists John Doerr, Bill Joy and Ray Lane have said a cap-and-trade program could create new markets and technologies that will lead to new business opportunities for Californians.

The report released last week asserts that reducing greenhouse gases could create 83,000 jobs by 2020, although that number has been disputed by opponents of the plan.

California, which is the 12th largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world, had already taken some steps toward reducing emissions before Schwarzenegger set his goals. Cars and power plants are the largest source of greenhouse gases, and the state has imposed new restrictions on automakers and required utilities to obtain more of their energy by using renewable sources like the sun and wind.

But the state will need to take significant new steps to meet the governor's goals. A state Energy Commission report last year noted that greenhouse gas emissions could increase by 24 percent between 1990 and 2020.

Where the debate goes from here is unclear.

Democrats in the Legislature have introduced several bills addressing global warming. Legislation by Assemblywoman Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills (Los Angeles County), would set a greenhouse gas emission cap and then require the state's Air Resources Board to come up with ways to help businesses meet the cap.

Schwarzenegger hasn't endorsed the bill, but Pavley said she hoped to work with the governor.

"I think we're all talking about the same thing," she said.

Vision Madera 2025

Saturday, April 08, 2006

By Charles Doud-Editor & Publisher

Madera Tribune

Draft plan and supporting vision ideas, which are numbered. The city invites all its citizens to give their opinions on which of the numbered ideas should have highest priority. Forms are available at City Hall for doing this. There is no charge.

PART I: A Well-Planned City

In the year 2025, Madera is a well-planned city. Sound planning helps Madera celebrate its past, balance its present with available resources and infrastructure, and anticipate its future with coordinated planning and interagency cooperation guided by a shared vision. New housing, commercial and industrial development, and agricultural uses are carefully planned and accommodated in a fair and systematic manner.

Madera's comprehensive transportation system connects local neighborhoods and districts with efficient, affordable mass transit. Madera is a friendly community for pedestrians and bicyclists. There is a well-developed system of walking and bicycle trails throughout the city. Safe, clean and attractive streets accommodate traffic, providing easy access to all parts of the city.

Madera promotes affordable, quality housing that is accessible to all its residents. Downtown Madera is the lively heart and soul of the community with diverse businesses, dining, entertainment and cultural opportunities.

Madera in 2025 is widely recognized as a model for how a small city works. Government services are coordinated, sufficiently funded and accessible to all residents. Maderans are actively involved in all aspects of local governance and planning.

Supporting Vision Ideas:
Managed Growth

101. Madera accommodates and guides growth through progressive, coordinated planning for the future through the implementation of an adopted managed growth and master plan.

102. All sectors of the community provide input on Madera's growth.

103. The city's population is in balance with resources and infrastructure such as sewers, bridges and roads.

104. City and county agencies identify appropriate areas for housing, commercial, industrial and agricultural use.

105. Existing lands are fully utilized and newly annexed lands follow the general plan.

Effective Government

111. Government agencies are aligned with a shared community vision.

112. Fees, services and resources are distributed equitably throughout the community.

113. The City has accessible facilities and staff are available and accessible to all, meeting the needs

of varied cultural, socioeconomic and disabled groups.

114. All parts of the community -- north, south, east and west -- are actively and equally involved in planning for the growth and development of Madera.

115. Madera has sufficient, diverse funding to support services to meet the needs of the growing community.

Diverse, Accessible Transportation

121. Madera's comprehensive multimodal transportation system - including pedestrians, bicycles, cars, public transit, rail and freight - allows easy and safe access to all parts of the city.

112. Traffic flow is not disrupted by rail.

123. Amtrak station is located at the intermodal center.

124. Madera's public transportation system is adequate, accessible and affordable.

125. Madera provides a system of safe bicycle trails throughout the city.

126. Madera's streets are clean, safe and aesthetically pleasing.

127. Madera is a pedestrian-friendly city, with facilities and amenities that promote pedestrian safety, comfort and accessibility.

Well-Planned Neighborhoods and Housing

131. Madera neighborhoods are inclusive and well-planned.

132. Madera's neighborhoods are connected through streets, trails and walkways that promote community interaction.

133. Madera designates and preserves its historical structures.

134. The community embraces consistent visual appearance standards.

135. Affordable, quality housing is available citywide for all members of the community.

136. Madera agencies provide transitional housing programs to ensure the homeless have safe shelter.

137. Sound redevelopment practices, code enforcement and building inspections are equitable and ensure quality, attractive and affordable housing throughout the city.

