



## Drumbeat: January 26, 2010

Posted by [Leanan](#) on January 26, 2010 - 9:09am

Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

### [The New Republic: Gate's Argument For Innovation](#)

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i>all paper currencies *and* the economic system upon which they are based.

The new currency, simply called Carbon Currency, is designed to support a revolutionary new economic system based on energy (production, and consumption), instead of price. Our current price-based economic system and its related currencies that have supported capitalism, socialism, fascism and communism, is being herded to the slaughterhouse in order to make way for a new carbon-based world.

### [Energy Wars: Russia's Neighbors Get Even](#)

It is becoming a New Year's tradition in Europe to wake up on January 1 with a big Russian headache. At the beginning of 2006 and 2009, Russia cut off energy supplies to Ukraine after a disagreement over natural gas prices, which subsequently caused fuel shortages in the European Union in the dead of winter. This January, all eyes are trained on Belarus, which has been having its own quarrel with Moscow over oil prices, threatening European energy supplies once again. But three weeks into the current standoff, there's been a twist: Kazakhstan, another ex-Soviet republic, stepped in last week to offer Belarus its own oil. Now the Kremlin's most reliable tool for controlling its neighbors — energy blackmail — is at risk of blowing up in its face.

### [Russia, Belarus draw closer in oil talks - source](#)

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russia and Belarus could sign a deal on Wednesday to end a dispute over oil pricing and tariffs that has practically cut off crude supplies to Belarussian refineries, a source close to the talks told Reuters on Tuesday.

### [Three crystal-ball gazers see market gains ahead](#)

Marion's presentation had more charts than a mariner looking for buried treasure. But he took time out to draw an analogy between the recent prediction by former CIBC World Markets economist Jeff Rubin of oil eventually reaching \$400 a barrel, and "the great scare of 1898," when people gathered in New York noting that 160,000 horses produced 3.5 million pounds of manure a day, predicting that "by 1930 horse droppings will rise to Manhattan's third-storey windows." The arrival of cars belching carbon dioxide was deemed a blissful relief.

### [Statoil Says 'Challenging' Market to Affect Gas Finds](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Statoil ASA, Norway's biggest oil and natural-gas producer, said a "challenging" gas market may affect its development of new discoveries as an increase in shale-gas output weighs on prices.

"We see a challenge from a short- and medium-term perspective because of the market situation and considerable uncertainty due to the new situation with shale gas," Vice President Sverre Serc-Hanssen said today at a conference in Bergen, Norway. "The medium-term picture may influence us with regard to the profitability of phasing in new gas discoveries."

### [Chavez's Vice President Quits, Leaves Hole in Cabinet](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Venezuelan Vice President and Defense Minister Ramon Carrizalez resigned from the government today, leaving President Hugo Chavez holes to fill in his cabinet amid a slumping economy and electricity crisis.

### [Gulf oil producers to record low inflation in 2010](#)

Gulf oil producers are expected to record another year of relatively low inflation in 2010 as housing pressures continue to ease and global prices are projected to remain far lower than in 2008, according to regional and international data.

Although the dollar could weaken through the year, the stifled increase in imports in the absence of large GDP growth is expected to offset the high import bill and keep inflation in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) at low levels.

### [Energy projects well on schedule](#)

RIYADH: The Council of Ministers Monday expressed its satisfaction about the ongoing oil and refinery expansion projects and said they would contribute to meeting the increasing global demand for energy.

“All these energy projects are progressing well as scheduled,” said Culture and Information Minister Abdul Aziz Khoja, quoting a Cabinet statement.

### [Smart water to sprinkle the desert](#)

Following the recipe of success from Norwegian oil fields, seawater will be injected into the Saudi Arabian desert sands.

Water injection has succeeded in improving the recovery rate from the Ekofisk field from the originally expected 17 percent to nearly 50 percent today.

### [Report: Power shortage by 2015](#)

“This is advice to a community making a 50-year decision,” Holland resident Don Triezenberg said during a question-and-answer period. “You’re going to be making those decisions today.”

The last of America’s coal investment can be expected around 2024, said Mark Griffith, Black & Veatch managing director of enterprise management solutions.

