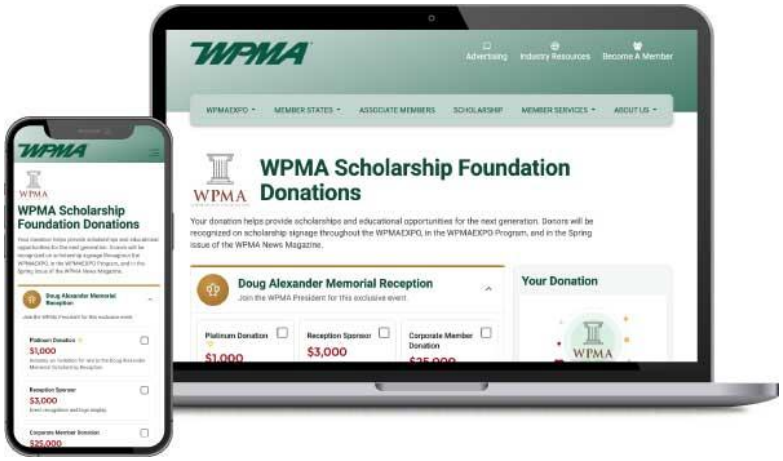
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The following information provided by:
EMA-Energy Marketers of America

Inside the Beltway Update

The 2026 midterm elections brought significant change to both the House and Senate. While not every race has been called, Democrats took control of both chambers. In the House, Democrats gained 24 seats, pushing the party well beyond the 218-seat threshold. Notably, Democrats are on track to amass the largest majority since 2008. In the Senate, Democrats flipped seven seats, including Iowa, Kansas, Maine, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and Texas. The Mississippi and Alaska Senate races have yet to be finalized but may increase Democrats' control. At a minimum, Democrats will have an eight-seat majority in the Senate, outperforming the initial polling data. Many districts and states that heavily supported President Trump in 2024 voted for Democrats in the 2026 election.

As for the lame duck session, it is still up in the air on what Congress can get done before the end of the year. Lawmakers face hard deadlines on government funding (December 11) and expiring farm and surface transportation authorities (December 31), so some form of stopgap funding and short-term extensions is likely, along with a strong push to clear the annual defense authorization bill. A farm-bill compromise on SNAP cost-sharing that unlocks year-round E15 remains possible if both sides cut a deal, but broader priorities—including a debt-ceiling increase or permitting reform—face a compressed calendar, leadership flux, and the realities of an outgoing majority. A second surface transportation extension is expected. Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA), who is seeking the top spot on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, aims to complete the full surface transportation reauthorization bill in early 2027. Also looming is the federal ban on hemp, which is set to take full effect on December 11, lawmakers could still delay it further or swap in a regulatory framework as part of the funding package.

With Democrats in control of Congress, House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) is on track to become speaker, and Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) will likely become Senate majority leader. According to Leader Jeffries, Democrats plan to focus on reversing Medicaid cuts, stopping the Trump tariffs, and ending the Iran War in their first few weeks in the majority. Leader Jeffries added that Congress' top priority should be reaching a spending agreement that meets the needs of the American people. Meanwhile, Republican leadership is in flux after Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) announced he would not run for leadership. Current House Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) and House Judiciary Chair Jim Jordan (R-OH) have both launched their bids for minority leader.

This week, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced that it awarded contracts to four firms to supply heating oil from the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve. The announcement comes after Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), who called for a heating oil release, lost her reelection bid to Democrat Troy Jackson. About 300,000 barrels, roughly one-third of the reserve's stockpile, will be distributed by the end of the week. DOE stated that the companies receiving the fuel will need to return it with interest before next winter. The reserve was last tapped after Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

Additionally, a group of Senate Republicans led by Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) asked a federal appeals court to overturn a ruling that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) improperly sent vehicle emissions rules to Congress for potential repeal. The EPA had previously granted California waivers under the Clean Air Act to set its own vehicle emissions standards. The EPA submitted these waivers to Congress for repeal in June, but a federal district court judge ruled the action was unlawful.

Looking ahead, divided government is returning to Washington. The 120th Congress will likely be marked by congressional investigations and partisanship as both parties look toward the 2028 presidential election. The shift in power will have broad implications for major policy issues, including affordability, energy, and investment in emerging technologies.