138. Madera uses Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards throughout the community to ensure full accessibility for all residents, regardless of disability or age.

Abundant Natural Resources

141. Madera provides a quality, reliable, comprehensive and affordable water system.

142. The community understands the importance of natural resources and conserves them.

A Vibrant Downtown

151. Downtown redevelopment activities in Madera are based on clear and open communication between all involved parties.

152. The downtown area is a safe, friendly and walkable community center with an emphasis on cultural diversity expressed through varied commercial, artistic and recreational activities.

PART II: Good Jobs and Economic Opportunity

In the year 2025, Madera has a strong and diverse economy, supporting the local tax base and essential community services that provides living wage opportunities for all its community members. It has overcome persistent unemployment and underemployment.

Madera's secondary school, community college, adult and continuing education programs provide comprehensive training for its residents leading to gainful careers in local businesses and industry. Madera's well-trained workforce helps attract new businesses that pay living wage jobs to the area.

Madera's economy is increasingly attuned to a global marketplace. Agriculture continues to be recognized as a key driver in the local economy and is preserved through sustainable agricultural practices, efficient land use and sound water policies.

Maderans support their community by shopping locally. An increasingly vibrant city, Madera serves residents and attracts visitors with a wide variety of restaurants, entertainment, cultural venues and shops. Downtown Madera supports diverse commercial and business opportunities, and affordable commercial spaces are available throughout the community. A permanent outdoor

market provides a multicultural, community gathering place with business opportunities for local vendors. Madera's vigorous economy provides jobs and economic opportunity for all.

Supporting Vision Ideas:

Abundant Commercial Opportunities

201. Madera is a destination city with a wide variety of restaurants, entertainment, cultural venues, shops and retailers in accessible locations.

202. Affordable, attractive commercial space throughout the community encourages business development.

203. An outdoor market provides a multicultural, community gathering place.

204. The downtown area is an affordable economic generator which supports diverse commercial opportunities.

205. Maderans shop locally, supporting the local economy and eliminating retail leakage.

206. Business and industry in Madera are increasingly attuned to the global economy.

Strong Workforce

211. Adult education and secondary school programs provide vocational training that leads to locally based employment.

212. Strong school-to-work programs provide connections for graduates to the workforce.

213. Madera's workforce is well-trained and attracts new businesses.

214. Business and industry pay a living wage to all employees.

215. Madera is known as a community that provides second-chance opportunities for employment.

216. Support for non-English speaking community members is available for all essential community services and interactions with local government.

Conservation of Natural Resources

221. An ample water supply sustains agriculture, industry and community needs.

222. Agricultural and business communities observe sustainable ecological practices to ensure that land, water and energy resources are protected and conserved.

223. The agricultural economy and land are preserved by the city and county through growth regulations and the use of urban boundaries.

PART III: A Strong Community and Great Schools

In the year 2025, Madera is a place that cares - about its many residents, cultures, and community members. Madera is an inclusive community with a small town feel and shared values. Maderans communicate and strive to understand one another. Madera has a unique and proud identity which is celebrated and supported. All areas of the city are served by officials elected through district representation.

Education in Madera is valued and accessible to all. Every neighborhood in Madera is served by a local school. Families are supported through safe, affordable childcare. Youth are supported by sports, community activities, performing arts, after school programs and employment opportunities. Madera's young people remain in the community because of the quality education and good jobs. There is a comprehensive adult school located on its own campus. Adults find ongoing opportunities for personal and career development through continuing education.

Madera's many clubs and community groups support its residents and respond to changing community needs. The community is recognized for its support of the arts with its community arts center and programs. Madera's diverse cultures are celebrated in festivals and gatherings in community centers and parks.

Madera's technologically up-to-date library serves the community with computer services, staff who speak multiple languages, and hours that meet user needs. Services and leadership opportunities are available for all members of the community - from the youngest to the oldest. Older adults have access to volunteer and paid positions. Multi-generational programs are available throughout the city, in parks and recreation centers. Maderans enjoy rich cultural and educational lives. Residents are proud to be Maderans, enriched by living in the community and working toward its betterment.

Supporting Vision Ideas An Involved Public

301. The public is encouraged to participate at all levels of government to achieve an inclusive community and build trust.

302. City council members and other elected officials are elected by district and are representative of the community.

303. Madera develops community leaders from the youngest to the oldest.

304. Madera offers multiple opportunities in English, Spanish and other languages as needed for residents to share concerns, issues and input.

