

# —PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

November 19, 2007

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## REAP Farm Conservation Tax Credit Applications Accepted Beginning January 2



The State Conservation Commission [this week approved](#) the guidelines and applications needed to apply for the Resource Enhancement and Protection Act (REAP) farm conservation tax credit.

The Commission will begin accepting applications January 2 and applications and other background materials should be available on the

Commission's website by December 1.

The REAP Program provides \$10 million this fiscal year for agricultural Best Management Practices in the form of transferable or sponsored tax credits.

Personal and business state tax credits ranging from 50 to 75 percent of the cost to install conservation practices like barnyard improvements, riparian buffers, no-till planting equipment, stream fencing and other practices will be available.

Each farm enrolled in the program is eligible for up to \$150,000 in transferable tax credits that can be used over a 15-year period or sold to other taxpayers. A business can earn tax credits by sponsoring projects on an eligible farm.

REAP was included in [Senate Bill 97](#), but received overwhelming bipartisan support. It was sponsored in the House by Representatives Jerry Stern (R-Blair) and Peter Daley (D-Washington) and in the Senate by Senators Mike Waugh (R-York) and Michael O'Pake (D-Berks), along with 79 other co-sponsors.

Information on REAP is available online at the [CBF REAP webpage](#) and at [State Conservation Commission REAP webpage](#).

Farmers or businesses interested in sponsoring farm projects who would like to receive an information packet on REAP should send an email to [REAP@cbf.org](mailto:REAP@cbf.org) or send their name and address to Chesapeake Bay Foundation, attn: REAP, 614 North Front Street, Suite G, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

**Spotlight:** [The REAP Program: New Conservation Dollars for PA Farms](#)

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### Session Schedule

The Senate and House will return to voting session November 19. The House cancelled

November 27 & 28 as session days, but

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added December 5, 17, 18 and 19 as voting days and added December 13 as a non-voting day. The Senate released its early 2008 session schedule this week—

January 1, 14, 15, 16, 28, 29, 30

February 4, 5, 6, 11, 12

March 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 31

April 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 28, 29, 30

May 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21

June 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30

### [PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

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#### **Spotlight**

- The REAP Program: New Conservation Dollars for PA Farms, *By Lamonte Garber, Chesapeake Bay Foundation*

## Grants & Awards

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## Online Video

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### PA Resources Council Promotes Composting Fall Leaves on KDKA Pittsburgh

David Mazza and Corrine Ogrodnick from the Pennsylvania Resources Council appeared on the KDKA “At Home With the Environment” program this week to promote composting of fall foliage.

Mazza and Ogrodnick provided the TV audience with the [basics of composting](#) as an alternative to burning or putting leaves in a landfill.

Search the [KDKA website](#) for other stories on the environment provided by the [PA Resources Council](#).

## On the Hill

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### On the Senate/House Agenda

The Senate and House have the following committee meetings scheduled next week and published voting Calendars for November 19—

#### Calendars – November 19

**House:** [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to protect the Appalachian Trail.

**Senate:** [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) providing for uniform environmental covenants for brownfields projects; [Senate Bill 266](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) requiring DEP to inventory greenhouse gases and create a climate change action plan.

#### Committees

**House:** the Local Government Committee meets to consider [House Bill 904](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) authorizing a temporary development moratorium and [House Bill 1525](#) (Steil-R-Bucks) authorizing impact fees and transportation capital improvement plans; the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Special Session House Bill 2](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) mandating the sale of transportation fuels with renewable content, [Special Session House Bill 12](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing an energy efficient home assistance program at the Housing Finance Agency, [Special Session House Bill 33](#) (Vereb-R-Montgomery) providing additional funding for the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program.

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**Senate:** the Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee holds a 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.

**Other:** the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee hosts the Environmental Issues Forum which features a presentation by Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh its E-Waste Recycling Program.

### Senate/House Bills Moving/Bills Introduced

The following bills and resolutions moved in the Senate and House this week--

#### Senate

**Climate Change:** [Senate Bill 266](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) requiring DEP to inventory greenhouse gases and create a climate change action plan was amended with two sets of technical changes and reported from the Senate Appropriations Committee and is now on the Senate Calendar for action.

