

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

March 27, 2006

PEC -- Restore \$100 Million in Cuts/Diversions from Environmental Programs



Pennsylvania
Environmental
Council

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council this week urged the Senate, House and Rendell Administration to listen to voters who passed the Growing Greener bond issue last year and restore more than \$100 million in funding proposed to be diverted or cut from key environmental programs in the 2006-07 budget.

“An overwhelming 61 percent of voters supported the bond issue last May sending a very direct and clear message that they support additional funding for watershed and habitat improvement, reducing nutrient runoff from farms, sewer and water system upgrades and farmland preservation,” said Brian J. Hill, Interim President and CEO of the Council. “Base funding for the very programs that the voters supported now face a reduction in next year’s budget because of diversions of \$30 million out of the Environmental Stewardship Fund and \$63 million out of the Keystone Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund.”

“The choice to reduce environmental funding this year not only collides with the very clear message from voters, but also with Pennsylvania’s obligations to clean up the 10,762 miles of streams that do not meet water quality standards, including 4,036 miles polluted by acid mine drainage,” said Hill.

The proposed 2006-07 budget diverts or cuts funding for half a dozen key environmental programs—

- \$30 million is diverted away from supporting the original Growing Greener Program— watershed restoration, mine reclamation, farmland preservation and sewer/water grants— to Hazardous Sites Cleanup, an environmental program that ran out of funding in June of 2005;
- \$63 million is diverted from the Keystone Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund, which supports open space preservation, recreation and State Park maintenance projects, to help balance the budget; and
- Funding for county conservation districts, environmental education, water quality monitoring, reducing nutrients from farms were all cut significantly or zeroed out.

The proposed cuts would also hurt the efforts of local watershed groups to restore and protect water quality and cleanup abandoned mine drainage.

Since 1999 over 400 local watershed groups and communities reclaimed over 5,000 acres of abandoned mines, planted 1,000 miles of stream buffers, created or restored over 3,000 acres of wetlands and much more.

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For every \$1 invested by the state, watershed groups matched it with \$1.25 of their own more than doubling the state's investment.

This record of accomplishment by watershed groups was recently confirmed in a study by the [Center for Rural Pennsylvania](#) which said “watershed groups- empower local residents, develop local leaders, provide examples of successful community organizations, compliment other state and local environmental programs, get results, play an essential role in promoting the environment, and act as environmental advocates.”

Hill also noted the Commonwealth will receive over \$946 million in new tax revenues during the 2006-07 budget year not earmarked for any purpose.

The Council is urging the Senate, House and Rendell Administration to—

- Restore \$30 million in funding for basic environmental programs in the Environmental Stewardship Fund and prevent diversions from this Fund in the future;
- Take steps in law to prevent the Keystone Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund from being used to balance the budget and ensure funding continues at the same historic levels; and
- Develop a dedicated funding source for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup and Nutrient Management Programs that are due to run out of funding and for restoring habitats for game and non-game species.

“We took two steps forward to address environmental funding issues with the passage of the Growing Greener II bond issue last year, let's not take a step back from our commitment to cleaning up the environment this year by reducing environmental funding in the budget,” urged Hill.

“The Pennsylvania Environmental Council stands ready to assist members of the Senate and House and the Governor in addressing these funding challenges by providing additional information from our professional staff, bringing stakeholders together and working with you on specific legislative proposals,” said Hill.

The Council urged concerned citizens to contact their House and Senate member and call Gov. Rendell's 1-800-932-0784 hotline or [send the Governor an email](#) or by finding your House or Senate member by going to: <http://www.legis.state.pa.us> (see box in upper right).

For more information and a sample letter you can send, visit the “Stop the Diversions” webpage at the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council website](#).

Links: [Rendell Proposes \\$100 Million Environmental Funding Shifts, Reductions](#)
[Groups Concerned About State Environmental Funding, Federal Cuts Hurt States Appropriations Committees Hear of Environmental Funding “Challenges”](#)

Session Schedule

The Senate returns to session the week of March 27 and the House returns April 3.

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Feature

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NEW - Watershed Awareness Month Activities

[Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

On the Hill

On the Senate, House Agenda

The Senate is in session the week of March 27 and the House April 3. Here’s the rundown of what’s on the calendars and in committees—

Calendars

The Senate will have this item on their Calendar March 27-- [Senate Bill 1063](#) providing additional funding to expand the PA Small Business Development Centers.

The House will start April 3 with this bill of interest on its Calendar-- [House Bill 2067](#) setting limits on state spending through a constitutional amendment.

Committees

In the House, the House Consumer Affairs & Health and Human Services Committees will hold a joint informational meeting on Low Income Energy Assistance Programs (LIHEAP) and customer assistance programs; and the Consumer Affairs Committee has an informational meeting on [House Bill 2257](#) providing retirement credit for certain mine inspectors.

In the Senate, Senate Appropriations Committee meets to consider [House Bill 2317](#) 2005-2006 Capital Budget for flood control, Keystone Recreation, Environmental Stewardship projects.

Senate/House Bills Moving/Introduced

Legislation on ecoterrorism and shutting off water to customers moved in the Senate this week and several new bills were introduced. Here's the rundown.

Ecoterrorism: [House Bill 213](#) (Godshall-R-Montgomery) establishing penalties for ecoterrorism passed the Senate and is returned to the House for a concurrence vote.

Shutting Off Water: [House Bill 893](#) (Semmel-R-Berks) changing procedures for shutting off water for nonpayment of sewage bills was passed by the Senate and returns to the House for a concurrence vote.

Bills Introduced

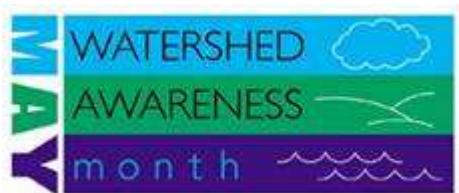
E-Waste Recycling: [Senate Bill 1122](#) (C.Williams-D-Montgomery) establishing the Computer and Electronic Equipment Disposal and Recycling Act to ban the disposal of e-waste in landfills beginning January 1, 2008.

Cell Phone Recycling: [Senate Bill 1124](#) (C.Williams-D-Montgomery) creating the Cell Phone Recycling Act requiring retailers of cell phone to accept cell phones for recycling.

Mine Inspector Service: [House Bill 2257](#) (Haluska-D-Cambria) providing retirement credit for certain mine inspectors in state service.

In Other News

May is Watershed Awareness Month, Celebrate “The Power of Positive Action”



Watershed Awareness Month is coming up in May and it's a great time to celebrate your accomplishments in restoring and protecting your watershed!

