

-PA ————— Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

November 12, 2007

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PA Resources Council Honors Environmental Leaders At Awards Dinner

“Nurturing Environmental Leaders” was the theme of the [Pennsylvania Resources Council’s](#) annual awards and fundraising dinner this week as the group recognized eight individuals, companies and organizations for their environmental leadership.

PRC selected leaders from across the Commonwealth to receive awards in the categories of community, conservation, education, energy, environmental health, and sustainable design and development.

Donnan Stoicovy, Principal at the [Park Forest Elementary School](#) in the State College Area School District, was this year’s winner in the leadership in education category.

Ms. Stoicovy has been a leader in environmental education in Pennsylvania for 26 years having served twice as President of the [PA Association for Environmental Educators](#). Her office is often a laboratory for environmental projects where she shares her love of the environment with students and teachers alike.

The school has received numerous recognitions and grants including PA Waste Watchers Award, Greenworks grants, and recognition by the State Environmental Education Roundtable for using the environment as an integrating context.

[Whole Foods Markets](#) was the winner of the award for leadership in the community.

Whole Foods’ seven stores offer “product swaps” where their shoppers can exchange a bottle of a conventional cleaning product for a safer, more eco-friendly alternative. Shoppers can also bring in plastic shopping bags in exchange for reusable canvas ones. They offer composting and recycling programs for their customers and their stores use 100 percent wind power energy.

[Natural Lands Trust](#) was recognized for their leadership in land conservation efforts in eastern Pennsylvania.

Since 1953, they have preserved more than 130,000 acres of land directly and through partnerships with individuals, conservation groups, and government agencies. They help communities achieve their own conservation goals through land-use planning, land stewardship and conservation-oriented development ordinances. They have provided consulting services to 122 municipalities in 23 Pennsylvania counties.

[United Oil Company](#) received an award for their leadership in green energy. United Oil Company’s products are specially designed to assist their customers with increasing productivity, reducing costs, improving safety and being environmentally friendly.

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United has been a leader in the formulation and production of industrial lubricants, many of which are based on natural vegetable oils and animal fats, from which BioDiesel is also produced. They are especially proud to introduce United B100 Biodiesel fuel.

University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute, [Center for Environmental Oncology](#) was selected for leading the way in environmental health.

By translating scientific research into practical, accessible information used to educate the public and health professionals about lowering exposure risks to environmental toxins, the Center works to influence public policy and provide a wide-range of educational outreach programs.

Since 2004, the Center for Environmental Oncology's Community Outreach and Education division has reached well over a million people, locally, nationally, and internationally through educational sessions in the form of workshops, seminars, continuing medical education, conferences and events which cover a variety of environmental health topics.

The [Philadelphia Water Department](#) received an award for their leadership in sustainable design and development. PWD has integrated the City's programs for combined sewer overflow, stormwater management, and source water protection into a watershed management based approach that uses land, waterway, infrastructure and sustainability practices to protect drinking water supplies and promote the propagation of fish and wildlife habitat.

Their watershed protection strategies, focused on our water resources, seamlessly compliment the region's green development practices, recreation, ecotourism and sustainable riverfront re-development efforts.

Special recognition awards were presented to **Rep. Carole Rubley** (R-Chester) and **Sen. Ted Erickson** (R-Delaware) for their long-time legislative leadership on environmental issues. Both legislators have been members of the board of PRC.

PRC's Annual Awards Dinner traditionally brings together more than 200 business, government and community leaders from throughout the Commonwealth.

For 68 years, PRC has been working with such leaders to create solutions to environmental challenges and to reach out to the community through its educational and service programs. These programs serve to encourage current and future leaders to take an active role in conserving our natural resources and promoting sustainable living.

Established in 1939 to reduce roadside litter and to fight illegal billboards, PRC is one of the Commonwealth's oldest, grassroots, environmental organizations. PRC's headquarters is in Ridley Creek State Park in suburban Philadelphia.

It also has a regional office in Pittsburgh and has satellite operations in the Harrisburg-Lancaster-York region. PRC's programs have expanded to include resource conservation, environmental summer camps, recycling, composting, teacher workshops, watershed and air quality education, and a variety of litter prevention programs.

For information about the dinner, contact Carol Butler at 610-353-1555 ext. 230 or [visit PRC's website](#).

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Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to session November 13.

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Grants & Awards

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Online Training

Watershed Academy Webcast on Smart Growth and Green Infrastructure

EPA's Watershed Academy will sponsor a free webcast on November 28 entitled, "[Smart Growth and Green Infrastructure](#)."

Speakers include: Geoffrey Anderson, EPA's Director of Development, Community and Environment Division, Nancy Stoner, Director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Clean Water Project, and Noelle Mackay, Executive Director of Smart Growth Vermont

They will discuss how various Smart Growth and Green Infrastructure tools are being used at the regional, watershed and site levels to preserve, enhance and protect water resources. The speakers will also discuss various approaches, including messaging, research and partnering, to ensure that these tools are successfully implemented.

For more information or to access archived audio versions of past webcasts, visit the EPA [Watershed Academy Webcast webpage](#).

On the Hill

On the Senate/House Agenda/Bills Introduced

The Senate and House have the following committee meetings scheduled next week and published voting Calendars for November 13—

Calendars – November 13

House: [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to protect the Appalachian Trail; [House Bill 1025](#) (Casorio-D-Westmoreland) amending the Workers' Compensation Act to add employees from the Fish and Boat Commission exposed to disease to the definition of "occupational disease."

Senate: [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) providing for uniform environmental covenants for brownfields projects.

Special Energy Session: [Special Session Senate Bill 1](#) (MJ White-R-Venango) to invest \$530 million over the next seven years in consumer energy programs, energy conservation, and the development of alternative and renewable energy.

Committees

House: the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meets to consider [House Resolution 300](#) (Bennington-D-Allegheny) urging Congress to ban the use of organic or inorganic arsenic and arsenic derivatives in poultry feed; the Health & Human Services Committee holds a hearing on [House Bill 798](#) (Phillips-R-Northumberland) establishing a task force on Lyme Disease; the Commerce Committee holds a hearing on [House Bill 1742](#) (Pashinski-D-Luzerne) requiring scrap and recycling facility operators to collect information on scrap material in Wilkes-Barre.

Senate: the Special Session Committee on Energy Policy will hold a hearing on [Special Session Senate Bill 1](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango), the Alternative Energy Investment Act; the

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Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meets to consider [Senate Resolution 195](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to review the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program, [Senate Bill 863](#) (Waugh-R-York) amending the Agricultural Area Security Law to provide for the Agricultural Land Conservation Assistance Grant Program and [Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) updating the Conservation District Law prompted by the 2005 review by the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee; the Appropriations Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1589](#) (D.Evans-D-Philadelphia) establishing a Capital Budget for 2007-08.

Bills Introduced

These bills were introduced this week--

Natural Gas Infrastructure: [Special Session House Bill 40](#) (Preston-D-Allegheny) creating the Natural Gas Pipeline Replacement Program and [Special Session House Bill 41](#) (D.Evans-D-Philadelphia) giving the PUC authority to order the acquisition of a natural gas company in a city of the first class.

NewsClips: [2 Bills by Evans Aim to Address PGW Ills](#)
[Editorial: PGW Fix: Getting Warmer](#)

Senate Committees Hold Hearings Special Energy Session Issues

Two Senate Committees have scheduled hearings on issues related to the Special Session on Energy. They include--

On November 14, the [Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policy](#) will hold a hearing on [Special Session Senate Bill 1](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango), the Alternative Energy Investment Act.