Oil prices are expected to almost triple in the next 20 years, he said.

### [U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu and Top CEOs to Tackle Urgent Issues in Business and the Environment at Wall Street Journal's ECO:nomics Conference](#)

NEW YORK (GlobeNewswire via COMTEX) ----At The Wall Street Journal's third annual ECO:nomics conference, leaders such as U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu; Robert Iger, president and chief executive officer of The Walt Disney Company; Peter Voser, chief executive of Royal Dutch Shell and other top industry and policy experts will tackle the most urgent issues in business and the environment. The conference will be held March 3-5, 2010 in Santa Barbara, Calif. at Bacara Resort & Spa.

### [Richard Heinberg: Peak Coal and Blackout \(book review\)](#)

Richard Heinberg begins by noting that coal production in any given region follows the

same curve as oil production. It too starts with an increase, reaches a maximum and then declines over time as the deposits run out. This evolution is markedly less visible, however, because numerous forms of coal exist, of extremely variable energy values. The best, that which is mined and therefore exhausted first, is anthracite. Next is bituminous coal of variable quality, then lignite and finally peat, which almost no one exploits to provide energy any longer. The poorer the quality of the coal, the less energy it produces per kilogram, to the point that there is no interest in transporting lignite over long distances because the energy needed to do this quickly exceeds that which would be produced by the lignite. And yet the official figures do not take these distinctions into account, or present them in an overly simplified fashion, something which creates a false impression of abundance.

### [Care Farming](#)

The Japanese visionary and environmentalist Masanobu Fukuoka once stated that “the ultimate goal of farming is not the growing of crops, but the cultivation and perfection of human beings”. This sentiment is at the heart of ‘care farms’ which aim to combine care and meaningful work in the supportive natural environment of farms, woodlands and market gardens for some of society’s most vulnerable people. Care farming provides a healthy daily structure for the participant ‘farm helpers’, building confidence and supporting people to develop their social and practical skills.

### [Energy Grants Seek Reliable Source for Diagnostic Aid](#)

WASHINGTON — Amid a global shortage of a radioactive isotope used to diagnose cancer, heart disease and kidney problems, the Energy Department on Monday moved to develop two radically different sources for the material.

Supplies have been short since last May, when the reactor in Chalk River, Ontario, that used to be the biggest supplier of the isotope was shut down because of a leak. It is under repair, but even if it can be restarted, it is more than a half-century old and its future is uncertain. A Dutch reactor that can also be used is almost as old and has been shut for extended periods, some planned, some not.

### [Former Soldier’s Death Furthers Chile’s Nuclear Energy Debate](#)

The death last Friday of a former Chilean soldier who was suing the state for health damages after he was overexposed to radiation once again highlights concerns over the future use of nuclear energy in Chile.

Manuel Mella Tapia, 41, guarded the La Reina nuclear research facility near Santiago between 1987 and 1989 as part of his compulsory military service. Tapia was diagnosed with leukemia in 2008 and had been waiting for a bone marrow transplant at Santiago’s Clinica Alemana.

### [Do Energy-Efficient Appliances Add Up?](#)

Energy efficient appliances are in the spotlight these days, thanks to a \$300 million rebate program from the Department of Energy. But do they really make financial sense?

### [An urban car for a two car household?: 'Range anxiety'](#)

Before Henry Ford's assembly line started rolling, more than a third of American automobiles were powered by electricity. The Model T made driving affordable for average families, and because it was fuelled by gasoline, it was cheaper and had a longer range than the electric cars of the 1900s. Ever since, electric cars have existed on the margins of the automobile world. Now BMW believes change is in the air, and the German auto giant is doing its part to make battery-powered electric vehicles (BEVs) a viable option in 21st century cities.

### [Golf and the great Lao land grab](#)

VIENTIANE - It is easy to be seduced by the peaceful rural scenes, punctuated by rice fields, vegetable patches and reed-filled wetlands. But behind the natural tapestry, tension and anger are brimming over in the local communities near the Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge outside of the Lao capital.