305. Madera's multitude of community service clubs connect and communicate with all residents and respond to the changing needs of the community.

306. Leadership in Madera's local government and civic life reflects and represents all aspects of our community, including income, ethnicity and neighborhoods.

A Rich Cultural Life

311. Artistic public displays express and honor Madera's diverse, multi-cultural and ethnic background.

312. Downtown and the Courthouse Park are a focal point for festivals and gatherings that blend our diverse ethnic communities.

313. Cultural centers with year-round programs and activities foster community pride and involvement for families and neighborhoods.

314. A multi-purpose, multi-cultural arts center is used by schools, groups and community members.

315. The community supports the Madera County Arts Council.

316. Madera honors those who contribute their time and resources to the community.

317. Our community members work to understand the values of one another and are open to ongoing education to better understand the power of diversity and cultures.

Education for All Ages

321. Barriers to higher education, including financial, transportation and accessibility issues, have been eliminated in Madera.

322. Madera embraces technology and works to ensure that all citizens have access to computers and can use them.

323. Madera's well-funded, "state of the art" library is open evenings and weekends, providing computer services, books in multiple languages and bilingual staff.

324. There is an elementary school in each neighborhood, allowing all children to attend school close to home.

325. Schools serve all levels of students, offering equal opportunity for personal growth and development.

326. Students, parents, teachers and the community are accountable for learning success.

327. There is a comprehensive, separate adult school, on its own campus, centrally located in the community and easily accessible to those most in need of its services.

328. Translation resources and language classes are available for non-English speaking community members.

Supported Youth

331. Madera retains its youth by attracting businesses and industry to the community.

332. A comprehensive, community-supported program of youth services is available including employment, sports, community activities, performing arts and after-school programs.

333. Madera is recognized for its affordable, high-quality sports programs for all.

334. After-school programs include a focus on local cultures and their histories.

335. Madera develops its youth for careers through internships and job shadowing.

336. Madera has multiple youth centers to serve the young people of the community.

337. Multi-generational and intergenerational programs are available through Madera recreational centers, parks and programs.

338. Safe and affordable childcare is available for all.

Valued Seniors

341. An organized program helps Madera youth provide service to local seniors.

342. Older citizens are valued and have access to paid and volunteer occupations.

PART IV: A Safe, Healthy Environment

In the year 2025, Madera has a safe and healthy environment for all its residents. Madera's state-of-the-art medical facilities and clinics serve all ages and cultures, promoting community and personal wellness. Madera's seniors and individuals with disabilities lead independent lives with the support of excellent local services. Madera is recognized for its highly effective prevention programs for teen pregnancy, gangs, drugs and domestic violence.

Community-based law enforcement programs help prevent crime. Law enforcement is accessible to the entire community through neighborhood meetings and regular communication with members of the public. Coordinated, emergency services and justice systems meet the needs of an expanding community.

Maderans are healthy and fit. Safe, well-maintained parks and recreational centers are conveniently located throughout the community, and are accessible. The Vern McCullough Fresno River Trail is a recognized feature of the city, providing valued recreation, access and mobility opportunities for pedestrians, runners and bicyclists. Increasing parkland keeps pace with a growing population.

[Madera encourages and enforces high environmental standards including air and water quality. The community is a recognized leader in waste reduction, reuse and recycling, and the conservation of natural resources.](#)

Supporting Vision Ideas:
Healthy Community

[401. New allergen-free trees and open spaces in Madera promote cleaner air and more walkable communities.](#)

402. All children and youth in Madera are provided with accessible health care and related education including nutrition and pregnancy prevention.

403. Education and training in healthy dietary practices are available through community groups and the Madera Community Hospital.

404. Madera has state-of-the-art medical facilities and trained providers emphasizing wellness.

405. Health care is available for all through expanded health care clinics and assistance from the community and health care organizations.

406. Madera has significantly reduced domestic violence and child abuse through communication and prevention programs and support for victims.

407. Madera's seniors receive adequate social services to support their independence.

408. Madera has addressed the problem of persistent generational poverty through a variety of programs, services and education.

Quality Parks and Recreation

411. Maderans make greater use of their river basin as a multi-use recreational area with a variety of outdoor activities.

412. The Fresno River has been redeveloped into a major water feature and lake, providing seasonal recreation, entertainment opportunities and water storage.

413. The River Trail is a recognized, well-maintained activity destination providing recreational opportunities for all residents.

414. Madera has increased the number of parks and recreational facilities supporting the needs of its growing population, including youth and families.