CDL Drivers Should Apply Early for HME Renewals to Avoid Loss of Operating Authority

Drivers seeking to renew or obtain a hazardous materials endorsement (HME) must undergo a Transportation Security Administration (TSA) security threat assessment, which includes background checks and fingerprinting. The HME must be renewed every 5 years. While the process typically takes 45 days, TSA can experience elevated demand for HME renewals and new enrollments, causing processing times to exceed that standard window. Thus, TSA recommends that all applicants enroll for the HME assessment a minimum of 60 days before applicants require an eligibility determination. Drivers who apply outside the suggested window risk a temporary loss of authority to haul fuels regulated as hazardous materials.

HME Application Process

Drivers may apply online or in person at the nearest TSA application center. Appointments can be scheduled online or by calling (855) 347-8371, weekdays 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments take priority.

When applying in person, drivers must:

- Provide required documentation and fingerprints.
- Present a current U.S. passport or a driver’s license and birth certificate (other acceptable documents are listed on TSA’s website).
- Pay a non-refundable fee by credit card, money order, company check, or certified/cashier’s check. The fee is valid for five years:
    - $88.25 for new and renewing applicants
    - $41.00 for applicants who already hold a valid TWIC card and are licensed in a state that accepts the TWIC threat assessment in lieu of the HME assessment.

Drivers may check their application status online at any time.

Cybersecurity Advisory for Commercial Refrigeration and Cold Chain Systems

EMA is sharing a cybersecurity advisory issued on 11-05-26 by DHS CISA and its federal partners regarding cyber threats targeting industrial refrigeration and cold chain monitoring systems.

Recent cyber incidents involving commercial refrigeration systems have been reported in several European countries, resulting in disruptions to refrigeration operations and potential inventory losses. Similar incidents in the United States are also being investigated as possible cyberattacks.

Cyber actors are targeting refrigeration controllers used in grocery stores, cold storage facilities, and other businesses that rely on temperature-controlled storage. These attacks could allow unauthorized users to remotely change temperatures or force refrigeration units into defrost cycles, potentially resulting in spoiled inventory, equipment damage, and operational disruptions.

The advisory recommends several measures to reduce these risks, including:

- Removing unnecessary internet access to refrigeration control systems.

- Changing default passwords and strengthening authentication.
- Updating software and firmware to address known vulnerabilities.
- Securing remote access and monitoring systems for unusual activity.

Although incidents have been confirmed overseas, the vulnerabilities could also affect businesses and critical infrastructure throughout the United States, particularly within the food and transportation sectors. Please review the following CISA Advisory which includes the specific ways to mitigate the likelihood of being attacked.

Click here for the CISA Advisory.

Reviewing Your Risk Management Culture
Thursday, November 19, 2026, 2:00 PM ET

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What you will learn:

- The benefits of strong leadership and setting an example from the top down.
- Why a risk management culture can help shape initiatives, goals, and well-being.
- How culture can shape employee decisions and actions.
- What makes a risk management program effective and how to implement these practices at your workplace.

Anyone can view and join.

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For additional information or to discuss this in further detail, please contact your **Federated** regional representative or EMA's National Account Executive **Jack West** at **507.455.5175** for any additional information or risk management questions.

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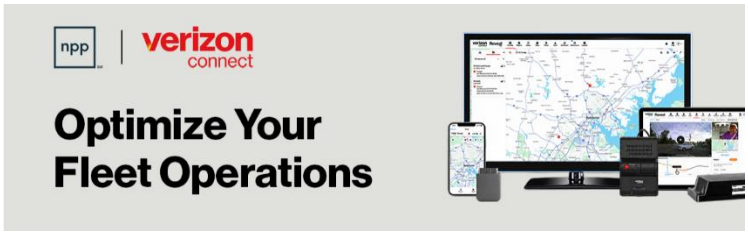
December 3, 2026 WOMA Holiday Party, Lucky Strike Bowling, Bellevue, WA
December 9, 2026 OFA Holiday Party, Waverley Country Club, Portland, OR
February 16-18, 2027 WPMAEXPO, MGM Grand, Las Vegas, NV

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