The communal complaint: their long self-sustaining community will on government orders soon be converted into an 18-hole golf course, luxury hotel and top-end residential developments, and the compensation on offer to relocate is well below going market land prices.

### [Campaign to save tropical forests failed by food giants](#)

Western food manufacturers are buying so little sustainable palm oil that the system set up to limit damage to tropical forests caused by the world's cheapest vegetable oil is in danger of collapse. Palm-oil producers say the industry may quit the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) because so few firms are financially backing the scheme.

### [World's glaciers continue to melt at historic rates](#)

Glaciers across the globe are continuing to melt so fast that many will disappear by the middle of this century, the World Glacier Monitoring Service (WGMS) said today.

The announcement of the latest annual results from monitoring in nine mountain ranges on four continents comes as doubts have been cast on how much climate scientists have

exaggerated the problem of glacier melt, which is seen as a leading indicator of how much the planet is heating up.

### [How Cows \(Grass-Fed Only\) Could Save the Planet](#)

So how can Coleman and Damrosch believe that adding livestock to their farm will help the planet? Cattleman Ridge Shinn has the answer. On a wintry Saturday at his farm in Hardwick, Mass., he is out in his pastures encouraging a herd of plump Devon cows to move to a grassy new paddock. Over the course of a year, his 100 cattle will rotate across 175 acres four or five times. "Conventional cattle raising is like mining," he says. "It's unsustainable, because you're just taking without putting anything back. But when you rotate cattle on grass, you change the equation. You put back more than you take."

### [The New Republic: Gate's Argument For Innovation](#)

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### [What Could You Live Without?](#)

Kevin Salwen, a writer and entrepreneur in Atlanta, was driving his 14-year-old daughter, Hannah, back from a sleepover in 2006. While waiting at a traffic light, they saw a black Mercedes coupe on one side and a homeless man begging for food on the other.

"Dad, if that man had a less nice car, that man there could have a meal," Hannah protested. The light changed and they drove on, but Hannah was too young to be reasonable. She pestered her parents about inequity, insisting that she wanted to do something.

"What do you want to do?" her mom responded. "Sell our house?"

Warning! Never suggest a grand gesture to an idealistic teenager. Hannah seized upon the idea of selling the luxurious family home and donating half the proceeds to charity, while using the other half to buy a more modest replacement home.



### [My free and easy life](#)

When Katharine Hibbert lost her job and her flat she didn't just downsize – she decided to dispense with money altogether, living on the stuff the rest of us throw away.

### [My year of living without money](#)

Is it possible to live without spending any cash whatsoever? After becoming disillusioned with consumer society, one man decided to give it a try.

### [Green future has a price](#)

IT DOES not matter whether you are a global warming sceptic, it is still difficult to deny that unsustainable economic pressure on natural resources and the environment is the most substantial market failure in the history of the market economy. Therefore, regulation is inevitable.

Surprisingly, most economists, most politicians and even the public don't seem to be particularly concerned with the type of regulation.

### [Retailers try new survival strategies for 2010](#)

Stores, including L.L. Bean, are being redesigned to be more environmentally friendly. The number of "green" products is being increased at Wal-Mart, Target and other stores. And you may find yourself paying for the privilege of using a plastic bag – or being rewarded for reusing – at more stores.

Much of the environmental emphasis is behind the scenes and focused on saving energy to save money. When it comes to energy, "Any savings immediately hit the bottom line," says Peter Graf, who heads sustainability for the business software company SAP.

### [Stock Market Breakdown!](#)

Instead of allowing the economy to breathe out and make way for new energy paradigms when the world had passed Peak Oil (which is what would have automatically happened had the US and Australia ratified the Kyoto Protocols in 1998) they sought to tamper with the economy in order to prolong the life expectancy of the cash rich legacy industries which had vested interests to protect and which were providing funding to ensure a maintenance of the status quo. Here's a broad brush picture of what happened next.

### [Global supply of rare earth elements could be wiped out by 2012](#)

The automobile industry uses tens of thousands of tons of rare earth elements each year, and advanced military technology depends on these elements, too. Lots of "green" technologies depend on them, including wind turbines, low-energy light bulbs and hybrid car batteries. In fact, much of western civilization depends on rare earth elements such as terbium, lanthanum and neodymium.