415. Recreational facilities provide programs and continuing education in the areas of exercise, health, nutrition and the arts for all ages.

A Safe Public

421. Public safety staff, including police, fire and other first responders, have been increased and equipped to meet the needs of a growing community.

422. Law enforcement and community safety is coordinated and enhanced by a regional information system.

423. Local courts provide access to justice and dispute resolution services for all, with new local facilities and enlarged capacity.

424. The community has virtually eliminated gang activity in Madera through prevention and rehabilitation activities for all groups.

425. Community programs and campaigns have helped move Madera in the direction of becoming drug free.

426. There are adequate, long-term substance abuse programs to assist those who seek recovery.

427. Madera's police are accessible through regular community meetings and activities and ongoing open communication with the public.

A Quality Environment

431. Madera has greatly increased its use of alternative sources of energy.

432. Madera businesses and individuals have helped reduce local air pollution through use of alternative modes of travel, reduced travel, more efficient equipment and processes, and related measures.

433. The (local) Air Quality Management District has further reduced air pollution through innovative air quality programs and cooperative local community plans.

434. The City of Madera adheres to the highest standards available to ensure high quality drinking water supplies.

435. The City of Madera is involved in water reclamation and other procurement sources to ensure adequate future supplies of water.

436. Madera implements policies and methods to support clean air and water.

437. Madera is a leader in recycling.

438. Madera uses technology that recirculates and reuses existing water resources, i.e. gray water, for medians and highway landscaping.

State seen as 'leader of the pack' on clean air

Environmentalists cheer governor's strong stands

By Michael Gardner

COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

Published in the San Diego Union-Tribune

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SACRAMENTO – In Michigan, where automakers still reign, the Rev. Charles Morris cites Scripture and California policy as he campaigns for curbs on tailpipe and smokestack emissions linked to disruptions in global weather patterns that can threaten water, power and food supplies.

“California is the leader of the pack,” says the Catholic priest who tends a parish in Wyandotte, just outside Dearborn.

“They put in emission reductions. They put in reformulated gas,” Morris said. “The sky didn't fall. The sun still shines. It belies the myths put out there.”

Religious leaders such as Morris – joining a growing number of environmentalists and politicians nationwide – say they have been energized by aggressive policies emerging from California and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

“There are people in many other states who are cheering us,” said Bill Reilly, the San Francisco-based chairman of the World Wildlife Fund and administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency under former President Bush.

Schwarzenegger has announced that he will use his clout to push legislation that would sharply curtail carbon dioxide emissions from power plants, refineries and other industries. Scientists link carbon dioxide to global warming.

“We know the science, we see the threat and the time for action is now,” Schwarzenegger said at a news conference Tuesday. “The federal government has so far fallen short with showing leadership when it comes to the environment.”

The Republican governor's agenda represents a sharp split from President Bush, who opposes mandatory regulations on emissions. The Bush administration and others argue that conducting more research and pursuing alternative energy sources are the best ways to address global warming.

The Democratic-controlled Legislature is moving ahead with several tough proposals. The centerpiece, in Assembly Bill 32, would force industry to scale back emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

More controversial are measures for a nickel-a-gallon gas tax to finance development of alternative energy sources. Separate legislation would impose an emissions surcharge on large trucks and sport utility vehicles to provide tax breaks for buying cleaner cars.

Schwarzenegger wants a package on his desk by summer's end.

But some scientists and businesses advise caution. If California reaches too far, industry could relocate to less-demanding states or countries. That would reverse any gains in California, they warn.

“What California does could be sacrificial for no purpose,” said Dorothy Rothrock of the influential California Manufacturers and Technology Association.

“The net gain would be nothing,” argued Andy O'Hare, vice president of a Washington, D.C.-based coalition of 30 cement makers.

It's not just industry representatives who question whether one state can accomplish much.

Economic growth in China is expected to make that country the world's largest producer of greenhouse gas emissions by midcentury – eclipsing cuts made by the United States and other industrialized countries.

“We can decide to go to zero and there still could be no net improvement,” said Walter Oechel, a climate researcher at San Diego State University.

Unfazed, Schwarzenegger said he plans to use his – and California's – influence to push the agenda nationally. The governor has called a summit for tomorrow in San Francisco to explore strategies and mobilize. He also plans to ask Western governors to join the campaign when they meet in June.

Nationally, dozens of religious leaders have formed coalitions in 18 states to lobby legislatures and Congress.

“We had to put our faith into action,” said the Rev. Sally Bingham, an Episcopalian priest at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco.