The agenda for the hearing includes: Iberdrola Renewable Energies USA, Gamesa, Mid-Atlantic Solar Energy Association, Plextronics, Inc., New Spring Capital, Ben Franklin Technology Partnership, SWAN Biomass Company, Keystone Biofuels, Inc., Pennsylvania Energy Resources Group and Secretary Dennis Yablonsky, Department of Community and Economic Development.

On November 20, the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee hearing on [Senate Bill 1134](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) providing for a transition to market rates in the electric utility industry, providing for energy efficiency and demand-response initiatives.

Senate Agriculture Committee Sets Action on Conservation District, Other Bills

The Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meets November 14 to consider bills updating the Conservation District Law and calling for a review of the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. The bills include:

- [Senate Resolution 195](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to review the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program;
- [Senate Bill 863](#) (Waugh-R-York) amending the Agricultural Area Security Law to provide for the Agricultural Land Conservation Assistance Grant Program; and

- [Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) updating the Conservation District Law prompted by the 2005 review by the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee.
Sen. Brubaker (R-Lancaster) serves as chair of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee and Sen. O’Pake (D-Berks) serves as Democratic chair.

Other News

PEC Urges Quick Action on Climate Change Legislation

The [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) this week urged the House and Senate to give final approval to legislation that would require the development of a plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the state – a plan that could build on the work done in PEC’s [Climate Change Roadmap for Pennsylvania](#).

The General Assembly returns to session on November 13.

“Climate change is already happening around the world and right here in Pennsylvania, but its impacts can be reduced if we take decisive action,” said Brian Hill, President and CEO of PEC. “And

since Pennsylvania is responsible for one percent of worldwide emissions of greenhouse gases – more than 105 developing nations combined – it is imperative for the state to adopt meaningful emission-reduction policies.”

Hill noted that the same policies and initiatives that address climate change would at the same time support energy independence, reduced energy costs, cleaner air and water, and economic development and job creation.

Sen. Ted Erickson (R-Delaware) and Rep. Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) have introduced bipartisan legislation ([Senate Bill 266](#) and [House Bill 110](#)) to require the state to inventory and develop a broad plan to reduce Pennsylvania’s greenhouse gas emissions. Sen. Erickson’s bill has passed committee and is soon expected to come up for a vote in the Senate. The Vitali bill, with amendments offered by Rep. David Reed (R-Indiana), has already passed the House.

“These bills would bring about a state-sponsored plan that would be able to draw extensively from the Climate Change Roadmap for Pennsylvania that PEC put out a few months ago,” Hill said, noting that PEC’s Roadmap included a comprehensive, sector-by-sector inventory of greenhouse gas emissions along with 38 policy recommendations for reducing those emissions in the Commonwealth.

The Roadmap was the result of a two year, multi-stakeholder effort which included representatives from energy generation, agriculture, capital investment, government, academia, and nongovernmental organizations.

Hill noted that Pennsylvania is already recognized nationally for green buildings, wind power, methane recovery, and a commitment to cleaner vehicles and fuels., adding, “These accomplishments are just one piece of a much larger puzzle in relation to climate change; solving that puzzle will require comprehensive policy changes which address a broad range of activities and virtually every sector of our economy.

“Because of our large levels of greenhouse gas emissions, Pennsylvania must adopt a climate change strategy that puts it at the forefront of state leadership. Senate Bill 266 and House Bill 110 are a tremendous first step in that strategy, and we believe our Climate



Change Roadmap can further inform the effort,” he said. “We urge the General Assembly to give final approval to this vital legislation.”

NewsClip: [Editorial: Greenhouse Gas Bill Reflects Support to Tackle Warming
DEP Joins Lawsuit Against EPA on Regulating Greenhouse Gases
Global Warming May Help, Hinder in Lehigh Valley](#)

PSU Scientists Enhance Mother Nature's Carbon Handling Mechanisms

Taking a page from Nature herself, a team of researchers developed a method to enhance removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and place it in the Earth's oceans for storage.

Unlike other proposed ocean sequestration processes, the new technology does not make the oceans more acid and may be beneficial to coral reefs. The process is a manipulation of the natural weathering of volcanic silicate rocks.

Reporting in the November issue of *Environmental Science and Technology*, the Harvard and Penn State team explained their method.

"The technology involves selectively removing acid from the ocean in a way that might enable us to turn back the clock on global warming," says Kurt Zenz House, graduate student in Earth and planetary sciences, Harvard University. "Essentially, our technology dramatically accelerates a cleaning process that Nature herself uses for greenhouse gas accumulation."

In natural silicate weathering, carbon dioxide from the atmosphere dissolves in fresh water and forms weak carbonic acid. As the water percolates through the soil and rocks, the carbonic acid converts to a solution of alkaline carbonate salts. This water eventually flows into the ocean and increases its alkalinity. An alkaline ocean can hold dissolved carbon, while an acidic one will release the carbon back into the atmosphere. The more weathering, the more carbon is transferred to the ocean where some of it eventually becomes part of the sea bottom sediments.

"In the engineered weathering process we have found a way to swap the weak carbonic acid with a much stronger one (hydrochloric acid) and thus accelerate the pace to industrial rates," says House.

The researchers minimize the potential for environmental problems by combining the acid removal with silicate rock weathering mimicking the natural process. The more alkaline ocean can store carbon as bicarbonate, the most plentiful and innocuous form of carbon in the oceans.

According to House, this would allow removal of excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in a matter of decades rather than millennia.

Besides removing the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, this technique would counteract the continuing acidification of the oceans that threatens coral reefs and their biological communities. The technique is adaptable to operation in remote areas on geothermal or natural gas and is global rather than local. Unlike carbon dioxide scrubbers on power plants, the process can as easily remove naturally generated carbon dioxide as that produced from burning fossil fuel for power.

The researchers, Kurt House; Daniel P. Schrag, director, Harvard University Center for the Environment and professor of Earth and planetary sciences; Michael J. Aziz, the



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Gordon McKay professor of material sciences, all at Harvard University and Kurt House's brother, Christopher H. House, associate professor of geosciences, Penn State, caution that while they believe their scheme for reducing global warming is achievable, implementation would be ambitious, costly and would carry some environmental risks that require further study. The process would involve building dozens of facilities similar to large chlorine gas industrial plants, on volcanic rock coasts.

"This work shows how we can remove carbon dioxide on relevant timescales, but more work is needed to bring down the cost and minimize other environmental effects," says Christopher H. House.

The Link Energy Foundation, Merck Fund of the New York Community Trust, U.S. DOE and NASA supported this work.

Dr. Christopher House can be contacted at 814-865-8802 or by sending email to: chh10@psu.edu.

Joint Committee Visits Innovative Schuylkill County Mine Reclamation Project

Members of the Joint Legislative Air Pollution Control and Conservation Committee joined staff from the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#) and Penn State University to tour an innovative demonstration project at an abandoned mine land reclamation project in Hegins Township in Schuylkill County.

The reclamation project represents a potential win-win-win solution for beneficial use of excess poultry manure, reclaiming abandoned minelands and growing renewable biomass energy crops.

Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango), Committee Chair, and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) Vice-Chair, and Rep. Tim Seip (D-Berks) toured a demonstration plot that is testing different methodologies for using poultry manure as a soil additive to reclaim abandoned minelands for the cultivation of biomass crops for renewable energy production.