**Alternative Energy Investments:** [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 was referred to Senate Appropriations Committee.

**Capital Budget:** [House Bill 1589](#) (D.Evans-D-Philadelphia) establishing a Capital Budget for 2007-08 was amended and reported from and back to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

**Student Conservation Assn.:** [Senate Resolution 213](#) (Fontana-D-Allegheny) recognizing the Student Conservation Association on its 50th anniversary of public service to parks and public lands in the Pittsburgh area was adopted by the Senate.

**GIS Day:** [Senate Resolution 215](#) (C.Williams-D-Montgomery) designating November 15 as “Pennsylvania Geographic Information System Day” was adopted by the Senate.

#### House

**Workers’ Compensation:** [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” was passed by the House and sent to the Senate for consideration.

**Hazardous Sites Cleanup Funding:** [Senate Bill 1100](#) (Pileggi-R-Delaware) that would provide a dedicated source of funding for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Program was referred directly to the House Appropriations Committee.

#### Bills Introduced

These bills were introduced this week--

**Student Conservation Assn.:** [Senate Resolution 213](#) (Fontana-D-Allegheny) recognizing the Student Conservation Association on its 50th anniversary of public service to parks and public lands in the Pittsburgh area was adopted by the Senate.

**Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards:** [House Bill 2006](#) (Yewcic-D-Cambria) amending the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act stipulating owners of alternative energy credits.

**Heritage Program:** [House Bill 2035](#) (Seip-D-Berks) making changes to the Heritage Area Program to protect historic, recreation, cultural, natural and scenic resources.

**Hazardous Sites Cleanup:** [House Bill 2039](#) (Milne-R-Chester) using surplus budget monies to fund the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund.

**Energy Education:** [House Resolution 506](#) (George-D-Clearfield) urging the Department of Environmental Protection and Public Utility Commission to develop recommendations on how consumers can take steps to deal with rising electric prices when rate caps expire.

### **Senate Energy Policy Committee Hearing on Renewable Energy Investments**

The [Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policy](#) this week held a hearing on [Special Session Senate Bill 1](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango), the Alternative Energy Investment Act, outlining a proposal for state investments in renewable energy.

Special Session Senate Bill 1 is an alternative to Gov. Rendell's proposal that would provide: \$20 million annually for consumer/home energy efficiency programs, \$20 million annually in tax credits for investments in alternative energy production projects; and \$20 million annually to finance a \$250 million bond for alternative and renewable energy development, clean energy and energy conservation, and pollution control technology.

For consumers, \$20 million would be available for grants, rebates and reimbursements for: purchasing energy-efficient heating and cooling units and appliances; residential energy conservation projects, including purchasing and installing: solar or solar photovoltaic panels; energy efficient windows and doors; and insulation, air-sealing and other energy saving projects.

Tax credits totaling \$20 million would be available to facilities which: produce or distribute renewable energy by using biofuel, biomass, solar power, wind energy, clean coal technologies, waste coal or other alternative energy sources defined under the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act; manufacture or produce products that provide renewable energy; and are used for the research and development of technology to provide alternative or renewable energy sources.

Bond proceeds would be allocated in the amount of \$50 million per year over a five-year period for: development of alternative and renewable energy technologies and venture capital; pollution control technology projects to assist existing electric generating units meet enhanced state and federal pollution emission reduction requirements; and

clean energy and energy conservation projects.

The Committee received testimony from: 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.

[A video of the hearing is available online](#) and copies of the testimony are available at the [Committee's webpage](#).

The Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policy is chaired by Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne).

**NewsClip:** [Governor, Business Leaders Urge Action on Energy Proposals](#)

### **House Sponsors of Clean Energy Bills Urge Action on Special Energy Session Bills**

A bipartisan group of legislators and Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future this week urged action on Special Session Energy legislation to encourage renewable fuels, deal with the transition to market-based electric rates, install smart electric meters and encourage energy conservation.

