



PA Environment Digest

An Update On Environmental Issues In PA

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Final Push For A State Budget Begins, 15 Voting Days Left Until June 30

With only 15 voting days scheduled between now and the June 30 deadline for a new state budget, the real work of getting agreement on budget items between the Senate, House and Gov. Corbett begins in earnest.

The good news reported this week of higher than estimated May revenues is both an opportunity to limit the impact of significant budget cuts proposed by Gov. Corbett and a challenge for House Republicans and the Governor to keep spending at their magic number of \$27.3 billion.

Revenues were a scant \$33.9 million, or 1.9 percent, more than anticipated bringing the year-to-date "surplus" to \$539.4 million, or 2.3 percent, above estimate.

The issue of whether to adopt a severance tax or impact fee on the Marcellus Shale natural gas industry is also up in the air.

Sen. Joe Scarnati (R-Jefferson) is pushing hard for Committee consideration of his impact fee proposal in the Senate. But this week his partner in Leadership, Sen. Dominic Pileggi (R-Delaware), announced he will introduce legislation imposing a severance tax on the industry with the proceeds going for senior citizen property tax relief. Sen. Pileggi said he did support Sen. Scarnati's impact fee proposal, however.

The fate of the Growing Greener Program, which has all but run out of money, is also up in the air.