The current test project involves 20 small subplots that have different applications and mixtures of poultry manure, composted poultry manure, commercial fertilizer and varying amounts of pulp mill sludge from a local paper mill. The pulp mill sludge serves as a source of carbon for the reclaimed soil.

Research results from the project will hopefully demonstrate the optimum mixture of manure, mill sludge and mine spoils for growing switchgrass for biomass energy production while minimizing nutrient runoff to surface water and leaching to groundwater.

The results will also inform the design of a 30-acre demonstration project slated to begin in the summer of 2008.

PEC and Penn State will grow parallel plots of switchgrass and high diversity native grasses at an abandoned mine land site in or near Schuylkill County. The project team will evaluate biomass production and carbon sequestration rates and the commercial viability of the methodology for reclaiming mine lands and growing biomass energy crops.



Sen. Musto (green jacket) and Brian Hill (in red) tour project

For more information, contact Scott Van de Mark, PEC, at 412-481-9400 or send email to: svandemark@pecpa.org .

Video Blog: [NRCS Grant Supports Innovative Mine Reclamation Project](#)

More Conservation, More Renewables Result of Electric Competition Expert Says

Competition can continue to produce better results for Pennsylvania electricity customers than regulation, including more conservation, new, efficient power plants and more renewable energy sources.

That's the message from William Massey, one of the key architects of federal policies that advanced competitive forces in electricity markets, [in a white paper](#) released this week by the Electric Power Generation Association.

"Evidence confirms that competitive electricity markets provide the lowest possible cost resources, improve reliability, and are good for the environment," Massey said in his white paper entitled "The Operation and Benefits of Competitive Electricity Markets in Pennsylvania."

Massey summarized a series of benefits that consumers in Pennsylvania and the broader region have enjoyed because of competition, including:

- **Lower costs driven by efficiency gains:** Massey noted that nuclear plants in Pennsylvania are operating more, saving over \$120 million per year. He argued that increased availability and better plant efficiency also help keep market prices down in PJM, the electric market that serves Pennsylvania customers.
- **More conservation:** Massey noted that "demand response" programs that pay customers to cut their electricity use during times of peak demand have increased six-fold in PJM since 2002. Demand response programs saved customers more than \$650 million in August 2006.
- **More renewables:** Massey said competition spurs the development of renewable power sources, such as wind and solar power. For example, Massey noted that approximately 73 percent of installed wind capacity is now located in regions with competitive markets, while only 44 percent of wind energy potential is found in these areas.
- **New power plants:** Since 1998, Massey said, competitive suppliers have added 9,000 MW of new generation in Pennsylvania, enough to power 9 million homes.

In his paper, Massey also cautioned against simplistic rate comparisons between states that have restructured and those that have not. He said, "Snapshots can be misleading because prices will go up and down in markets to reflect fundamental economic conditions that no regulatory model can eliminate."

Massey argued for finding ways to gradually transition Pennsylvania customers to market rates as the remaining electric retail rate caps expire over the next few years. He said Pennsylvania policy makers should consider gradually increasing rates, staggering electricity purchases, and varying the length of contracts to help mitigate inevitable increases driven by global energy markets.

Massey concluded his paper by urging Pennsylvania policy makers to continue to rely on competitive electricity markets. He said, "Now is not the time to step backward toward monopoly regulation and reverse the market benefits enjoyed by Pennsylvania

consumers. Pennsylvania should continue to move forward with its successful transition to competitive electricity markets."

[The white paper is available online](#). Visit the [Electric Power Generation Association website](#) for more on electric generation in Pennsylvania.

Projected Heating Costs, Natural Gas Supplies Estimated for This Winter

The Public Utility Commission this week held its annual briefing on the availability and pricing of natural gas and other fuels for the winter heating season.

The Energy Association of Pennsylvania, PECO Energy Company, AmeriGas, and the Department of Public Welfare advised the PUC that they are prepared to serve utility customers and assist them for the upcoming winter.

[J. Michael Love](#), President and CEO of the Energy Association of Pennsylvania, said there is more than adequate supply to meet the upcoming winter demands. On average, consumers relying on natural gas can expect to spend about 10 percent more than previously.

Love reported the U.S. Energy Information Agency released its annual outlook for winter heating fuel costs with its October Energy Outlook. The report noted this breakdown on expected, average energy costs for households in the Northeast—

- Propane – expect to pay \$2,262 or 21 percent more this winter than last;
- Heating Oil – expect to pay \$1,827 or 21.9 percent more than last winter;
- Natural Gas – expect to pay \$1,212 or 10 percent more than last winter; and
- Electricity – expect to pay \$1,432 or 7.1 percent over last winter.

[Amy Hamilton](#), Manager of Gas Acquisition and Planning for PECO Energy Company, reported that PECO will have sufficient supplies to meet demand this winter and is seeing prices higher for the entire Northeast region.

According to [J.P. Ghio](#), Manager-Assets and Wholesale Services at UGI Energy Services, the U.S. propane inventory remains below the five-year average. Customers can expect to pay more for propane as the levels stay low.

[Edward J. Zogby](#), Director of Policy for the Department of Public Welfare, presented the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) program's plans for the assisting Pennsylvania consumers this winter. (*See separate article on LIHEAP.*)

[William Hall](#), from the Public Utility Commission, provided an overview of natural gas usage and infrastructure in Pennsylvania.

Choosing Lower Cost Suppliers

The PUC encourages natural gas customers to take steps to reduce natural gas heating bills by looking for lower cost suppliers which customers may do under Pennsylvania's [utility choice program](#).

Other Tips

Find other tips for lowering natural gas heating bills by going to the PUC's [Prepare Now for Winter Gas Prices webpage](#).

PUC Appeals DOE Decision on National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor

The Public Utility Commission filed for rehearing with the U.S. Department of Energy over its National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor for the Mid-Atlantic region while also filing suit against the designation in U.S. District Court.

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"The PUC remains committed to ensuring that our ability to act on behalf of Pennsylvania's needs is not weakened when it comes to deciding where and if a transmission line should be sited," said Commission Chairman Wendell F. Holland. "By filing with both DOE and before the federal courts, we are protecting all avenues of appeal to ensure that state's rights are protected when it comes to transmission line projects."

"The PUC will continue to fight action that puts unbounded authority in the hands of the federal government who may not act in a manner that has the best interests of Pennsylvania at heart," said Commissioner Tyrone J. Christy. "Given that DOE ignored the comments by the states in the previous proceeding, we wanted to ensure that we explore every opportunity for making certain that vital decisions about Pennsylvania continue to be made in Pennsylvania."

The PUC has taken an active role in representing the interests of Pennsylvania before the federal government filing comments on the issue and participating as a party in this case.

In its petition for rehearing before DOE and its filing in the U.S. District Court, the Commission maintained that the NIETC is overly broad, calling the plan beyond the scope intended by Congress in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The filing before the U.S. District Court also asks the court to prevent the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission from implementing the NIETC at this time.

According to both filings, the PUC alleges that the DOE's "expansive interpretation of its own powers is neither reasonable, nor reasonably required to effectuate Congress' purpose," nor is it supported by the Act. The PUC said:

- The federal government failed to apply the law in a manner that is minimally intrusive on traditional state siting authority and jurisdiction;
- The designation is overly broad and inconsistent with Congressional intent;
- DOE failed to adequately identify congestion levels, sources and lacks the required findings of fact;
- The NIETC boundaries fail to adhere to the requirements of the law;
- The federal government used an inadequate basis for the NIETC designation; and
- DOE failed to include the requirement that a project not conflict with regional planning in its designation.