This is also a great opportunity to educate key decision-makers on how important watershed

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groups are to improving water quality all over the state.

Remember, inviting members of the Senate and House to your events, sending them your newsletters and keeping them updated on your accomplishments will go a long way as a reminder of the good work watershed groups do.

Consider these facts—

- Since 1999 over 400 local watershed groups reclaimed over 5,000 acres of abandoned mines, planted 1,000 miles of stream buffers, created or restored over 3,000 acres of wetlands and much more;
- For every \$1 invested by the state, watershed groups match it with \$1.25 of their own, more than doubling the state's investment;
- Over 11,000 volunteers, including the PA Senior Environment Corps, are actively involved in water quality sampling across the state;
- Over 450 watershed association members, local government partners, nonprofit groups, environmental agency staff, businesses and other professionals assembled at the Coldwater Conference and the Schuylkill Watershed Congress in February and over 800 people took part in the Ohio River Watershed Cruise last Fall to share successful watershed protection strategies; and
- A recent study by [The Center for Rural Pennsylvania](#) found that watershed groups: empower local residents, develop local leaders, provide examples of successful community organizations, compliment other state and local environmental programs, get results, play an essential role in promoting the environment, and act as environmental advocates.

Much has been accomplished, but lots is left to do. Over 10,762 miles of Pennsylvania's streams are still so polluted they don't meet water quality standards.

Here at *PA Environment Digest*, we would like to put the spotlight on activities for Watershed Awareness Month by publicizing your events.

If you have tours, education programs, buffer planting parties, cleanups or other activities going on in and around Watershed Awareness Month, send them to:

DHess@HolstonCrisci.com.

Attendance Nearly Doubles for the Second PA No-Till Alliance Conference



(from L to R) Grant Troop (Lancaster), Preston Boop (Union), Mike Ohler (Venango), Jeff Frey (Lancaster), Robert Buhl (Erie), Jim Hershey (Lancaster), Leroy Bupp (York), Gary Long (Blair), Karl Kroeck (Tioga), Russell McLucas (Fulton) and William Cannon (Mercer).

Over 135 farmers, farm business representatives, conservation district staff, farm organizations, as well as supporting agencies attended the second Pennsylvania No-Till Alliance Conference in State College March 15.

Despite icy roads, participants came from all over Pennsylvania and neighboring states to hear nationally recognized authorities speak about continuous no-till agricultural practices.

The successful daylong event began with a presentation by Dr. Don Reicosky, a soil scientist at USDA-ARS, North Central Soil Conservation Research Lab. His presentation focused on the how no-till systems can be designed to use the soil carbon

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dynamics that affect plant nutrient availability, water holding capacity, water infiltration and other agro-ecosystem processes.

The most up-to-date weed management information for continuous no-till systems was discussed by the second speaker, Dr. William Curran of Penn State University.

The speaker presentations were followed by break-out sessions on No-Till Forages presented by Dr. Les Vough of the University of Maryland, and Steps to a Successful No-Till Transition presented by Joel Myers USDA/NRCS State Agronomist.

A panel presentation by the Board of Directors of the PA No-Till Alliance, entitled "Forty tips in 20 minutes," allowed these successful no-till farmers to share the secrets of their success to an eager audience that asked many practical questions.

The PA No-Till Alliance is an organization that provides farmer-to-farmer support for beginning and experienced no-till farmers, with a goal of bringing together individuals interested in the multiple benefits of no-till crop production: improved soil, water and air quality as well as fuel and time savings.

Its overall mission is to promote the successful application of no-till through shared ideas, experiences, education and new technology. In its first year of existence, Alliance members have already begun to serve as a network for farmers interested in no-till practices.

Continuous No-Till production was recently approved, by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Bay Program, as an agricultural best management practice. The formation of the PA No-Till Alliance has been the result of a collaborative effort between farmers, USDA-NRCS, Department of Agriculture, Department of Environmental Protection, Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State Cooperative Extension, PA Association of RC&D Councils, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and PennAg Industries Association, Inc.

For additional information or to join the PA No-Till Alliance, contact the Capital Resource Conservation and Development Area Council office at 717-948-6633 or email Susan Parry at: susan.parry@pa.usda.gov .

Manure Hauler and Broker Training Sessions Announced for May

The Department of Agriculture this week announced manure haulers and brokers will have more opportunities for training in May

The department, in cooperation with Penn State's Cooperative Extension Service, has already hosted seven training sessions. Additional sessions for individuals seeking certification as a Commercial Hauler 3 or Broker 1 or 2 will be offered—

- May 9 at the Dauphin County Ag Center, 1451 Peters Mountain Rd, Dauphin; and,
- May 11 at the Centre County Solid Waste Authority, 253 Transfer Road, Bellefonte.

Each session will run from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The sessions are free, but registration is required.

The Commercial Manure Hauler and Broker Certification Law (Act 49 of 2004) took effect February 26 and requires owners and employees of commercial haulers or brokers to be certified by the Department of Agriculture.

People seeking certification as a Commercial Hauler 1 or 2 are not required to take the classroom training and may be certified via worksheet or workbook, respectively. Materials are available online or by contacting the department.

To register, or for more information on [Commercial Manure Hauler and Broker Certification Act](#) regulations and training, contact the Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry at 717-787-3568 or 717-772-5218.

Comments Requested on TMDLs for 3 Indiana County Watersheds

The Department of Environmental Protection has [invited public comments](#) on proposed Total Maximum Daily Load Plans (TMDLs) for three Indiana County watersheds.

The watersheds are: Ferrier Run, Penn Run and Tearing Run.

Comments are due May 15.

The proposed TMDLs are posted on DEP's TMDL webpage or contact Tim Kania, 814-472-1900 or send email to: tkania@state.pa.us for more information.

Note: This notice included information on a March 16 public meeting to accept comments, but it was published in the PA Bulletin after the meeting took place.

Lycoming Researcher Receives Grant to Study Hellbenders

They are ugly and prehistoric-looking, but the eastern "hellbender" salamander may be a harbinger of the health of the Susquehanna River basin.

Peter Petokas, a research biologist with the [Clean Water Institute at Lycoming College](#), has received a \$49,000 grant from the Fish and Boat Commission to study this giant salamander that is only found in the drainage areas of the Allegheny, Ohio, and Susquehanna Rivers.



Game Commission Photo

The hellbender—also known as the waterdog, mud devil, mudpuppy and Allegheny alligator—is the largest salamander in North America, growing to a length of 27 inches.

