



PA Environment Digest

An Update On Environmental Issues In PA

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New State Budget Continues Severe Rendell Cuts To Environmental Protection

The Senate and House gave final approval and Gov. Corbett signed the FY 2011-12 General Fund budget bill-- [House Bill 1485](#) (Adolph-R-Delaware)-- this week spending \$27.1 billion, a 4.1 percent reduction in spending from the FY 2010-11 funding levels and without any tax increases.

On the Marcellus Shale drilling impact fee issue, bipartisan efforts in the House and Senate fell apart after Gov. Corbett specifically threatened to veto **any** impact fee bill sent to his desk before the Governor's Marcellus Shale Commission submits its report July 22.

There are no provisions for re-funding the [Growing Greener Program](#) which became all but bankrupt this year. Just \$6 million in Growing Greener funds will be available for the next round of grants, down from its peak of \$50.1 million in 2001.

The only bright spots in the budget were the Resource Enhancement and Protection ([REAP](#)) Farm Conservation Tax Credit Program which was restored to its full \$10 million in funding and a transfer of \$15 million from the PA Infrastructure Investment Authority to the H2O Water Infrastructure Program administered by the Commonwealth Financing Authority included in the Fiscal Code bill. The transfer does not represent a net gain in funding.

For those keeping track, a total of \$1.5 billion has been diverted or cut from environmental programs to help balance the state budget or to fund programs that could not get funding on their own over the last nine years.