The current NIETC includes 52 out of Pennsylvania's 67 counties in the corridor's Mid-Atlantic region. Cameron, Clarion, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Lawrence, Lycoming, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Sullivan, Tioga, Venango and Warren counties are not included in the draft corridor designation. Besides Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region encompasses all or portions of Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Virginia and West Virginia.

NewsClip: [State Contests Need for Power Lines
PUC Seeks Rehearing on NIETC](#)

Link: [Governor Asks DOE to Reconsider Electric Transmission Corridor Decision](#)

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program Opens for 2007-08 Season

The [Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) -- also known as LIHEAP -- opened this week to help Pennsylvania families and individuals who need assistance paying winter heating bills, the Department of Public Welfare announced.

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"As home heating costs continue to rise, many families may struggle to make ends meet this winter," said Public Welfare Secretary Estelle Richman. "Through the LIHEAP program, eligible families and individuals receive needed help, reducing the risk that they will be forced to choose between heating their home and paying for necessities like food or shelter."

LIHEAP is a federally funded program administered by the Department of Public Welfare that helps low-income households pay for home heating fuel through cash grants and emergency furnace repairs through crisis grants.

During the 2006-07 LIHEAP season, nearly 370,000 families were helped through cash grants and more than 133,000 families received crisis assistance.

For the 2007-08 season, a family of four with an annual income of up to \$30,975 can qualify for LIHEAP.

Cash grants are based on income, family size, type of heating fuel and region. In addition to proof of income and household size, applicants must provide a recent bill or a statement from their fuel dealer verifying their customer status and the type of fuel that they use.

Crisis grants up to \$300 are approved for families experiencing heating emergencies, such as mechanical breakdowns or unexpected fuel shortages.

Applications for LIHEAP are available at County Assistance Offices, local utility companies and community service agencies, such as Area Agencies on Aging or Community Action Agencies. Families can also apply for LIHEAP cash grants online through the [Public Welfare Compass website](#).

For more information, call the toll-free LIHEAP Hotline at 1-866-857-7095, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Philadelphia Eagles, PPL Announce Completion of Solar Panel Project

The Philadelphia Eagles and PPL Corporation announced a project to build and operate solar energy panels at the NovaCare Complex in Philadelphia is now up and operating as part of the [Eagles' GO GREEN Program](#).

PPL Renewable Energy, a subsidiary of PPL Corporation of Allentown, Pa., designed and constructed the innovative solar system that converts energy from sunlight into electricity.

The solar panels, which track the sun throughout the day, were installed at the team's training and practice complex in August 2007 and are the first of their kind in Pennsylvania.

The solar panels are expected to produce 16,100 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, eliminating 26,400 pounds of carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas) emissions annually. The amount of carbon emissions saved equates to planting 67 trees each year.

When the GO GREEN campaign was introduced, the organization researched and familiarized itself with environmental efforts focused around purchasing electricity from green energy sources.

"The (GO GREEN) campaign has continued to grow. We believe these solar panels are an important step in the process of greening our team. The panels are a constant reminder, to our employees, players, coaches and visitors (who pass them daily), that we



all need to reduce our environmental footprint," said Eagles owner Christina Lurie.

"PPL is excited to be a part of the Eagles' efforts to enhance renewable energy in Pennsylvania," said Steve Gabrielle, business development manager of PPL Renewable Energy. "This solar energy project will produce electricity cleanly and efficiently, and help to reduce the emission of carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas."

The purchase of solar panels to offset energy consumption is just one example of the Eagles multifaceted GO GREEN campaign. Other efforts include the Eagles initiative to purchase enough wind energy to power all 10 home games, the team's employee reimbursement program for wind energy purchases, and the GO ZERO program that will help offset emissions caused by away-game air travel.

GO GREEN is a way of life for the Eagles organization and a rallying effort both on and off the field.

PPL Renewable Energy already has developed renewable energy projects that total more than 15 megawatts of generation -- enough to power 12,000 homes. These include solar panel installations and landfill gas projects in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

For more information, visit the [Eagles GO GREEN webpage](#).

PPL First Utility to Give Daily Electricity Use Information

PPL Electric Utilities announced this week it has become the first major electric utility in Pennsylvania to track and display daily electricity use information for all of its customers.

Customers can now view how much electricity they used for each day on the company's [Energy Analyzer webpage](#). The information is possible because of investments the company has made in advanced meters in recent years.

"This is a significant next step in our e-power program that gives customers much more detail about their electricity use so they can better understand how to save energy and money," said David G. DeCampli, president of PPL Electric Utilities.

"With daily usage information, you can see the difference a day of laundry or baking for the holidays makes on your electric bill," he said. "You can experiment with changes, like adjusting your thermostat, to see the effect on usage within days."

DeCampli said that in 2009 the company plans to make hourly electric-use information available for customers on the web. Ultimately, that level of detail will allow the company — and competitive suppliers who may be able to offer lower prices for electric service — to provide customers new pricing options in 2010.

To get started on PPL Electric Utilities' [Energy Analyzer webpage](#).

\$521,000 in Grants to Improve Energy Efficiency, Prevent Pollution Awarded

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced the award of [Small Business Advantage Grants](#) to 89 small businesses across the state who will receive a total of \$521,000 in grants to incorporate innovative technologies that improve energy efficiency and reduce pollution.

"From electricity to natural gas, gasoline and diesel fuel, energy prices are going up and that can have a drastic impact on the bottom lines of small businesses," said Gov. Rendell. "Conserving energy and reducing pollution makes sense not only for the environment, but also economically. We're announcing our investment in these 89

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innovative companies because they have recognized that truth and are investing in their future."

The Small Business Advantage Grants program provides a 50-percent match of up to \$7,500 for equipment or processes that reduce energy consumption, promote pollution prevention, and increase profitability.

Examples of projects include high-efficiency heating and cooling systems, motion sensors that shut off lights when rooms are empty, and auxiliary power units that allow long-haul truckers to turn off engines during layovers and still have heat and electricity.

[A list of grants awarded is available online.](#)

For more information on other assistance available to small businesses, visit the DEP [Office of Small Business Ombudsman](#).

EPA Grant Supports Indoor Air Education in Philadelphia

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has awarded a \$24,550 [environmental education grant](#) to the Southeast Pennsylvania Area Education Center in West Chester, Pa. to teach janitors, parents and teachers from 12 Philadelphia area daycare centers about indoor air pollution.

The education center will focus on teaching adults how to minimize environmental toxins in homes and daycare facilities. The project will expand staff and faculty awareness of health hazards associated with indoor air pollution caused by commonly used cleaning products and pesticides. It will also promote the increased use of environmentally-friendly cleaning products and pesticides in the child care facilities.

"By teaching parents, guardians and educators essential information about indoor air pollution, we can help maintain safe and environmentally-friendly schools and homes," said Donald S. Welsh, administrator for EPA's mid-Atlantic region.

Since 1992, EPA has provided almost \$3 million annually in environmental education grants to local organizations, schools and government agencies nationwide. This funding supports a wide range of environmental issues for citizens of all ages.

Visit EPA's [Environmental Education Grants webpage](#) and online resources for communities, educators, and children.

Nominations Now Being Accepted for Local Government Awards

The Governor's Center for Local Government Services is accepting nominations for the [2008 Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence](#).