Petokas will use the grant money for a two-year project that will identify areas in the streams where hellbender populations occur; assess these habitats; establish long-term monitoring of hellbender populations; and compile comprehensive, detailed, and meaningful information useful in the development of a hellbender management and conservation plan for the Susquehanna River West Branch watershed, and potentially for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

"What we learn about species like hellbenders...is important in itself, but expanding our knowledge about these animals can have larger implications for humans as well," said PFBC Executive Director Dr. Doug Austen in a press release. "Many animals are sensitive to changes in habitat, water and air quality, and thus can be good indicators of environmental health. The condition of fish and wildlife populations is often an early indicator of pollution that affects us all."

Hellbenders may have existed for millions of years. They are thought to live from 20 to 30 years but these shy and secretive salamanders are very difficult to spot.

Petokas has been interested in the hellbender for a long time. He and Lycoming College graduate Jim Rogers have conducted informal research on hellbenders over the past two years – locating areas where hellbenders occur and their preferred habitat in North-Central Pennsylvania streams.

With the \$49,000 grant, they can formalize the research. "For Lycoming students, this is an incredible opportunity to do original research and discover a river native that few people have heard of," said Dr. Mel Zimmerman, Director of the Clean Water Institute.

NewsClip: [Hellbenders-Prehistoric Creatures Living in PA](#)

Fish Commission Undertakes Statewide Study of Stocked Fish Movement

Trout swim. That's obvious, but just how far trout swim and when they may move from stocking points is the focus of a study this spring by the Fish and Boat Commission.

Starting this week though April 14-- the day before the start of the 2006 Pennsylvania trout season -- Commission biologists across the state will monitor stocked stream sections across the Commonwealth.

Biologists will electrofish as many as 140 different stream sections at least 10 days after each is stocked. Electrofishing is a common fisheries survey process which passes a mild electric current through water, drawing in fish so that they can be evaluated. The total number of study sites will be determined by stream conditions, but the PFBC hopes to survey as many as 140 different locations.

Study objectives are to determine how widespread stocked trout movement is in Pennsylvania in early spring and to determine what may cause stocked trout to move great distances from their release point.

The study is a follow-up to a small project the PFBC conducted last spring in northeastern Pennsylvania that produced some surprising results. The 2005 study involved radio telemetry, tagging, electrofishing, and creel survey work on [Wysox Creek](#) in Bradford County and [Tunkhannock Creek](#) in Susquehanna County. That work generally confirmed angler complaints of trout movement on these streams.

Most of the radio-tagged trout left their stocking points before the season started. Rainbow trout tended to leave their stocking points after three days, brown trout after seven, and brook trout after ten.

Astonishingly, one of the radio-tagged rainbow trout stocked in Wysox Creek was found 123 miles from its stocking point 16 days after it was released. The Tunkhannock Creek rainbow trout stayed closer to the stocking point. Of the study fish, the farthest any traveled was 12.6 miles. Conversely, one of the study fish stayed at the stocking location for 14 days before moving about one-half mile.

The 2005 study didn't pinpoint the causes for fish movement, but it certainly suggested additional examination was warranted. Understanding more about the movement of stocked trout is important to the PFBC as it may have ramifications as to when and how streams are stocked.

For example: based on the study results from last year, in 2006 stocking schedules have been revised on some northeast Pennsylvania streams so that they will be stocked as close to opening day as possible.

Tunkhannock Creek will be stocked on April 4 and Wysox Creek will be stocked on April 14. Further, some streams in northeast Pennsylvania will not receive rainbow trout in their preseason stockings.

Teacher Education Workshops on Wetlands, Creating Outdoor Classrooms Set

The [John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge](#) in Philadelphia will host two wetlands workshops on April 7 and 8 for teachers.

On April 7 there will be The Wonders of Wetlands workshop will be held to teach participants how to host their own WOW workshops and get valuable, hands-on experience in teaching.

A Planning of Wetlands Outdoor Classroom workshop will be held April 8 to teach participants how to create a wetland habitat that will serve as a classroom to learn science, math, engineering, social studies and more.

For more information, or to register, contact Sarah Toman 410-745-9620 send email to: pow@wetland.org or visit the [Wetlands Education website](#).

\$100 Million in Clean Water Grants Awarded by PENNVEST

The [Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority](#) this week approved more than \$100 million to clean up state waterways and improve wastewater and sewage facilities in 23 counties.

\$32.6 million of the funds will be used to support the installation of nutrient-reduction technology in wastewater treatment plants. This technology removes nitrogen and phosphorus from treatment plant emissions, a critical step in improving water quality in many streams, as well as the Chesapeake Bay.

More than \$51 million dollars will also be used for Combined Sewer Overflow and Sanitary Sewer Overflow. Combined Sewer Overflows combine sanitary and storm sewer drainage in common pipes and carries the total flow to sewage treatment plants. Sanitary Sewer Overflows, on the other hand, involve sanitary sewer systems with old pipes that are not water-tight, allowing storm water to enter the system and be carried to the treatment plant.

The PENNVEST Board also approved four drinking water projects for \$3.2 million during the meeting. This brought the total funding for this meeting to \$105.1 million, of which \$54.3 million was in the form of low interest loans and \$50.8 million was in grant funding.

Examples of project include:

- Cumberland/Franklin Counties: Shippensburg Borough Authority received a \$2,373,500 loan and a \$2,626,500 grant to install nutrient-reduction technology to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous discharges into the receiving stream;
- Fulton County: Hustontown Joint Sewage Authority received a \$636,646 loan and a \$704,509 grant to construct a new interceptor line and make modifications to the treatment plant to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous emissions into the receiving stream;
- Lancaster County: Salisbury Township received a \$1,898,800 loan and a \$2,101,200 grant to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant that serves Salisbury and Sadsbury townships with nutrient-reduction technology, which will reduce nitrogen and phosphorous emissions into the receiving stream;
- Luzerne County: Greater Hazelton – CANDU received a \$2,943,140 loan and a \$3,256,860 grant to upgrade and expand its sewage treatment plant with nutrient-

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reduction technology to eliminate the discharge of nitrogen and phosphorous into the receiving stream. The system serves 80 companies in the 5,000-employee Humboldt Industrial Park;

- Mountaintop Area Joint Sanitary Authority received a \$2,472,238 loan and a \$2,735,762 grant to convert the plant's treatment process to tertiary level to improve the quality of the discharge and reduce nitrogen and phosphorous discharges into the receiving stream;
- Schuylkill County: Pine Grove Joint Treatment Authority received a \$94,940 loan and a \$105,060 grant to install nutrient-reduction technology and reduce nitrogen and phosphorous emissions for the authority's treatment plant; and
- York County: Stewartstown Borough Authority received a \$392,838 loan and a \$434,712 grant to upgrade and expand the sewage treatment plant and improve the quality of the plant's discharges, as well as reduce nitrogen and phosphorous emissions from the plant.