Morris said his church started with solar power and other energy savings. But he felt a calling to do more.

“We are a part of, not apart from, all creation,” he said. “Global warming scares the bejeebers out of me.”

Industry is scared too, but less of global warming than of the state acting independently and overzealously.

“It's goodbye concrete production,” if California regulations push costs much higher, O'Hare said.

Industry fears of being unable to contain a Schwarzenegger-inspired movement may be well-founded. Ten states have adopted versions of California's 2003 landmark legislation on vehicle emissions standards targeting carbon dioxide. Maryland's Republican governor on Thursday signed legislation calling on the state to reduce its emissions by 10 percent by 2019.

“California is a trendsetter ... It will be copied,” said Reilly, the former EPA administrator.

However, the Bush administration continues to align with industry, particularly automakers who have challenged California's right to impose tougher tailpipe standards. The administration has also balked at signing the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, an international effort to curb global warming.

But the governor's top advisers, who just issued a comprehensive report calling for stepped-up efforts, say global warming is a threat to the economy and the environment.

Among warnings they sounded:

- Sierra snowpack – the source of much of California's water supply – is gradually declining, although record storms have buried mountains this spring.
- Shifts in weather patterns are disrupting crop production.
- In forests, drier years invite catastrophic fires and spread devastating pests.
- Unseasonable and erratic storms could bring devastating floods.

“It gives you a sobering assessment of why this is one of the defining issues of our time,” said Terry Tamminen, the governor's chief environmental adviser.

Where some businesses see a threat, Bob Epstein sees opportunity. A founder of Environmental Entrepreneurs, a coalition of high-tech and venture capital concerns in 22 states, Epstein said a legislative commitment would spur more investment in alternative energy.

“It will accelerate new business in California,” said Epstein, based in Berkeley.

Bowing to complaints raised by industry, Schwarzenegger immediately rejected the most contentious recommendation from his advisers – and some Democrats – to explore a gas tax or fee on goods movement.

"You see what's happening with the gasoline price. It's going up all the time," Schwarzenegger said. "People are suffering because of it, so why would we now slap on top of that a tax to make it even more expensive?"

However, the governor may not have the final say. A proposed ballot measure now being circulated for November would tax oil companies \$4 billion to finance broad introduction of alternatives to fossil fuels.

Schwarzenegger's proposals, produced by an appointed Climate Action Team, include economic carrots to encourage industries to shift to renewable energy.

Among those:

- A market-based system that would allow buying, selling or trading pollution credits. Growing industries could secure compliance with pollution regulations while providing other companies with capital.

- A requirement that power generators invest more in renewable resources. Out-of-state generators also would have to comply to sell power in California.

- Farmers would be provided incentives to replace sooty diesel engines and curb their use of pesticides. Alternative-fuel vehicles also would be promoted.

The governor's team is convinced emissions can be cut without pinning industry to numerical limits. However, some lawmakers want more aggressive regulation.

"You have to set a cap so you mean what you say. You have to send a signal to the marketplace," said Assemblywoman Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills, an architect of California's historic legislation imposing new emission controls on automakers to slow global warming.

Scientists have called the state's goals an important step.

"California is just an increment of the global emissions, so we shouldn't overstate what the state will be able to do on its own," said Dan Cayan, a climate expert at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography who helped write the report for the governor.

"But by taking seriously this issue with either regulatory or creative economic strategies, this is an important statement for not only the national community but the international community," he said.

Daniel Sarewitz, a professor of science and society at Arizona State University, said it's important for policymakers to look beyond the debate over the Kyoto Protocol.

Instead, Sarewitz said, leaders must understand and address why society has become so vulnerable to climatic disruptions. He cited examples of building in hurricane regions and allocating large amounts of scarce water to farmland in the arid San Joaquin Valley.

He's also skeptical that curbs on fossil fuels will have significant immediate benefits because so much of the world's economy depends on burning oil and coal. Carbon stays in the atmosphere for "hundreds of years," he said.

"There is no foreseeable path to decarbonization that will have an impact on society's vulnerability to climate changes over the next half century," Sarewitz said.

But Epstein, the entrepreneur, said obstacles can be overcome in this era of technological revolution.

"Everybody loses if we do nothing," he said.

Gov. Backs Greenhouse Gas Strategy

Aides say he plans to endorse the far-ranging program to curb global warming today, despite opposition from GOP and business leaders.