So what's the problem with these rare elements? 97 percent of the world's supply comes from mines in China, and China is prepared to simply stop exporting these strategic elements to the rest of the world by 2012.

### [Palm Oil Drops to Lowest in Two Months on China Demand Outlook](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Palm oil dropped to the lowest in two months on concern demand from China, the biggest consumer of edible oils, may slow and as crude oil and soybeans declined.

April-delivery futures fell 2.5 percent to 2,407 ringgit (\$703) a metric ton on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange, the lowest close since Nov. 19.

### [Iraqi Oil: Why Are the Majors Willing to Take the Plunge?](#)

The economics of these Iraqi technical service contracts, in which the developers get a dollar or two for every incremental daily barrel produced, are not very compelling. Why, then, are so many majors and supermajors willing to take the plunge?

My colleague David Lee Smith put it this way last summer: "It's called getting your foot in the door of a country with an estimated 115 billion barrels of oil." The promise of getting better terms on future deals has got to be the prime motivator here.

### [K+S Fights Salt Sewer Designed to Save German Fish](#)

(Bloomberg) -- K+S AG, the world's biggest salt producer, may be banned from dumping minerals into a German river and forced to build a sewer line to the North Sea costing \$700 million, about twice its annual operating profit.

### [China's Worst Sea Ice in 40 Years Continues to Thaw](#)

(Bloomberg) -- The ice pack that had stranded ships and disrupted oil production in northern China continued to thaw in Bohai Sea as ports 150 miles south began to



recover from the region's worst freezing in 40 years.

Forty-eight percent of Liaodong, the northernmost bay of Bohai Sea, was frozen today compared with 52 percent yesterday, the State Oceanic Administration said on its Web site.

### [Indonesia Plans To Grow One Billion Trees Annually: Susilo](#)

WEST JAVA (Bernama) -- Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on Tuesday said that his country has planned to plant one billion trees per year, in order to fight forest destruction, as well as an effort to save the planet from climate change.

### [Every farm will have a turbine in five years](#)

IT IS predicted that every farm in the UK will have a wind turbine within five years, as the sector ramps up to meet the Government's targets on cutting carbon emissions.

Farming Futures, an industry-led body which advises on practical action to combat climate change, made the claim as it launched a free guide to wind energy aimed at farmers and land managers.

### [Fears Barack Obama will omit climate change from State of Union speech](#)

Global warming – a signature issue for Barack Obama – is at risk of getting the short shrift in this year's State of the Union speech on Wednesday, further shrinking the already slim prospects of getting a climate change law through Congress, environmentalists say.

Obama is being lobbied hard to send a strong signal that climate change remains at the top of his agenda and issue a forceful call to Congress to move forward on legislation this year.

### [The Ozone Hole Is Mending. Now for the 'But.'](#)

That the hole in Earth's ozone layer is slowly mending is considered a big victory for environmental policy makers. But in a new report, scientists say there is a downside: its repair may contribute to global warming.

### [Economic growth 'cannot continue'](#)

Continuing global economic growth "is not possible" if nations are to tackle climate change, a report by an environmental think-tank has warned.

...Andrew Simms added: "There is no global, environmental central bank to bail us out if we become ecologically bankrupt."

None of the existing models or policies could "square the circle" of economic growth with climate safety, Nef added.

See also: [What If the Global Economy Was a Giant Hamster? or Infinite Growth on a Finite Planet](#)

### [Icy crystals heat up](#)

Vast deposits of methane, trapped in icelike crystals under Alaska's frozen tundra and beneath ocean floors worldwide, could play an important role in the nation's energy future.

But after more than two decades of study, major oil companies and governments are still trying to crack the code to large-scale extraction of these energy rich substances called gas hydrates.

Wickrema Singhe, a Houston-based engineer and project consultant to some of the world's biggest oil companies, has wrestled with the same problem. And recently, he's developed a technology he believes could provide at least part of the answer.