[A complete list of projects is available online.](#)

Putting Conservation Into Local Codes Workshop May 4

Local officials, planning commission members and interested citizens are invited to a "Putting Conservation into Local Codes" workshop in Harrison City, Westmoreland County on May 4.

The program will give participants practical information on how to do conservation zoning and subdivision under the [Growing Greener by Design handbook](#) developed by the Natural Lands Trust and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

For a [registration form](#) and other information, visit the [Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County website](#).

Three PA Companies Honored for Energy Conservation by EPA

The U.S. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Agency honored 67 businesses, groups, and government entities this week for their accomplishments and leadership in the [Energy Star program](#), including three Pennsylvania companies.

Pennsylvania organizations honored were Pittsburgh-based supermarket chain Giant Eagle Inc., Indiana-based window and door manufacturer Gorell Enterprises Inc., both in the Sustained Excellence category, and Malvern-based supermarket chain Acme Markets Inc. for Excellence in ENERGY STAR Outreach.

Top national awardees included the Whirlpool Corp., General Electric Co., Osram Sylvania, Gorell Windows and Doors, Precision Entry Inc., The Home Depot, the Maytag Corp., Lowe's Corp., the Sierra Pacific Power Co., and Sears, Roebuck and Co.

Visit the [ENERGY STAR website](#) for the full list of awardees.

PECO WIND Ranked Top 10 by U.S. Department of Energy

The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory recently ranked [PECO WIND](#) in the top ten green power programs based on total number of customers.

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More than 600 utilities across the United States now offer voluntary programs allowing customers to choose electricity generated from renewable resources such as wind and solar.

"We are so pleased with the Department of Energy's ranking and recognition of PECO WIND," said Denis O'Brien, president of PECO. "We believe in providing our customers with many choices, including a choice in how their electricity is generated. We, along with the tens of thousands of customers who have chosen PECO WIND, understand the importance of investing in electricity generated by alternate methods."

More than 24,000 customers have chosen to purchase PECO WIND, placing it seventh on the DOE's list. Since its launch in May 2004, PECO WIND has become one of the largest and fastest growing green power programs in the country. The environmental benefit is the same as planting about 5.3 million trees or not driving 68 million miles.

Provided through a partnership with wind energy marketer Community Energy, Inc., PECO WIND is a clean, environmentally friendly wind power option for customers.

Brent Alderfer, president of [Community Energy, Inc.](#), PECO's wind energy supply partner, said: "We applaud the success of this program and the enthusiasm of PECO customers. The PECO WIND program leads the field in so many ways, it's not surprising to see it move up the charts on the Department of Energy's top 10 programs. PECO and its customers have put Pennsylvania in the lead on new, clean wind generation."

The first wind energy product offered by a utility in Pennsylvania, PECO WIND is available to PECO's residential and business customers in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia and York counties and is supplied by a new wind power facility in Waymart, PA, near the Poconos.

PECO WIND is offered to residential customers in 100-kilowatt hour (kWh) blocks for an additional monthly fee of about \$2.50 per block, added directly to customers' monthly PECO bill.

For more information about PECO WIND or to sign up, customers can call 1-866-WIND-321 or visit the [PECO WIND website](#).

Pennsylvania Partners with ENERGY STAR to Promote Efficiency in Schools

Gov. Rendell this week said Pennsylvania is partnering with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program to significantly improve the energy efficiency of school buildings, especially existing buildings and additions.

The state departments of Environmental Protection and Education, along with EPA, are urging Pennsylvania school districts to commit themselves to improving their energy efficiency through ENERGY STAR, a federal program helping schools, businesses and consumers protect the environment through superior energy efficiency.

ENERGY STAR offers free Web tools and resources for identifying energy reduction opportunities and developing energy management strategies. Schools that improve their energy efficiency may qualify to earn the ENERGY STAR building label based on EPA's Energy Performance Rating System.

Currently, Pennsylvania has 73 ENERGY STAR-qualified buildings, including 12 school buildings, and the state's ENERGY STAR buildings represent approximately 10 million square feet of space. They save an estimated \$32 million annually in energy bills, while meeting industry standards for indoor air quality. The buildings also prevent 122

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million pounds of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to the emissions from more than 37,000 vehicles.

Pennsylvania's green building program has invested significant resources through increased reimbursements to school districts as incentives to build or renovate schools at the silver, gold and platinum levels of the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating system. Planning grants have been used to facilitate the transition to more energy-efficient buildings.

As a starting point in the energy management process, ENERGY STAR's portfolio manager can benchmark and track energy consumption in all of a district's buildings. The Web tool can show monthly savings by improving energy performance. It can also track cost savings, energy-use reductions and environmental impacts after building upgrades are made.

School facility managers interested in making their schools more energy efficient and earning the ENERGY STAR rating should contact Mark Hand, DEP's Energy Star program manager at 717-787-9377, or Mindee Osno, EPA's regional ENERGY STAR program manager at 215-814-2074.

In addition, EPA announced this week that The Philadelphia Lighting Maintenance Company has joined EPA's Energy Star program as a service and product provider and will use the Energy Star free tools and resources to help bring value to customers and sales advantage to its organization.

PLMC will be able to educate its customers about Energy Star with programs like "Portfolio Manager," a free, web-based bench marketing tool.

For more information, visit DEP's [Green Buildings webpage](#) or the [ENERGY STAR® K-12 Schools webpage](#).

EPA Invests in Clean Indoor Air and Safer Schools

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced initiatives in Lebanon, Erie, Warren and Crawford counties to make schools safer and healthier.

The Eastern Lebanon County School District has joined [EPA's Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools](#) (TfS) program to improve indoor air quality problems in its buildings.

EPA Region 3 staff from Philadelphia will help address the problems through training, presentations and walk-through evaluations. EPA will also use the EPA Integrated Pest Management program that eliminates and discourages pests in buildings, using less toxics, chemical use and storage space.

EPA Region 3 is also promoting its [Safer Schools Initiative](#) in schools in and around Erie to help the schools safely dispose of excess laboratory chemicals. EPA will provide training in inventory reduction and waste minimization, and help school staff identify old and unused chemicals in school laboratories that present health and safety hazards.

Thirty-six schools in the tri-county area of Erie, Warren and Crawford Counties, are learning to inventory chemistry and science classrooms and to safely dispose of outdated and hazardous materials. Four schools chose to adopt the micro-scale chemistry educational option where much smaller quantities of materials are used in experiments.