Nominations are due November 16.

Given each year during Local Government Week in April, the awards recognize township officials whose achievements serve as a model for other Pennsylvania local governments.

Awards are presented in several categories: building community partnerships, responding to adversity, promoting community/economic revitalization, innovative community/government initiatives, fiscal accountability and best management practices, innovative planning and sound land use practices, intergovernmental cooperation and information technology.

For more information visit the [Governor's Awards webpage](#) or call 888-223-6837.

DEP Takes Action Against Seven Municipalities On Stormwater Regulations

The Department of Environmental Protection has ordered seven municipalities in Bucks, Chester and Montgomery counties to comply with the reporting requirements of federal stormwater regulations by December 5 or face possible legal action and fines.

The municipalities—Bristol Township and Langhorne Borough in Bucks County; Valley, West Bradford, West Caln and Westtown townships in Chester County; and Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County—are owners of municipal separate storm sewer systems, or MS4s, and are required to submit an annual report to DEP by June 9 of each year. The municipalities were late in submitting the 2006 report and have yet to submit a report for 2007.

According to DEP’s Southeast Regional Director Joseph Feola, these regulations address the water quality of runoff that enters streams and rivers through storm sewers.

“Residents of these seven municipalities deserve the benefits that will come from looking after their stormwater discharges more carefully,” Feola said. “Stormwater runoff can degrade water quality and cause localized flooding. This initiative is designed to help us protect the environment and control runoff every time it rains.”

MS4s are required to implement and enforce a stormwater management program to protect water quality and satisfy federal requirements by reducing pollutant discharge to the maximum extent practical. The MS4 program, initiated in 2002, is an effort to improve water quality across the state and it is a key component of Pennsylvania’s comprehensive stormwater management program.

Pennsylvania administers the federal government’s stormwater regulations, which require communities to complete certain activities at scheduled intervals over the next several years. Communities must adopt a local stormwater ordinance, accurately map storm sewer systems, conduct initial outreach activities to raise public awareness of reducing polluted runoff, and document accomplishments in an annual report.

Unmanaged or poorly managed stormwater can result in stream-bank scour, stream destabilization, sedimentation, loss of groundwater recharge and base flow, localized flooding, habitat modification, and water quality and quantity impairment.

Conversely, stormwater managed properly through established best management practices can remove pollutants, recharge groundwater through retention and infiltration, provide base flow for surface water, and maintain the stability and environmental integrity of waterways and wetlands.

“To protect and sustain groundwater and surface water resources over the long-term, stormwater should be managed as an environmental resource rather than as a waste to be discharged and moved downstream quickly,” Feola said. “These plans protect our fresh water supply, while balancing the needs of businesses, the community and recreational users.”

Visit DEP’s [Stormwater Management Program webpage](#) to learn more.

Trout Unlimited Chapter Investigation Leads to DEP Charges Against Mining Co.



Members of the Chestnut Ridge Chapter of Trout Unlimited recently uncovered evidence of possible illegal discharges from a mining operation as they began designing a mine drainage treatment system on Jonathan Run in Fayette County.

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While investigating the discharge as part of a Growing Greener Grant near the Watkiss Mine, Trout Unlimited members discovered two 4-inch pipes buried under the ground, discharging untreated mine water onto state game lands and into Jonathan Run.

“We believe Purco Coal officials buried these pipes to conceal their deliberate action of not fulfilling the legal requirement to treat any discharge from their mine site,” said Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty. “Jonathan Run is polluted as a result.”

The Department of Environmental Protection this week charged Purco Coal Inc. with intentionally discharging untreated acid mine drainage to an “exceptional value” stream in Fayette County, and concealing the discharge to prevent DEP from discovering it.

In 1983, Purco Coal reported no flow from a seep that was identified previously as a deep mine discharge from the Watkiss Mine in Stewart Township, Fayette County. About the same time, though, Jonathan Run near the mine began to show signs of pollution.

The Watkiss Mine was closed in 1989. Repeated DEP inspections of the mine site and reclamation work there showed no discharges.

Based on these inspections, DEP returned the Purco Coal’s bond money in 1995. The company was required to post the bond in order to guarantee the site’s reclamation and that no acid mine discharge was coming from the former mine.

DEP has ordered Purco Coal to remove the underground pipes, construct an interim acid mine drainage treatment system, submit a plan for a permanent treatment system, and reimburse the Growing Greener program the \$37,845 paid to Trout Unlimited.

DEP has also ordered the company to implement an interim treatment system, submit plans for a permanent system and reimburse the department for a grant associated with the work that uncovered the discharge.

NewsClip: [State Accuses Coal Company of Polluting Fayette Stream](#)

Wetlands Conservation, Stream Barrier Removal Grant Applications Due

Applications are now being accepted for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act Small Grants Program and NOAA American Rivers Grants. Details below--

Applications for the [North American Wetlands Conservation Act Small Grants Program](#) are due November 30. The program is designed to promote long-term wetlands conservation activities through encouraging participation by new grantees and partners who otherwise may not be able to compete in the Standard Grants program. Also, the Council believes that a Small Grants program can be important in developing a pool of new partners/grantees who eventually might participate in the Standard Grants program.

[Stream Barrier Removal Grant Program](#) applications are due December 3. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration awarded American Rivers \$800,000 to fund the removal of dams and other stream barriers in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Northwest and California. Since 2001, NOAA has partnered with us to provide communities with financial and technical assistance to restore stream habitats that benefit fish and local economies.

Scholarships Available for the Sixth Annual Social Venture Institute



The [Sustainable Business Network](#) of Greater Philadelphia is hosting the sixth annual Social Venture Institute on November 16-17 designed specifically for entrepreneurs who want their business to have a positive impact on their community and the environment.

The Institute begins at noon, November 16, ending at 4:30 p.m. and November 17 and will be held at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Jon M. Huntsman Hall, 3730 Walnut St. Philadelphia.

There is a fee for attendees; however, a limited number of scholarships are available for minority entrepreneurs. Information on [scholarships is available online](#) or call 215-922-7400.

For more information and to register online visit the [Social Venture Institute webpage](#).

Game Commission Reminders With Deer Season Just Around the Corner

Pennsylvania's biggest hunting season - the two-week rifle [deer season](#) - is just around the corner—running from November 27 to December 8— which annually leads to the harvest of more than a quarter million deer and pumps millions of dollars into the Commonwealth's economy.

"Preparing for deer season becomes a priority for most hunters as soon as the turkey is cleared off the table on Thanksgiving Day," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "Anticipation, reviewing scouting efforts and ensuring all the equipment is ready makes the preparation a weekend-long endeavor that doesn't end until they head afield opening morning.

"Deer hunting is important to Pennsylvanians everywhere. It's a tradition that was handed down by our forefathers and one that we will continue for future generations. It's a safe and time-proven way to manage this renewable resource and ensure its conservation. Deer hunting provides millions of days of outdoor recreation, millions of pounds of venison, and helps limit deer damage to forests, crops and vehicles by reducing deer numbers.

"Time spent deer hunting is invaluable to Pennsylvanians," Roe said. "It provides an escape from our fast-paced world. A chance to slow down, to enjoy the outdoors, to outfox the most-respected big game animal in the country."

The Game Commission strives to manage a healthy and productive deer herd that provides recreational opportunities within acceptable ecological impacts and human conflicts. It's a never-ending job, and one that will always be influenced by Pennsylvania's changing landscape and the varying viewpoints of its residents. But, the agency is committed to providing sound deer management.