By Janet Wilson and Marc Lifsher, Los Angeles Times, April 11, 2006

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger will announce today his support for a strategy to combat global warming that has drawn criticism from Republicans and business leaders, aides said Monday.

The market-based approach would include controversial "cap-and-trade" requirements mandating greenhouse gas producers who exceed certain tonnages of harmful emissions to buy credits from other companies that have lowered emissions.

Schwarzenegger is expected to make the announcement, endorsing major components of his climate action team's plan, at a summit he has convened in San Francisco this afternoon bringing together economists, investors, business executives, environmentalists and lawmakers.

Legislative approval could be needed to enact key elements of the 1,300-page plan, including the cap-and-trade system and a registry for businesses to report the amounts of greenhouse gases they emit.

Terry Tamminen, special advisor to the governor on environment and energy issues, said that under the market-based program, power plants, for instance, would be able to buy emissions credits not just from other power plants but also from other industries, including timber companies that set aside forests to trap carbon dioxide, a key greenhouse gas. Tamminen said such broad access to the credit market would help to drive prices down.

Limited versions of such market-based programs are operating in Chicago and Europe, he said, adding that California's would go much further. Schwarzenegger has said he wants to reduce greenhouse gases by 80% by 2050, putting the state ahead of the rest of the world.

Tamminen said one-third of those reductions could come from a market-based cap-and-trade program. The plan calls for two years of study to design the program.

Cap-and-trade programs are opposed by the Bush administration as well as by many of Schwarzenegger's business backers, including major oil companies and the California Chamber of Commerce.

Allan Zaremborg, president of the chamber, said his members would "be concerned about any cap program that encourages arbitrary reductions in emissions and encourages companies to migrate operations to other parts of the world where there are no carbon dioxide controls."

Tamminen said industries had expressed similar concerns 35 years ago when the Clean Air Act was put into place but had not left the state or hurt the economy through compliance.

Another high-ranking administration source said that Schwarzenegger was well aware of the business concerns and wanted careful study and design but that it would happen.

"He's endorsing the concept and saying we need to have this, but there's an acknowledgment this has to be done carefully," the source said.

By making the endorsement, the incumbent governor will be siding with environmentalists and Democrats in an election year, a strategy some Republican strategists said could work in his favor.

GOP analyst Dan Schnur, who teaches public policy at USC, said Schwarzenegger "outflanked" his Democratic challengers by having his climate action team unfurl the lengthy report last week and will win over mainstream voters in both parties who want something done about global warming.

Recent polls back him up. In June, the Public Policy Institute of California found that 69% of

Californians surveyed said they supported the governor's global warming reduction targets. A national Republican polling firm recently found that American voters believe by more than 2 to 1 it is possible to reduce the effects of global warming.

But others said it could hurt him, particularly with Republican Party regulars who oppose government regulation and who are key to campaigning and getting out the vote.

"He's walking a fine line," said Larry Gersten, a political science professor at San Jose State. "He's trying to ... scoop up those votes he had in 2003 without losing the votes on the right, and he's in a rather precarious position."

Philosophical differences among Schwarzenegger's staffers, legal challenges by automakers and hostile actions by the Bush administration could also stymie pieces of the plan.

One-third of the greenhouse gas reductions outlined in the climate action team's report would come from a tailpipe control law already in place, sponsored by Assemblywoman Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills). Automakers are challenging that law in court, arguing that California does not have the legal right to regulate carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas.

"This is a tough case," said lawyer Jim Marston of Environmental Defense, a national environmental group that has intervened on the automakers' lawsuit. He said the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also needs to sign a waiver approving the Pavley law and said California might have to wait for a new president for that to happen.

But he said California has quietly inserted a police powers clause into laws giving them the right to regulate greenhouse gases to protect public health.

Adding another potential roadblock, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recently said in a new fuel economy rule that no state has the right to regulate carbon dioxide.

"The real question is while we're sitting here congratulating ourselves, are the feds getting ready to cut our throats?" said V. John White, an environmental lobbyist.

The Center for Biological Diversity, an environmental group, sued the highway agency on Thursday, seeking to have the fuel economy rule thrown out.

Schwarzenegger said in a news conference last week, "I have to say that the federal government has so far fallen short with showing leadership when it comes to the environment. I think that I, as governor, don't want to wait for the federal government or for any other states, as far as that goes [to act on global warming].... California has always been innovative and has always been bold about those kind of things, and I think that this is a very bold move, this report."

The plan outlines four dozen initiatives, many of which do not need federal approval.