For more information, visit [EPA's Children's Health webpage](#).

BP, DuPont Get Top Scores in First-Ever Ranking of Climate Change Strategies

After years of inaction, a growing number of leading U.S. companies are confronting the business challenges from global warming, recognizing that greenhouse gas limits are inevitable and that they cannot risk falling behind their international competitors in developing climate-friendly technologies.

Some U.S. companies, such as General Electric, are catching up and joining DuPont and Alcoa in leading their industries. But many others are still largely ignoring the climate issue with "business as usual" strategies that may be putting their companies and shareholders at risk.

These are among the key findings of a [first-ever report issued this week](#) by the Ceres investor coalition that analyzes how 100 leading companies are addressing the growing financial risks and opportunities from climate change -- whether from expanding greenhouse gas regulations, direct physical impacts or surging demand for climate-friendly technologies.

BP and DuPont came out #1 and #2 in the rankings.

Altogether, 76 U.S. companies and 24 non-U.S. companies in 10 business sectors are profiled in the report.

The report uses a "Climate Governance Checklist" to evaluate how major industrial corporations are addressing climate change in five broad areas: board oversight, management performance, public disclosure, greenhouse gas emissions accounting and strategic planning.

The report took nine months to complete and uses data from securities filings, company reports, company websites, third-party questionnaires and direct company communications.

Using a 100-point scoring system, the report ranked the largest companies in the oil/gas, electric power, auto, chemical, industrial equipment, mining/metals, coal, food products, forest products and air transportation sectors, with operations in the United States.

The scoring system gave most credit to companies with a sustained commitment to controlling greenhouse gas emissions, disclosing data and strategies, supporting regulatory actions, and taking practical, near-term steps to find lasting solutions to climate change.

For more background and to listen to the announcement online, visit the [CERES Global Climate Change 100 webpage](#).

Quecreek Mine Rescue Site Earns Official State Historic Marker



The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission this week approved the placement of an official [state historic marker](#) at the site of the 2002 rescue of nine miners trapped in the [Quecreek Mine](#) in Somerset County.

“These markers will pay tribute to Pennsylvania’s rich and complex history,” said Commission chairman Wayne S. Spilove. “At the same time, they will honor and recognize the many Pennsylvanians who have made great contributions not just to our state, but the world.”

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The mine rescue site is on a farm owned by Bill and Lori Arnold who opened their doors to rescuers and literally the world at the time of the accident.

The site itself is managed by the non-profit [Quecreek Mine Rescue Foundation](#) that accommodates the thousands of visitors to the site every year.

The tentative wording for the historic marker submitted with the application was--

The Quecreek Mine Rescue Site

From July 24 to 28, 2002 the world watched as state and federal agencies, the mining industry, local mine workers, medical and emergency responders and the Somerset community succeeded in rescuing nine miners trapped by the flooding of the Quecreek Mine through a rescue shaft drilled on this site.

The rescue not only provided a positive boost for the United States after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, it result in changes to the way underground mines are regulated to improve mine worker safety.

Photo Feature: [Congratulations Mine Rescuers - PDF](#)

Engineer Honored by Cumberland Trout Unlimited

Ray Zomok, a Senior Civil Engineer Manager with the DEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering was honored March 18 by the [Cumberland Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited](#).

He was presented with the chapter's prestigious Limestoner Award for his personal and professional dedication to conserving, protecting and enhancing the coldwater resources of southcentral Pennsylvania and in particular his efforts on Letort Spring Run.

The Limestoner Award is the chapter's highest honor and is presented in recognition of those persons who have made outstanding contributions to the preservation, maintenance and restoration of coldwater resources, particularly in the Cumberland Valley.

Help Wanted – Nature Conservancy Seeks Applicants for 4 Positions

The Nature Conservancy is seeking applicants for four positions at Fort Indiantown Gap, Lebanon County, Delaware Water Gap, Monroe County and in Harrisburg.

[See position descriptions and requirements online.](#)

See & Hear

Egg-citement Builds as Peregrine Falcons Await the First Egg

If history is any indicator, and it is in this case, the first egg laid by the female peregrine falcon nesting on the Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg should come any day now.

She has always laid her eggs on or around March 25. When she starts she should produce one egg about every other day until the full clutch of typically four eggs is complete.

[Watch live, online video](#) of these “egg-citing” events as they happen.

See & Hear

Watersheds.tv – Learn Other Watershed Groups Restore and Educate



Browse dozens of stories about how watershed groups across the state are planting buffers, knocking down dams, treating abandoned mine drainage, reducing nutrient runoff and much more by visiting Watersheds.tv.

Produced by the GreenTreks Network, Watersheds.tv lets watershed leaders say in their own words, video and photos how they protect their watersheds.

Learn more by going to Watersheds.tv.

Feature

Remembering the Accident at Three Mile Island, March 28, 1979

At 3:53 a.m., March 28, 1979, the cascading failures of valves, pumps, gauges and reactor operators combined to produce the worst accident in the U.S. commercial nuclear power industry.

The accident occurred at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant Unit 2 near Middletown, a few miles downstream from Harrisburg. For 48 hours, the reactor was dangerously out of control.



Anyone living in and around T.M.I. remembers exactly where they were on March 30 when they heard Gov. Dick Thornburgh order all preschool children and pregnant women within five miles of the plant to evacuate and later everyone within 10 miles to close their windows and stay indoors. Seven thousand people were evacuated and perhaps a hundred thousand more fled.

A hydrogen bubble formed in the reactor bringing it very close to exploding. Within a few days, scientists reduced the size of the bubble. The cooling down process, however, took a month and the radioactive plant would take years to decontaminate.

Though no lives were lost in the accident, the uncertainty and fear it caused gave people a new sense of vulnerability. The day after the accident, 35,000 protesters in Hanover, West Germany, chanted, "We all live in Pennsylvania."

In contrast, Unit 1 at Three Mile Island has operated successfully since it first began commercial operations in 1974 producing electricity for Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic region.

As a result of the accident, emergency planning and response programs at the local, state and federal level were dramatically improved around nuclear plants and state efforts to monitor radiation and provide direct oversight at these facilities also underwent significant changes.

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Here are remembrances from that day by three of the people who were touched in unique ways by the accident –

- **Thomas M. Gerusky**, Director of the Bureau of Radiation Protection at the then-Department of Environmental Resources on March 28, 1979, and was in charge of the state's technical response to the accident;
- **James M. Seif**, former Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, and in 1979 administrative assistant to Gov. Dick Thornburgh; and
- **Erik J. Epstein**, chairman of [Three Mile Island Alert, Inc.](#), a safe-energy organization based in Harrisburg and founded in 1977.