Hunters must wear 250 square inches of fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined at all times while afield. They also are advised that it's illegal to



hunt, chase or disturb deer with a firearm within 150 yards of any occupied building without the occupant's permission.

All hunters who take a deer must fill out their harvest tag and attach it to the deer's ear before moving the carcass. The tag can be secured to the base of the ear with a string drawn very tightly, if the hunter plans to have the deer mounted. Cutting a slit in the ear to attach the tag will require additional work by a taxidermist.

A harvest report card - provided with every license sold - must be mailed to the Game Commission within 10 days after taking the deer. Hunters who lose or misplace a deer harvest report card are urged to use or copy the big game harvest report card found on page 33 of the 2007-2008 Pennsylvania Hunting and Trapping Digest, which also is provided to all license-buyers.

Deer hunters also are advised of the recent change in legal hunting hours. It now is legal to hunt from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset. For more information, please see page 14 of the 2007-08 Digest for the legal hunting hours table. Deer hunters with an unused bear license also are reminded they may take a bear from November 26 to December 1 in the state's extended black bear season. The extended season will be held in WMU 3C, portions of 3B, 4E, and 2G, from November 26 to December 1. In WMU 3D, an extended season will run November 28 to December 1.

Bear licenses must be purchased prior to November 26. Bear licenses may be purchased at any issuing agent or through "[The Outdoor Shop](#)" on the Game Commission's website. Web orders are provided a "web order number" that must be written on the current general hunting license and signed.

Facts from the Pennsylvania Game Commission: Do deer see color? Because deer eyes have more rods, which enhance night vision, than cones, which provide the ability to see color, for decades, the answer was no.

Recent research suggests deer do see color - especially on the blue-side of the color spectrum - but they have trouble seeing reds and greens. Camouflage patterns confuse a deer's vision, but they have an uncanny ability to see movement. If you want a deer to come closer, break up your outline by standing still or near a tree. Also, don't wear blue jeans and avoid having the wind blow your scent to the deer!

For more information, visit the Game Commission's [Deer Management Program webpage](#).

Local White-Tailed Deer Information Available Online

Interested in learning more about what's going on with whitetails in your county? Please consider visiting the Game Commission's "[Field Officer Game Forecasts](#)" found on the agency's website.

Developed to share field officer perspectives and observations on game and furbearer trends in their respective districts and to help hunters and trappers get closer to the action afield, the field reports have been warmly received by many hunters and trappers.

"Our field officers spend a tremendous amount of time afield, often in areas hunters and trappers are eager to learn more about," said Carl G. Roe, Game Commission executive director. "Their observations have value to hunters and trappers so we decided to make them accessible to anyone who enjoys hunting and trapping in Pennsylvania - resident or nonresident. They can access the reports from their home or office."



For more information, visit the Game Commission's [Deer Management Program webpage](#).

First Annual PA Prescribed Fire Conference February 19-20

The Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council is sponsoring the first annual [PA Prescribed Fire Conference](#) on February 19-20 in State College.

Across the country, prescribed fire is being used for forest regeneration, fuel reduction, and ecological restoration. Public concerns, dated legislation, and the need for communication between federal, state, and private members of the fire community have brought attention to the need for a Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council, a group of interested and invested people to promote prescribed fire use.



Ultimately, the resurging interest in and use of fire as a management tool will depend on understanding and addressing real and perceived social constraints. This will require the combined effort of the Pennsylvania fire community – those who have the training, education, and desire to become active partners for the future of our forests – working with a broad set of stakeholders.

The Conference will focus on fire use and ecology in Pennsylvania, the oak regeneration challenge, current rules and regulations that must be addressed when using fire in the Commonwealth, and the Pennsylvania Prescribed Fire Council.

Registration is now open. The conference will be held at the Penn State Conference Center in State College, Pa. CEUs will be available to foresters attending the conference.

For more information, [download the conference brochure](#), or if you have any questions, please contact Tara Claghorn, ttc126@psu.edu ..

Links: [The Nature Conservancy Presentation on Prescribed Fire in PA Prescribed Fire – Tools and Tactics Section](#), The Nature Conservancy Newsletter

\$366,000 Investment to Help Businesses Increase Use of Composted Material

The Department of Environmental Protection announced six grants totaling \$366,000 in Compost Infrastructure Development Grants to increase the use of composted organic materials in finished products.

The grants include--

- **Centre County:** [Tait Farm Foods Inc.](#) - \$55,560 for equipment that will allow this community supported agriculture farm to receive additional leaf and yard waste from Harris Township and food waste from food manufacturers, restaurants and residences. Tait Farms will compost an additional 200 tons of organic waste annually.
- **Cumberland County:** [Dickinson College](#) - \$93,000 for equipment that will enable the campus farm to expand and accept organic materials from new sources, including campus cafeterias, coffee shops and local businesses. The grant will allow the college to compost an additional 91,000 pounds of material annually. The finished compost

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will be used on the campus farm, which grows fresh produce that is used in the campus dining halls.

- **Jefferson County:** [Quiet Creek Herb Farm & School of Country Living Inc.](#) - \$17,662 for equipment to start on-site vermicomposting at a local restaurant. Vermicomposting uses worms to compost food waste into nutrient-rich soil amendments. The nonprofit group expects to compost 168 cubic yards of organic materials annually.
- **Montgomery County:** [Two Particular Acres](#) - \$91,893 for equipment that will allow this family-owned farm to receive additional food wastes from hotels, hospitals and grocery stores. The farm will compost 10,000 cubic yards of material annually. Additional equipment will mechanically remove plastics that contaminate the feedstock, resulting in a higher quality finished product with greater market value.
- **Schuylkill County:** Red Earth Farm – \$20,533 for equipment that will allow this community supported agriculture farm to accept organic materials from additional local businesses. The farm plans to compost 2,000 additional cubic yards of material annually.
- **Tioga County:** Keystone North Inc. - \$87,289 to develop and build a vermicomposting system to be demonstrated at Mansfield University, which does not currently compost the food waste generated on campus. The company expects to compost 164 tons of food waste annually at the university. The resulting compost material will be sold and could generate up to \$2,000 per week. Additional vermicomposting systems will be manufactured and sold based on market demand.

The grants, which can go up to \$100,000 for each project, are leveraged to attract additional investment from private entities and community organizations. This year's recipients will invest more than \$91,000 additionally to support these projects.

For more information, visit [DEP's Compost webpage](#).

DCNR Names Deputy Secretary for Conservation, Technical Services

A veteran of the [Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's](#) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation has been appointed as deputy secretary for conservation and technical services.

Effective this week, Cindy Adams Dunn will succeed Larry Williamson, who will now serve as a special advisor to DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis until Williamson's retirement in the spring. Replacing Dunn as the director of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation is Brenda Barrett, who, most recently, was the national coordinator for heritage areas with the National Park Service.

"This is a strong team to support recreation, conservation, regional initiatives and land protection around the state," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "Larry, Cindy and Brenda's many years of experience, dedication and leadership - and their tremendous passion for establishing community partnerships to advance the greening of Pennsylvania - will help protect the commonwealth's natural and heritage resources, and provide recreational opportunities for all Pennsylvanians and visitors to enjoy."

Adams Dunn will oversee DCNR's bureaus of Recreation and Conservation and Topographic and Geologic Survey and serve a pivotal role in advancing the agency's mission to promote community recreation and conservation initiatives, and educate the public through geologic and topographic information and mapping.