For example, it seeks to persuade farmers to plant grass and rice for use in manufacturing "bio-fuel" to replace oil and gas, would require utilities to buy "clean" power and would call for carbon dioxide to be trapped in vast forests or buried in caverns.

Supporters say progress has already been made, often at Schwarzenegger's behest.

The state Board of Forestry is identifying lands and working with an existing voluntary emissions registry already in place. The Public Utilities Commission adopted key pieces of the governor's solar power initiative after it failed in the Legislature; those actions are part of the new package.

A dozen more bills that would implement other measures in the plan were introduced this week.

But many business leaders are nervous. Representatives of most oil companies, concrete makers, rubber producers and automakers argue that global warming is an international problem that shouldn't be tackled by a single state.

Jack Coffey, Chevron's government affairs manager, said most oil companies — except for BP, the Royal/Dutch Shell Group and others based in Europe — oppose mandatory reporting or caps on greenhouse emissions.

"The problem is there is pressure put on California industries to reduce, and no one else is doing it, not our neighbors over in Nevada or Oregon or Arizona," said Frank Sheets, a spokesman for Texas Industries Inc., a cement manufacturer with plants in Riverside and near Victorville. "We'd rather see a national system.."

Plan backers note California wants to work with neighboring states, and that 10 other states are moving to adopt tough tailpipe emissions laws.

Schwarzenegger said last week he would bring the report to the next Western governors conference.

There are also growing divisions over global warming within industry groups.

"Business is not monolithic in its opposition," said Tamminen.

Many venture capitalists and some utilities are eager to see the new technology initiatives move forward.

A letter signed by BP, the London-based oil giant; Pacific Gas and Electric; a Silicon Valley business association; and three environmental groups commended the governor for the climate action plan's call for "a rigorous and comprehensive system for reporting greenhouse gas emissions" and its recommendations "to provide credit to businesses that take early action to reduce emissions."

US urges China to clean up environment

Reuters, published in the Washington Post
Tuesday, April 11, 2006; 6:04 AM

BEIJING (Reuters) - The United States urged China on Tuesday to clean up its environment ahead of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, as China's top environmental agency warned Beijing citizens to stay home to avoid serious air pollution.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administrator Stephen Johnson warned China that the world was watching its environmental protection efforts in the lead-up to the Beijing Games.

"The eyes of the world are on China as we approach the Olympics in Beijing in 2008 and the Expo in Shanghai in 2010," Johnson said during a speech at Beijing's Qinghua University.

"More environmental protection progress can and must occur."

Johnson said more stringent enforcement of central government environmental policy and legislation was required regionally and urged greater cooperation between China's levels of government -- central, provincial and local.

Johnson spoke as smoggy skies hung over Beijing and the State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) issued health warnings provoked by high air pollution exacerbated by sandstorms across northern China.

Beijing's number of "blue sky" days in the first three months of this year -- a state measure of relatively low pollution days -- is at its lowest in five years, SEPA reported on its Web site.

[S.F. Chronicle commentary, Tuesday, April 11, 2006:](#)

OPEN FORUM

California's cool(ing) opportunity

By Karen Douglas

Get ready. California's leaders are gathering in San Francisco today to consider new solutions to curb global warming in the Golden State. San Francisco is the host of the first of eight "climate summits" in which California's California is poised to show once again its environmental leadership and innovation.

With strong bipartisan leadership from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Legislature, California is about to pass the first ever statewide limits on global-warming pollution, taking direct aim at what the Rev. Sally Bingham, the environmental minister at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, has called "the most important moral issue of our time." Fortunately, California's political leaders recognize that acting now to protect our children while jump-starting a new energy economy in California is imperative, and they aren't letting partisan politics or special interest rhetoric get in the way.

Last week, Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez, D-Los Angeles, and Assemblymember Fran Pavley, D-Agoura Hills, announced AB32, the Global Warming Solutions Act, which would set enforceable limits on emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and other gases that cause global warming. Other legislators, including Senate President Pro Tempore Don Perata, D-Oakland, have also stepped up to the plate, authoring a package of bills that will reduce California's dependence on fossil fuels and help meet targets for reducing California greenhouse-gas emissions set by the governor.

This legislation builds on the governor's leadership on global warming. In June 2005, the governor announced ambitious targets for reducing global warming pollution in California, stating: "The debate is over. We know the science. We see the threat. And we know the time for action is now."