Note: The articles by Mr. Gerusky and Mr. Seif were originally published in the March 27, 1998 Update by the Department of Environmental Protection.

“It’s a Biggie – Some Thoughts on the Accident at Three Mile Island by Thomas M. Gerusky

Last week, I was interviewed by the producers of a proposed Public Television Network show which will provide a 20-year update on the Three Mile Island accident. That accident occurred on March 28, 1979. To prepare for the interview, I went back to my notes and published reports of the accident to refresh my memory. As I wandered through the documents, the memories of that time and the aftermath of the accident came slowly into focus. The following are some of the thoughts that returned.

It is difficult to discuss the accident and the Commonwealth's response to it without reviewing the attitudes of the public, the press, the nuclear industry, the regulators and the technical world. Nuclear power was touted as the safest form of supplying energy. Nuclear reactors were designed and operated to run without a serious accident. New nuclear power stations were being proposed all over the country.

The staff of the Bureau of Radiation Protection and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency had prepared emergency response plans for an accident at those power reactors situated in the state and for accidents at other facilities and on the transportation routes for spent fuel and other sources of radioactivity. Infrequently, transportation accidents had taken place and we had responded. In no case was there any serious release to the environment nor any exposure of the public.

A plan had been drawn up for the Three Mile Island complex. It is interesting to note that a public meeting on that plan was held in Middletown, just north of the reactors, only a short time before the accident and few people showed up.

At approximately 7 a.m. on the morning of March 28, I received a call from our bureau's emergency officer, Bill Dornsife, a nuclear engineer who had previously worked at Three Mile Island, who informed me that he had received a call from the island concerning an emergency that was occurring there. He gave me some details, but the words I will always remember were "It's a biggie." The procedure was for me to proceed to the office while other staff members contacted other individuals and agencies to provide them with the information.

I arrived at the office around 7:20 a.m. From that time on and continuing for the next 30 days, our office was open and staffed around the clock. Bureau and department

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technical and administrative staff assisted in providing the coverage. It became a team effort and continued a team effort through the cleanup.

Although we had established an open phone line with the reactor, the lack of early information was a major concern. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the federal regulator of the facility, had not yet arrived on site and even after they arrived, little new information was forthcoming. Metropolitan Edison Company, the operator of TMI, had stated through its public relations office in Reading that the accident was under control and that no serious releases of radioactivity had occurred. Our information from the radiation protection staff on the island indicated otherwise.

As the seriousness of the accident became more apparent, more Pennsylvania officials became involved, first Lt. Gov. William Scranton, and then Gov. Dick Thornburgh. The administration had just been sworn into office the previous January and their responsibilities under emergency conditions were just becoming known to them. Throughout the course of the accident, both men exhibited professionalism and leadership. I was really impressed with the way the governor listened to the information he was receiving, asked very pointed questions and then made up his mind after reviewing all of the facts.

Two days later, Friday, March 30, was a day I will always remember.

We had been receiving reports from the island that controlled releases of radioactive gases were occurring. Monitoring was being performed from a helicopter situated above the release point and off-site.

The information concerning the levels was being relayed by phone to the NRC emergency desk at the commission's headquarters in Washington. There was confusion concerning the data and Washington incorrectly thought that the levels reported at the release point were occurring off-site. As a result, they contacted the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and recommended an evacuation. From that point on, chaos reigned until the governor contacted the chairman of the NRC to question its recommendation.

On a subsequent telephone call from the chairman to the governor, he told the governor that the NRC had no idea what was happening inside that reactor and, when questioned about the need for an evacuation, he stated that if his wife and daughter were in the immediate vicinity of TMI, he would get them out.

Gov. Thornburgh had no choice, and started a voluntary evacuation program for the most vulnerable of the population, pregnant women and small children. The governor also requested that senior NRC staff be sent to the island to take over the accident response. That brought Harold Denton and many NRC staff members here. Someone said later that it was impossible to "run" an accident response from Washington.

The ensuing days were filled with tension, the possibility of an explosion from a hydrogen bubble growing inside the reactor, the visit of President Jimmy Carter and the governor to the plant, the planning for a massive evacuation of the residents of the area in case things got worse, continuing releases of inert radioactive gases from the stack, the hoard of press from all over the world, and finally, the subsequent relaxation of the recommendation for evacuation based upon the knowledge that there was no potential for an explosion.

For us, the NRC, the utility and the public in the vicinity of TMI, the cleanup of the reactor over the next 10 years, the need to vent the remaining radioactive Krypton from the

building before anyone could enter, learning that the fuel had melted and the expenditure of over a billion dollars kept the accident in our minds.

The reactor has now been mothballed with considerable radioactive material still inside. It will stay that way until it's sister reactor, Three Mile Island I, is shut down. They will be decommissioned together, when the next generation also will learn what happened on March 28, 1979.

REACTOR!?!? **by James M. Seif**

I enjoyed Tom Gerusky's account of the TMI incident, and would like to add three memorable moments of my own.

The first occurred about 7:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 28, 1979.

Always an early riser, I was settled into my small office in Room 225, Main Capitol, the official address of the Governor's Suite in Harrisburg. State Trooper Denny Denisevich and I had just made a "fresh pot"—his had cooked all night as he tended the antique Governor's Switchboard.

I was administrative assistant to Gov. Dick Thornburgh. My duties were principally as scheduler. (The "Abominable No Man" as he put it.) But only two months had elapsed since inauguration, and all of us were still trying to define our assignments.

My phone rings. Denny says, "a guy from Met Ed wants to reach the Governor to report something." One thing I did know about my job was to step in front of such anonymous reports. I say, "anonymous" because I had just moved to Harrisburg, and had no idea that GPU was a utility and didn't know that Three Mile Island was a power plant — let alone a nuke.

In any case, the man told me his emergency manual required a call to the governor's office when there's a "reportable incident at our plant."

"Okay, what happened?"

"We lost cooling in the reactor, but it's okay now. We've shut down as a precaution."

"REACTOR!?!?" (I still hope I didn't say it that way.)

"Yes, this is a nuclear power plant."

I asked several questions. Did they call local police? State Police? Emergency management people? The nuclear regulators in Washington? Yes to all. Was anyone hurt? No. What about damage to equipment? He didn't know.

Given the answers to his questions and his calm tone, I concluded that the call was little more than his following the checklist in his manual — and the "call the governor" item was on the checklist as a matter of political caution and not necessary for any real emergency purpose.

It turns out that was, in fact, the origin of the "call the governor" item, but of course, as the crisis developed in the next hours, I felt I had been misled. I can't recall now if I mentioned any of this to Gov. Thornburgh or not, but I did let him take a scheduled trip out of town that day, and valuable hours were lost.