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Adams Dunn has served as the director of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation since January 2005. Before that she was the director of DCNR's Office of Education, Communications and Partnerships.

Earlier in her career, Adams Dunn also served as the director of community relations and environmental education for DCNR, as the executive director and vice president of Audubon Pennsylvania, and led the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Harrisburg office for 10 years.

Adams Dunn holds master's and bachelor's degrees in biology from Shippensburg University. She lives in Hampden Township, Cumberland County, with her husband.

Barrett will be responsible for a variety of grant and technical assistance programs concerned with community recreation, heritage regions, rivers conservation, greenways and trails, and natural areas and open space.

Prior to joining the National Park Service, Barrett served in a number of positions with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, including director of Historic Preservation, and of Historic Sites and Museums.

Barrett holds a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Colorado, a master's in archeology from the University of Wisconsin and a law degree from Penn State Dickinson School of Law.

She lives in Harrisburg with her husband.

Williamson of Silver Spring Township, Cumberland County, directed the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation for more than 20 years. He served as the deputy secretary since January 2005.

Spotlight

Prescribed Fire Helps Restore Oak and Pitch Pine Forests in PA

Last fall, thanks to cooperative weather and a dedicated crew of staff and volunteers, The [Nature Conservancy Pennsylvania Office](#) successfully completed its first prescribed burn at West Branch Wilderness in Clinton County. Spanning about two acres, the burns were small, but plans are under way to turn larger tracts in the future.

The Conservancy is using prescribed fire at this 3,000-acre “forest laboratory” to restore degraded forests to ecologically and economically healthy conditions by fostering the growth of keystone species such as oak and pitch pine.

“We learned a lot of information from this first burn that will be a stepping stone to the next level of fire management. Prescribed fire is an important tool that can help us restore this forest to a productive level for both nature and people,” said George Gress, fire specialist and land steward.

Fire is an essential force that has shaped life on Earth, but in many natural areas, the role of fire is severely out of balance, with negative consequences for both human and natural communities.



However, plants and animals that live in fire-shaped landscapes are resilient to the repeated fires that tend to be part of these systems. In fact, many species in these areas depend on fire to survive and thrive.

“Prescribed fire promotes the overall health and structure of the forest and greatly accelerates the restoration of degraded forest lands,” said Dylan Jenkins. “Low-intensity, high-frequency fire is like rain: It’s very regenerative and can transform a stagnant site into a healthy, productive forest.”

Fire is especially important for fostering the growth of oaks, a group of species resilient and adapted to low intensity burns. Frequent burns help reduce competition for space and sunlight by minimizing the cover of mountain laurel and other heath plants that crowd out oak seedlings. Such burns also expose soil and foster growth of species such as red and white pine, black cherry, native grasses, blueberry and flowering dogwood.

Pitch pines, an important component of vibrant and productive forests, also crave fire. Birds of prey nest and roost in the trees’ open branches, and wide-ranging mammals like fisher favor the unique architecture of pitch pine forests for habitat. Altered natural fire regimes have fragmented historically dense stands of these trees, which were once prevalent throughout the Pocono Mountains, the Central Appalachians and the North Central Highlands. To promote regeneration of this important species, Conservancy staff will manually replant pitch pine seeds this spring to capitalize on the nutrient-rich soils after the burn.

Todd Sampsell, director of stewardship, credited the Conservancy’s fire crew for last fall’s successful burn. “Our stewardship staff has worked hard to obtain increasingly higher levels of training and provide leadership on the fire line. Their skills and expertise are an impressive resource we’re increasingly sharing with our interested partners. Our success at West Branch Wilderness is helping us restore and manage our forests and unique habitats.”

To volunteer for these and other projects, visit The Nature Conservancy [PA Volunteer webpage](#) or contact Molly Anderson by sending email to: molly_anderson@tnc.org to find out how you can help protect our fire-shaped landscapes.

Reprinted from [Spring/Summer 2007 Newsletter](#), The Nature Conservancy

Links: [The Nature Conservancy Presentation on Prescribed Fire in PA Prescribed Fire – Tools and Tactics Section](#), The Nature Conservancy Newsletter

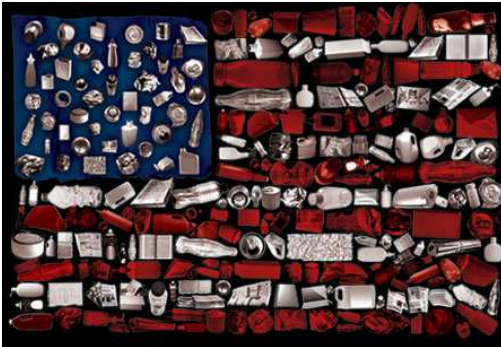
See the separate article in this *Digest* on the first annual [PA Prescribed Fire Conference](#) in February.

Opinion

Celebrating Nearly 20 Years of Recycling in PA— A Good Habit Getting Better America Recycles Day November 15

By

**Anthony L. Crisci
Counsel
Pennsylvania Beverage Association**



Next year Pennsylvania will celebrate the 20th anniversary of [curbside recycling in the Commonwealth](#), a program signed into law by Gov. Robert P. Casey in 1988 that has grown to include over 9 million residents in 1,364 municipalities across the state. Recycling has become a habit that most people do every day around the house without a second thought.

As we celebrate [America Recycles Day](#) November 15, it is a great time to remember this good habit needs to be reinforced and expanded to achieve even more waste reduction, energy savings and employment opportunities for our citizens.

The public and private investment in our recycling programs is huge.

The Department of Environmental Protection provides over \$48 million in grants to set up and support community-based recycling programs each year.

There are more than 3,200 businesses and organizations that recycle and use recycled materials in manufacturing, generating more than \$18 billion in gross annual sales and employing more than 81,000 workers. These businesses paid more than \$305 million in taxes to the state treasury, according to the Department of Environmental Protection.

Aside from the economic benefits, the environmental benefits have been significant: 4.86 million tons of material that would otherwise be dumped in landfills is recycled annually. Recycling has saved enough energy to provide power to 940,000 homes for one year or put another way it has the energy equivalent of 786 gallons of gasoline, according to DEP.

Roadside littering of beverage containers, now collected in recycling programs, declined by 64 percent between 1988, the first year of the program, and 1999, according to a state Department of Transportation survey.

Clearly, Pennsylvania is on the right environmental path with its recycling efforts, but more must and can be done to build on the success of the system we have in place. One creative idea to expand curbside recycling has resulted in tripling both the participation rates and the amount of material collected in pilot neighborhoods in Philadelphia.

[RecycleBank](#), a private firm, works with communities and local businesses to provide residents with a dollar-incentive to recycle. In communities that sign on, residents earn RecycleBank “dollars” for each pound of material they recycle. These dollars can then be redeemed for coupons worth real dollars at local food stores, clothing shops and can even be donated to non-profit groups, up to \$300 per year.

Since the pilot program in Philadelphia, RecycleBank has taken its program to dozens of other communities in Pennsylvania and other states with similar results.

Innovative solutions like RecycleBank that build on Pennsylvania’s already successful recycling program can both reinforce the good habits we have developed over the last 20 years and continue to make the Commonwealth an environmental leader.

Anthony L. Crisci serves as Counsel to the Pennsylvania Beverage Association which represents beverage bottlers serving the residents of Pennsylvania. He can be contacted at 717-234-1716.