The governor asked his Climate Action Team to report back on steps to implement the targets. This report, released last week, demonstrates that the governor's aggressive targets can be achieved while providing billions of dollars in savings for businesses and residents, and tens of thousands of new jobs by 2020. The Climate Action Team report also includes a recommendation that a multi-sector, market-based system be developed that caps emissions based on the governor's 2020 target.

The emissions limits in AB32 are based on the same targets as the governor's plan would empower the California Air Resources Board, the state's air-quality regulator, to develop a program to identify who needs to comply and to enforce the limits. In addition, AB32 would implement the Climate Action Team's recommendation that significant emitters of greenhouse gas pollution, such as electric utilities and oil refineries, would be required to report their emissions to the state. AB32 would make California the first state in the nation to limit emissions of global warming pollution. It would achieve very significant pollution reductions in California and, by creating market demand for clean energy solutions, would spur a clean technology boom in California.

There is a reason why the CEOs of Sun Microsystems and Google and prominent California venture capitalists recently wrote the governor to advocate an enforceable cap on global-warming pollution and a market-based program to meet the cap, saying: "We urge you to help change history in a way that leaves a healthy world for our children, ensures a proud heritage of stewardship and moves California and America down the path toward energy independence."

Today, California sends \$30 billion out of the state every year to buy fossil fuels, the primary cause of the state's global-warming pollution. That is \$2,500, on average, from every California family. Reducing global-warming pollution through energy efficiency, renewable energy, smart growth and improved transit will bring that money back home to our communities. And investments such as energy efficiency and renewable energy will provide more than twice as many jobs as investments in fossil fuel-fired power plants.

The pollution limits in AB32 would curb spending on imported energy and spur the development of clean technology - giving California a competitive edge in this nascent high-tech industry.

As the 12th largest emitter of global-warming pollution in the world, California can make a real dent in global warming, while reaping the benefits of a clean technology boom. California has too much at stake to stall out on actions to fight global warming. Our coastline, our agricultural and ski industries, our drinking water from our Sierra snowpack and healthy air for our families are all on the line.

It is a sign of true leadership when our elected officials turn one of the biggest challenges of our time into an economic opportunity for our state. California has a proud tradition of pioneering clean-air and clean-energy solutions. It is time for our state to lead again. The Legislature must pass AB32 to ensure that a strong limit is placed on global warming pollution in the Golden State.

Karen Douglas is the director of the California Climate Initiative at Environmental Defense (www.environmentaldefense.org) and Devra Wang is the director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's California Energy Program (www.nrdc.org).

[Fresno Bee editorial, Tuesday, April 11, 2006:](#)

Filling in the holes

Infill development is the way to go for Fresno and the state.

It makes a lot of sense to build in established neighborhoods. The new construction usually helps revitalize the area. Sewer and water lines and other expensive infrastructure are already available. In this growing Valley, it also saves prime farm land, which is being gobbled up at too fast a pace by suburban development.

As Bee reporter Sanford Nax pointed out in a story Sunday, infill projects are being encouraged across the state as increasing home prices make it financially feasible to build in older areas. In Fresno, the general plan actually seeks to push development into established neighborhoods.

In this region, poor air quality is another reason to encourage infill development. It puts people closer to their jobs, which reduces driving. A denser population also will make mass transit more feasible.

But infill development has its challenges. Parcels often are surrounded by existing buildings, and that limits what can be built. Neighbors often complain about what's going in, meaning that developers and city officials must spend more time educating residents about projects.

Planners and developers must have flexibility, and the permitting processes must move quickly. Denser urban developments often require greater capital — and carry concomitant risk — than sprawling suburbs. Delays in the paperwork can push the costs beyond what's financially feasible to build.

But infill development is such a good idea for everyone that state officials have begun tracking availability of parcels, offering a detailed listing of vacant and underutilized lots in California. The \$300,000 study shows the eight-county San Joaquin Valley has 10% of the state's population but only 3% of its infill parcels.

Valley parcels are typically larger, according to the report, but there is a lack of urban amenities, including transit service necessary to serve higher-density development. Almost a quarter-million new homes and apartments could be built on infill parcels in the Valley.

Statewide, infill could make a substantial dent in urban sprawl. The estimated 500,000 infill parcels could hold up to 1.5 million housing units, or about 25% of California's housing needs over the next 25 years, according to the report. State officials say that could reduce sprawl by 100,000 acres.

That's a huge dividend for this growing state. There's no doubt that many people will still want the suburban living that has dominated the landscape in recent years. But infill projects offer choices to residents. Some in Fresno want an urban living experience and that also should be available to them.