The second recollection is from late Saturday night, March 31, when the crisis reached its most perilous point. Reactor temperature was rising, evacuation was accelerating and a lot of us were getting tired and edgy. After riding around for several

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hours with State Police Commissioner Dan Dunn, I was especially tense. Dan was a former FBI Special Agent, whom I had known for years, and he was one of the drollest and most cheerful people I knew. But this night, his jaw was clenched.

Back in the governor's office with other staff, we checked the TV and Saturday Night Live, hosted by the comedians Bob and Ray, came on. To our shock, it opened by announcing a contest to pick a new capitol of Pennsylvania!!! We called the network in New York, hoping that the script could be altered by the news of how serious we thought the problem had become. We figured the network — and certainly the sponsors — would not want to add to any panic.

No such luck. An unresponsive switchboard operator said only that he would try to get a message to the theater. To this day, I recall him by the name he carries in that night's phone log: FNU LNU – First Name Unknown, Last Name Unknown. This was FBI lingo taught to me years before – by Dan Dunn.

Finally, there was an interesting postscript: About six weeks after the crisis had passed, Another governor called. Gov. Thornburgh was on the road; and so I took the call.

This governor was also a "rookie" and was calling to glean some of the lessons of TMI. We spoke about the organizational issues of emergency management, local-state relations, medical perils (including panic), the political danger of Congressional Second Guessers, the media circus and so on.

I was impressed because he was one of the few people who was interested in the policy and managerial implications of what had happened, and the only governor that I know of who ever called.

When we were finished, I said, "Thank you for calling, Gov. Clinton."

He said, "It's Bill. Keep up the good work, Dick!"

Evacuating Three Mile Island

By Eric J. Epstein

Central Pennsylvania is middle America. We enjoy holiday parades, Friday night football and old fashioned everything. We welcome the change of seasons and pretty much stay put from generation to generation. We're used to America coming to us to visit Gettysburg, marvel at the Amish, and eat Hershey Chocolate.

My father admired the technology that was Three Mile Island. Driving toward the nuclear power plant he confidently welcomed the billowing steam clouds. Many residents boated, fished or water skied around the Island. School students routinely were paraded through the plant to greet their future. My dad was assured that an accident at Three Mile Island was "not possible." I believed my dad. We believed the nuclear industry and the government.

The last week of March 1979 was unseasonably warm. Central Pennsylvanians stepped outside for their first, prolonged post-winter break. While Governor Richard Thornburgh was acclimating to Harrisburg, the "new" reactor in Middletown was struggling to stay on line. On Wednesday, March 28, 1979, TMI became a household name. Two days later, while school was in session, area residents fled the area not knowing if or when they would return. America now knew us for all the wrong reasons.

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Evacuation plans in 1979 were little more than an afterthought stashed in a drawer. The problem is that people are not hypothetical planning numbers. Human behavior rarely conforms to scientific predictions. People don't want to leave their homes. Farmers don't want to desert their animals.

I was away at college. My sister waited for my mom to pick her up at Linglestown Junior High School, my brother was in his first trimester, and the family furniture store, which had survived three floods and a fire, remained open.

In Middletown, Mayor Robert Reid directed traffic out of town as fleeing residents asked him to protect their homes while they were gone.

To the north, streams of citizens from Harrisburg flowed down Market Street to line up for busses heading anywhere.

Across the river, Goldsboro became a ghost town, dairy cows continued to graze in Etters, and the City of York, like Harrisburg and Lancaster, had no nuclear evacuation plan.

Hershey still made chocolate, the Amish continued to plow Lancaster's fertile earth, and the Battlefield at Gettysburg attracted visitors.

The TMI community remains a living case study of how not to evacuate. Many residents still keep an overnight bag packed, a stash of "TMI money," and make sure their cars have a full tank of gas. For those of us who live, work and parent in the shadow of Three Mile Island, the Accident continues to exact a toll.

No reactor community should have to endure another nuclear nightmare. At the very least, we should stop pretending that emergency evacuation planning is adequate. I need to be able to get in my car, drive past Three Mile Island, and tell my daughter that adults are doing everything humanly possible to make sure there is no "next time."

Links: [Three Mile Island Unit 1](#)
[PEMA – Nuclear Power Plant Safety](#)
[DEP – Division of Nuclear Safety](#)

Quick Clips

Here's a selection of NewsClips on environmental topics from around the state.

[Volunteers Needed for PennDOT Cleanup Program](#)

-- In Fayette, Westmoreland, Washington, Greene

[Volunteers Needed for Great PA Cleanup – Franklin County](#)

[Volunteers Needed for Cleanup in Darby Creek Watershed, Philadelphia](#)

[A Forest Steward's View on the Future of Whitetail Deer](#)

[Outdoors: A Backyard World Teaming With Life](#)

[Editorial: Natural Links-Biodiversity in PA](#)

[State in Cross Hairs as East Clamors for More Electricity](#)

[Wind Farms Are Sprouting](#)

[Farmers May Reap Benefits of Biofuels](#)

[Best Year Ever for Farmland Preservation in Lancaster?](#)

[Montco Moves for Open Space](#)

[Test Your Home for Dangerous Radon Gas](#)

[PA High on Switch Grass as Energy Source](#)
[Students Want Eco-Friendly PSU](#)
[Developer Recycles in a Big, Big Way](#)
[Editorial: Flushing Away an Opportunity](#)

Watershed NewsClips

Read a sampling of NewsClips on watershed topics from around Pennsylvania.

[Along Mill Creek, Amish Do the Right Thing](#)
[Pine Creek Watershed Assessment Planned](#)
[Lawmakers, Activists Push for Federal Mine Reclamation Funding](#)
[Group Seeks Grant to Restore Slippery Rock Creek](#)
[Thousands of Paddlers to Converge on Lakes, Rivers and Streams](#)
[New Chesapeake Bay Clean Water Rules Come With Cost](#)
[Many Questions Dog Bay Cleanup Strategy](#)
[Leet Woman Takes on Flooding Issue](#)
[Multi-Faceted Rohrer Family Farm is Honored](#)
[Peru Creek, Colorado Cleanup Uses PA Technology](#)
[DEP Replaces Water Supplies Affected by Abandoned Mine](#)

Watershed Awareness Month Activities

This special Calendar section is devoted to activities going on in and around Watershed Awareness Month in May. If you have events to add, send them to:
DHess@HolstonCrisci.com.