Grants & Awards

This section gives you a heads up on upcoming deadlines for grants and financial assistance as well as nominations for awards and other recognition programs. **NEW** means from last week—

- **November 16** – **NEW**. [Governor’s Award for Local Government Excellence](#)
- **November 27** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for January 22 Meeting](#).
- **November 30** – **NEW**. [North American Wetlands Conservation Act Small Grants](#)
- **November 30** – USDA [Environmental Quality Incentive Program Grants](#)
- **November 30** – [U.S. Composting Council Composting Awards](#).
- **December 3** – [PA Historical and Museum Commission Grants](#)
- **December 3** – **NEW**. [NOAA Stream Barrier Removal Grants](#)
- **December 7** – [2008 Philadelphia Sustainability Awards](#)
- **December 7** – PA Land Trust Assn. [Conservation Leadership Award](#)
- **December 13** – [Western PA Conservancy, Dominion Watershed Grants](#)
- **December 14** – [Coldwater Heritage Partnership Grants](#).
- **December 14** – [PA Parks/Forests Foundation 2008 Awards](#)
- **December 14** – U.S. EPA [Greater Research Student Opportunities Grants](#)
- **December 15** – DEP [Growing Greener Innovative Technology Grants](#)
- **December 15** – **NEW Deadline**. DEP [New or Innovative Water/Wastewater Grants](#).
- **December 15** – DEP [Environmental Education Grants](#).
- **December 31** – Fish & Boat Commission [Sportfishing/Aquatic Ed Grants](#)
- **January 1** – Environ. Concerns [Schoolyard Wetland Habitat Grants](#)
- **January 4** – [PA Conservation Corps Grants](#).
- **February 1** – PA Land Trust Assn. [Government Leadership Award Nominations](#).
- **February 19** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **March 31** – PAEP [Karl Mason Environmental Award](#).
- **April 2** – [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)

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

Quick Clips

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

[Campaigns Elect to Recycle Signs](#)

[Bucks OKs Open Space Spending - \\$87 Million](#)

[Offering Different Electricity Rates Could Help Customers Cut Costs](#)

[PPL Gives Away Energy-Saving Bulbs](#)
[Op-Ed: Fee Needed to Update Gas Infrastructure](#)
[Burden or Benefit? Fallen Leaves Taken to Task](#)
[Last Gasp for Allegheny County's Air Pollution Program?](#)
[DEP May Get Control of Air Quality Program](#)
[Supporters Defend County's Air Monitoring](#)
[Editorial: Allegheny County Should Not Give Up Pollution Control](#)
[Gypsy Moths Extracting Heavier Toll](#)
[Leafy Mount Nittany Threatened by Moths](#)
[Serious ATV Injuries Are On The Rise Here](#)
[Accessible Tunnel Road Offers Much to Explore](#)
[State Contests Need for Power Lines](#)
[Pipeline to be Built to Send Landfill Gas to Lancaster](#)
[Editorial: In Case of Oil Supply Disruption, Coal Offers Alternative](#)
[On-Lot Sewage System Maintenance Ordinance Approved](#)
[Editorial: Regional Planning Would Protect Gettysburg](#)
[Transit-Oriented Housing Development Set for Green Tree](#)
[The Nature Conservancy Opens Western PA Office](#)

Watershed NewsClips

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

[Droughts Worsened by Sprawl Patterns](#)
[4 Luzerne County Streams Cited For Healthy Trout Populations](#)
[PA Offers Tax Credits to Farmers](#)
[Susquehanna River Walk to Be Completed by Next Spring](#)
[The Tireless Project: Cleaning Up Our Rivers](#)
[Wildwood Project Could Limit Paxton Creek Flooding](#)
[Wyoming County Watershed Protection Projects Reviewed](#)
[U.S. Senate Buys Flood Control](#)
[Why Your Sewer Bills Will Soar](#)

Regulations

The Environmental Quality Board [published final-form regulations](#) making changes to the Storage Tank Program and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission published [comments on proposed changes](#) to coal mining and safe drinking water regulations by the EQB.

NewsClip: [New Storage Tank Regulations Take Effect](#)

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – November 10, 2007](#)

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 a proposed policy](#) on delivery bans may be imposed under the Storage Tank Program and the Public Utility Commission [published a proposed policy statement](#) on Customer Assistance Programs to help customers pay utility bills.

DEP ID: 257-4000-001. Storage Tank Product Delivery Prohibition. This guidance document describes the circumstances under which the Department may impose storage tank product delivery prohibitions in conjunction with the Department's authority to suspend, revoke or deny an operating permit, as authorized by the Storage Tank and Spill Prevention Act. Comments due: December 10.

[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. **NEW** indicates new from last week. [Go To: PA Environment Digest Calendar Page](#)

- [Online Environmental Remediation Courses Announced](#)
- **November 13** – **NEW**. Senate Appropriations Committee meets to consider [House Bill 1589](#) (D.Evans-D-Philadelphia) establishing a Capital Budget for 2007-08. Room 461. 12:30.
- **November 13** – **NEW**. PA Farm Bureau Biofuels from Agriculture, Opportunities and Challenges Seminar. Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Magnolia B. 1:45-3:00.
- **November 14** – House Intergovernmental Affairs Committee meets to consider [House Resolution 300](#) (Bennington-D-Allegheny) urging Congress to ban the use of organic or inorganic arsenic and arsenic derivatives in poultry feed. Room 302. 8:30.
- **November 14** – **CANCELLED**. DEP [Water Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Next scheduled meeting January 9.
- **November 14** – **NEW**. Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policy hearing on [Special Session Senate Bill 1](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) Alternative Energy Investment Act. Room 8 A/B East Wing. 9:00.
- **November 14** – **NEW**. Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meets to consider [Senate Resolution 195](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to review the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program, [Senate Bill 863](#) (Waugh-R-York) amending the Agricultural Area Security Law to provide for the Agricultural Land Conservation Assistance Grant

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Program, [Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) updating the Conservation District Law prompted by the 2005 review by the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee. Room 8E-A East Wing. 11:30.

- **November 15** – **NEW**. House Health & Human Services Committee hearing on [House Bill 798](#) (Phillips-R-Northumberland) establishing a task force on Lyme Disease. Room 205 Ryan Building. 11:30.
- **November 15** – House Commerce Committee hearing on [House Bill 1742](#) (Pashinski-D-Luzerne) requiring scrap and recycling facility operators to collect information on scrap material. City Hall Counsel Chambers, Wilkes-Barre. 10:30.
- **November 19** – Environmental Issues Forum presentation by Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh’s E-Waste Recycling Program sponsored by the Joint Air Pollution Control and Conservation Committee. Room 60 East Wing. Noon.
- **November 20** – **NEW**. Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee hearing on [Senate Bill 1134](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) providing for a transition to market rates in the electric utility industry, providing for energy efficiency and demand-response initiatives. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:30.
- **November 20** – **CANCELLED**. Environmental Quality Board. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **November 29** – [DEP Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board](#) meeting on the Alternative Bonding System. Delaware Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **December 4** – [Delaware River Basin Commission](#) hearing on [numeric values for existing water quality](#) in the Lower Delaware River. 25 State Police Dr., West Trenton, NJ. 2:30.
- **December 13** – DEP [Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Advisory Board](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **February 22-23** – 2008 [Keystone Coldwater Conference](#). State College.

[DEP Calendar of Events](#)

[Watershed Events](#) (*courtesy [PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers](#)*)

[Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

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Stories Invited

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

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