### [Dubai Helps Iran Evade Sanctions as Smugglers Ignore U.S. Laws](#)

(Bloomberg) -- On a sweltering mid-October evening, horns blare as pickup trucks at Dubai Creek wharf jockey to deliver cargo bound for Iran. Televisions, cartons of toothpaste, car parts, refrigerators and DVD players stretch for about a mile on the dock along the murky waterway that snakes to the Persian Gulf.

"We'll take anything as long as you pay us," says Ali, a 24-year-old Iranian deck hand in an oil-stained T-shirt, as he pulls down a blue tarpaulin covering air conditioners, tires and tea bags headed for the port of Bandar Abbas, 100 miles (160 kilometers) across the Gulf. "We've taken American stuff -- printers, computers, everything."

### [Report: Hackers spied on US oil companies](#)

Washington - Three major US oil companies came under cyber attacks that may have come from hackers in China, the Christian Science Monitor newspaper reported Monday.

Sensitive bid data on oil discoveries by Marathon Oil, ExxonMobil, and ConocoPhillips

were the target of the attack, the newspaper said citing documents and sources familiar with the investigation.

### [Total joins US shale play rush](#)

French giant Total has become the latest big-name player to enter the US' unconventional onshore play, shelling out \$2.25 billion for a 25% slice of gas player Chesapeake Energy's Barnett Shale assets.

### [Idemitsu to Cut Fuel Processing by 2% in February on Weak Demand](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Idemitsu Kosan Co., a Japanese refiner, will cut fuel processing by 2 percent in February from a year earlier because of weak domestic demand.

### [Crude Oil - Possible Scenarios Analysis](#)

Crude Oil, like many other commodities, had a volatile 2008 and 2009. Crude was trading at a record high in mid 2008 and at multi year lows in the first quarter of 2009. Since then, as the global economy stabilized from a free fall, crude oil prices have also risen steadily. This article looks into different possible scenarios that might pan out in the global economy and its possible impact on crude oil prices.

Based on past price movements, one can come to a conclusion that crude oil prices are largely a function of the following:

- The Global Demand and Supply Scenario
- The movement of the Dollar
- Geopolitical factors

### [Revisiting the 4 Horsemen of the Oil Boom](#)

Peak Oil: As stated above, it is a real phenomenon. Oil fields peak in production, and then the pressure starts to wane and production drops. Mexico's Cantarrel oil field was once one of the top 5 producing fields in the world. It's production peaked in 2003 at 2.1 million bpd (barrels per day). Due to the loss of reservoir pressure, production in January 2009 had already fallen to 770,000 bpd.

### [What oil shortage? World is swimming in it](#)

Within the next few years, Iraq is positioned to rival Saudi Arabia by bringing its oil production to 11 million barrels a day, once again proving that "peak-oil" hysteria is just another hoax, Jerome Corsi's Red Alert reports.

Scientists for the U.S. Geological Survey have also suggested Venezuela's oil reserves may double the reserves in Saudi Arabia.

"Both announcements cast further doubt on the peak-oil theory, the idea that world consumption is exhausting the earth's available supply of oil," Corsi wrote.

#### [KazMunaiGas EP 2009 Oil Output Falls 3.8% on Weather, Power Cuts](#)

(Bloomberg) -- KazMunaiGas Exploration Production, an oil unit of Kazakhstan's state energy company, said crude output declined 3.8 percent last year to 11.5 million tons (231,000 barrels per day).

"Despite severe weather conditions and disrupted power supplies, the decrease in 2009 production was kept close to planned levels," Chief Executive Officer Kenzhebek Ibrashev said in an e-mailed statement today.

#### [Baker Hughes profit plunges on weak energy demand](#)

HOUSTON (AP) -- Baker Hughes Inc. said Tuesday that its fourth-quarter profit plunged 81 percent as last year's tumble in energy prices discouraged companies from drilling for more oil.

#### [Cnooc May Join Tullow in Developing Uganda's Oil](#)

(Bloomberg) -- China National Offshore Oil Corp. is interested in teaming up with Tullow Oil Plc to help develop Uganda's energy resources, the president's office said.

Company officials from China National and Tullow held talks with President Yoweri Museveni yesterday, his office said in an e-mailed statement.