- **May 6** – [Green Valleys Association Envirofest Family Fun Festival](#). A 5K run, birds of prey, music, environment-friendly living demonstrations, native plant sale, displays and food will all be part of the fun.
- **May 8** – **Fayette County Children’s Water Festival**. Penn State Fayette-The Eberly Campus. 1,000+ sixth graders will hear presenters, participate in demonstrations and visit exhibitors organized by 150 volunteers and is funded by the Conservation District, Western PA Conservancy, local water suppliers, watershed groups, school districts, DEP, Ohiopyle State Park and local businesses. Contact: heatherdfowler@yahoo.com .
NewsClip: [Fayette Water Festival-GreenTreks Network](#)
- **May 23** – [Saylor Grove Wetland Dedication](#), Philadelphia Water Department. Lincoln Dr. & Wissahickon Dr. and Rittenhouse Ave, Philadelphia. 6-8:00 p.m. Contact: Tiffany.Ledesma@phila.gov 215-499-3756.
- York County activities and events:

The following events are scheduled in York County

- 22 April – York County Stream Steward Cleanup Day, 9 am to 1 pm, multiple locations (6 so far)
- 30 Apr to 7 May – [National Soil & Water Stewardship Week](#)

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- 9 May - York County Envirothon grades 3 & 4
- 2 & 3 May – York County Envirothon grades 7 & 8 and 5 & 6
- 5 May – Greater Hanover Alliance hosting Regional Watershed Protection Workshop for Municipal Officials, 8 am to 4 pm, location TBA
- 9 May - York County Envirothon grades 3 & 4
- 13 May – Restoration Monitoring Workshop, 8 am to 4 pm, at Penn State York
- 18 May – CCWA’s 9th Annual Meeting, 7 pm, at York Water Company’s Lake Redman facility
- 22 May – What’s the Big Deal about Invasives? Workshop, 7-9 pm at ANNEX, sponsored by MAEscapes
- More information on York activities is available from Gary Peacock, York Watershed Specialist, by sending email to: GPeacock@Yorkccd.org .

Regulations

The Independent Regulatory Review Commission approved the Nutrient Management regulations adopted by the State Conservation Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection [posted draft regulatory language](#) to limit mercury emissions from power plants.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – March 25, 2006](#)

Comment Deadlines: [Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

[Copies of Proposed Regulations \(DEP website\)](#)

[Status of Regulations, 6-Month Calendar \(DEP website\)](#)

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection [published proposed changes](#) in policy related to lead and copper in drinking water.

DRAFT: DEP ID: 383-3301-107. Title: Laboratory Reporting Instructions for Lead and Copper under the Lead and Copper Rule. Description: This guidance, issued on February 1, 1999, provides instructions to community and nontransient, noncommunity water systems and certified laboratories for the reporting of drinking water lead and copper tap monitoring results as required by the Federal Lead and Copper Rule, published on June 7, 1991, and as implemented in 25 Pa. Code Chapter 109, Subchapter K (relating to lead and copper). Comments due: April 24.

[For copies of Draft Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

[For copies of Final Technical Guidance \(DEP website\)](#)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Upcoming conferences, meetings, workshops, plus links to other online calendars. Meetings are in Harrisburg unless otherwise noted. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- **May 8-12** – [“Show Me the Money” Grant Workshop](#). Lewisburg.
- **March 27** – Senate Appropriations Committee meets to consider [House Bill 2317](#) (Feese-R-Lycoming) 2005-2006 Capital Budget for flood control, Keystone Recreation, Environmental Stewardship projects. Rules Committee Room. Off the Floor.
- **March 28** – Joint House Consumer Affairs & Health and Human Services Committee informational meeting on Low Income Energy Assistance Programs (LIHEAP) and customer assistance programs. Room 205 Ryan Building. 1:00.
- **March 28** – DEP Critical Water Planning Area Subcommittee of Act 220 [State Water Plan Statewide Committee](#) meeting. 14th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **March 29** – House Consumer Affairs Committee informational meeting on [House Bill 2257](#) (Haluska-D-Cambria) providing retirement credit for certain mine inspectors.
- **March 29** – **CANCELLED** - House Republican Policy Committee hearing on DEP Regulatory Process and Economic Development. Room 140 Main Capitol. 1:00.
- **March 30** – [Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee](#) special meeting to discuss draft regulations limiting mercury emissions from power plants (draft rule posted online). Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **March 31** – Pennsylvania State Planning Board meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **March 31** – [DEP Workshop on Wetlands, Stream Impacts, Permitting for Local Officials and Developers](#) in Mercer and Venango Counties. Mercer.
- **April 3** – [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) Environmental Issues Forum – PA CleanWays update on rural dumping in Pennsylvania. Room 205 Ryan Building. 12:00.
- **April 5** – Senate Environmental Resources & Energy Committee hearing on gasoline additives and their impact on the environment and fuel supplies (MTBE, ethanol). Room 8E-A East Wing. 9:00.
- **April 13** – DEP [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Steering Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 2:00 to 5:00.
- **April 18-19** - [Chamber Environmental Conference and Trade Show](#). Camp Hill (near Harrisburg).
- **April 28-29** – [PA Land Conservation Conference](#). State College.
- **May 5** – Forestry Task Force meeting (Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee). Penn Stater Conference Center. State College. 10:00.
- **May 18-19** – [2006 Pennsylvania Heritage Partnerships Conference](#). Preservation PA. Franklin, Venango County.

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- **May 26** - DEP [Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy Steering Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 to 1:00.
- **June 12** – [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#) Environmental Issues Forum – Jim MacKenzie, [Octoraro Native Plant Nursery](#) “Going Native – Opportunities for Using Native Plants in Pennsylvania.” Room 205 Ryan Building. 12:00.
- **October 31-November 5** – [National Historic Preservation Conference](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation. Pittsburgh.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#)

(courtesy [PA Organizations for Watersheds & Rivers](#))

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

(courtesy [PA Center for Environmental Education](#))

[Senate Committee Schedule](#) [House Committee Schedule](#)

Helpful Web Links

[Daily NewsClips](#) [Daily DEP Update](#) [GreenTreks Network](#) [Watershed Weekly](#)

[DEP Press Releases](#) [DEP Advisory Committee Meetings & Agendas](#)

[DCNR Resource Magazine](#) [DCNR Press Releases](#)

[Fish & Boat Commission Press Releases](#) [Game Commission Press Releases](#)

Stories Invited

Send your stories about environmental issues, programs and positive actions to **PA Environment Digest** - DHess@HolstonCrisci.com or go to www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com .

PA Environment Digest is edited by David E. Hess, former Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and is published as a service to the clients of Holston & Crisci and the public. Holston & Crisci is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Holston & Crisci call 717-234-1716.

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