#### [Gasol's Premium to Oil Widens as Colder Weather Boosts Demand](#)

(Bloomberg) -- European gasoil's premium to Brent crude widened as colder weather drove up demand in Germany, the region's biggest market for the heating fuel.

#### [Interior to look at drilling in Atlantic Ocean](#)

WASHINGTON – Interior Secretary Ken Salazar says he is nearly ready to begin an environmental analysis that could lead to drilling in areas up to 200 miles offshore in the Atlantic Ocean.

Salazar told reporters he will soon launch a 45-day comment period on a planned study of how drilling would affect the ocean floor. He said federal officials know little about the Atlantic Coast because of a long-standing moratorium on oil and gas exploration across much of the nation's Outer Continental Shelf. Congress lifted the moratorium in 2008.

### [Greenpeace calls for a ban on Arctic oil drilling](#)

Immediate moratorium on all activity by oil and gas industries would help safeguard the local community and ecosystem as well as reduce potential carbon emissions

### [Apache Plans Forties Oilfield Output Increase, Maintenance](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Apache Corp. plans to increase production from the North Sea Forties field by 3 to 5 percent this year and will shut down platforms in August and October to carry out maintenance work, a company official said.

The field, one of about 70 that supply the benchmark Forties blend of crude, produced an average of 63,200 barrels a day in 2009, compared with 61,700 barrels a day the previous year, said James House, managing director of Apache North Sea Ltd., in a telephone interview from Aberdeen, Scotland.

### [PG&E SmartMeters likely to boost shut-offs](#)

More Pacific Gas and Electric Co. customers who fall behind on their bills will have their power shut off once the utility installs SmartMeters throughout its territory, the company predicted in a recent government filing.

The advanced, digital meters allow San Francisco's PG&E to turn service off or on without sending a crew to a customer's home. As a result, PG&E expects to shut off 85 percent of the customers eligible for disconnection in 2011, according to the company. In 2008, just 37 percent of customers eligible for disconnection actually lost service.

### [Wind-energy industry lost factory jobs despite stimulus](#)

Federal stimulus funds rescued the U.S. wind-power industry from what could have been a disastrous 2009, but it still lost highly sought-after manufacturing jobs, according to a trade association report out Tuesday.

### [Democrats study Plan B for energy, climate change](#)

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration's already dim hopes of passing sweeping energy and climate change legislation darkened further with last week's Republican victory in the special election to fill a Senate seat from Massachusetts.

Now Democratic leaders eager to cap the greenhouse gases blamed for global warming are mulling a possible Plan B: tacking “clean energy” measures onto a job-creation package and following that up with an “energy-only” bill that doesn't contain a specific plan for combating climate change.

### [Uranium Supply Imbalance to Drive M&As as Asia Builds Reactors](#)

(Bloomberg) -- International mergers and acquisitions to gain access to uranium mines are set to rise as countries seek to strengthen fuel security to power new nuclear reactors, Nomura International said in a report.

“The key feature of worldwide uranium resource distribution is that a couple of countries own most of the world’s uranium resources,” Nomura International (HK) Ltd. analyst Ivan Lee said in a report yesterday. “Some countries with a large amount of nuclear power capacity are not endowed with rich uranium resources.”

### [Indonesia cuts capacity of planned geothermal plants](#)

JAKARTA (Reuters) - Indonesia has cut the planned capacity of geothermal power plants it will start building this year by 18 percent to 3,900 megawatts (MW), an official at the mines and energy ministry said on Tuesday.

### [U.S. Geothermal Energy Capacity Expected to Triple in 5 Years](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Electricity-generation capacity from geothermal energy in the U.S. is expected to triple within five years, buoyed by government stimulus spending, the Geothermal Energy Association said.

More than 6,400 megawatts of geothermal capacity is under development to add to 3,153 megawatts that’s already built, the Washington-based association said in an e-mailed statement.

### [Company says its ethanol engine is more fuel-efficient](#)

VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP, Mich. — Ricardo Inc. says it has done what many thought



impossible: design an ethanol-burning engine with better fuel economy than a traditional gas engine.

### [Sweden: Volvo to start methane-diesel tests in February](#)

Volvo Trucks has confirmed that it will launch field tests of methane-diesel engines in February. Several Swedish customers will test the eco-friendly technology in commercial operation, using 7-litre models of the Volvo FL and Volvo FE. The engines in the trucks have been converted for gas operation, with special tanks added for pressurised methane gas (CNG/CBG). A separate fuel system has also been added with gas injectors in the inlet manifold.

### [Plug-In Electric Cars Can Lower Global Warming Emissions, Oil Consumption and Unhealthy Air Pollution](#)

"We're on the cusp of an historic shift in the way we use energy for transportation," said Jim Burke, CEO, TXU Energy. "Increasing the use of electric vehicles is vitally important for Texas, for our community, and for our customers - so it's vitally important to us as well. We are working to help lead this shift, including developing time-of-use rates that will help our customers benefit from cheaper night time charging."

"The current electric system has the capacity to fuel up to 73 percent of American vehicles without building another power plant by charging vehicles at night or using solar panels by day," said McCall Johnson, Clean Energy Advocate, Environment Texas. "However, the nation will need to clean up its electric grid to reap the full environmental potential benefits of plug-in cars."

### [Solar Spending in Germany May Suffer With Power Cuts](#)

(Bloomberg) -- Q-Cells SE, Solarworld AG and competing solar-energy companies face a dimmer outlook for investment and jobs as the German government considers cutting subsidized power prices.

Lower rates may reduce profit for panel makers and strip Germany of its title as the largest market for photovoltaic panels, said Karl Kuhlmann, chief executive officer of S.A.G. Solarstrom AG, a builder and operator of solar power plants.

### [Cape Wind's fate unclear, even in Obama's hands](#)

(AP) -- After eight years of review, the future of a controversial wind farm off Cape Cod now rests in what would seem to be friendly hands - an Obama administration that's pledged to make the U.S. "the world's leading exporter of clean energy."

But it's tough to tell if Cape Wind's prospects just got better or worse.

### [Smart Windows: Energy Efficiency with a View](#)

(PhysOrg.com) -- Buildings consume 40 percent of our nation's energy. NREL is testing and researching electrochromic windows that could knock that back significantly.

Imagine wrapping a giant pair of Wayfarers or Aviators around your house on a sunny day. Wouldn't that be cool?

### [Handmade is the new black](#)

Like many parents, when Joe and Amy Sharp of Columbus, Ohio, had their first son years ago, they soon found themselves "disgusted" by constant recalls of his cheap plastic toys. Unlike most parents, though, Joe, a carpenter, did something about it. He began making simple wooden rattles and blocks, discovering, says Amy, that "kids like using their imaginations if parents will let them." Friends clamored for the toys, too. And so, when the Sharps faced two mortgages after an investment property failed to sell, they wanted to turn this hobby into cash.

### [Sequestration plant study goes public](#)

GREEN RIVER -- Federal officials on Monday released their draft environmental study for a pioneering carbon sequestration project proposed for western Wyoming that could boost the state's burgeoning underground CO<sub>2</sub> storage industry.

### [Sweet future: Fluctuating blood glucose levels may affect decision making](#)

Would you choose to receive a small amount of money today or a larger sum next month? We know that it is worth it to wait longer for a larger reward, but sometimes the temptation for the smaller, immediate reward becomes too great and we simply cannot resist it. Selecting the immediate reward is known as "future discounting" and often suggests a lack of self-control.

### [10 big questions on climate change answered](#)

WeatherWatch weather analyst Philip Duncan's blogs on climate change have attracted a lot of reader interest. He took readers' 10 most commonly asked questions and put them to Dr James Renwick, Principal Scientist, Climate Variability & Change at Niwa.

## [Methane Causes Vicious Cycle In Global Warming](#)

Carbon dioxide is the gas we most associate with global warming, but methane gas also plays an important role. For reasons that are not well understood, methane gas stopped increasing in the atmosphere in the 1990s. But now it appears to be once again on the rise. Scientists are trying to understand why — and what to do about it.



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