"Too little has been done on energy policy in 2007, and our energy problems are getting more serious every month. Funding renewable energy, supporting biofuels, boosting energy conservation, and cutting peak electricity demands with smart meters have been discussed and debated since February," said John Hanger, president and CEO of PennFuture.

"We now have 28 days left before the legislature is scheduled to leave for the holidays," continued Hanger. "Will 2007 be a lost year of no action? Or will it be known as the year the leaders of Pennsylvania passed key energy legislation that protects our economy, environment and security?"

Legislators at the press conference included:

Bryan Lentz (D-Delaware) appeared at the request of Rep. Michael Gerber (D-Montgomery), who introduced the PennSecurity Fuels Initiative ([House Bill 1202](#)), already passed in the House, which would require a growing percentage of our transportation fuels – gasoline and diesel fuel – to be made from homegrown renewable energy sources like soybeans and agricultural waste.

Rep. Carole Rubley (R-Chester, Montgomery), appearing at the request of Rep. Chris Ross (R-Chester), who is prime sponsor of legislation ([Special Session House Bill 31](#)) to require that energy conservation programs be created in all parts of Pennsylvania so that electricity demand does not continue to increase every year but is stabilized at current levels.

Rep. Robert Freeman (D-Northampton), sponsor of the bill (House Bill 2017 in the regular session and Special Session House Bill 38-- *neither bill text is available online*) helping consumers to save money by insuring that smart electric meters are installed for all electricity customers, so that all consumers can be paid for cutting energy demand during the times when electricity is most needed and most expensive.

Rep. Eugene DePasquale (D-York), whose legislation ([Special Session House Bill 1](#)) will ensure adequate funding to provide incentives for job-creating renewable energy development and money-saving energy efficiency investments to compete with surrounding states.

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Rep. Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) urged action on the Energy Independence bills to help combat global climate change. [House Bill 110](#), sponsored by Rep. Vitali on climate change, passed the House last month and the Senate is considering a companion bill—[Senate Bill 266](#)—on climate change sponsored by Sen. Erickson (R-Delaware).

Rep. Camille (Bud) George (D – Clearfield), Chair of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, also participated in the press conference, saying he would do everything in his power to move these bills forward.

Rep. Joseph Preston (D-Allegheny), Chair of the House Consumer Affairs Committee, said he would work with both sides of the aisle to address this important issue that affects all Pennsylvanians.

Others attending the press conference include Representatives John Hornaman (D-Erie), Chris King (D-Bucks), and Mike Vereb (R- Montgomery).

### Senate Agriculture Committee Acts on Land Conservation Bills

The Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee reported out a bill and resolution on the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program and the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, but rescheduled action on legislation updating the Conservation District Law.

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.

[Senate Bill 863](#) (Waugh-R-York) would permanently establish the Agricultural Land Conservation Grant Program in the Agricultural Area Security Law.

This Program provides matching grants to counties to assist with their farmland preservation programs, including the development of Geographic Information Systems, development of effective agricultural zoning ordinances, staff training, the hiring of contract services and the purchase of certain computer software.

Under the current Program, counties can receive a maximum of \$25,000 in accumulative grants; in the six rounds of applications that have already been approved, six counties have reached this maximum ceiling. Senate Bill 863 would remove this \$25,000 limitation and instead set an annual cap of \$10,000.

"This grant program has been very valuable to counties in delaying the loss of prime farmland to non-agricultural uses," Sen. Brubaker said. "I am very pleased that Senator Waugh has reintroduced his legislation to provide for its permanent authorization."

Sen. Brubaker also noted that during the statewide listening sessions held earlier this year by the Committee, several individuals expressed an interest in reviewing the farmland preservation program to ensure that after 25 years, it is still as effective as it could and should be.

For that reason, Sen. Brubaker said he introduced [Senate Resolution 195](#), which was approved by the Committee today. The resolution would direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of the program, including an analysis of, among other items, the criteria by which farms are selected, options available to the program, and the feasibility of providing other incentives such as tax credits in lieu of cash payments.

"Our farmland preservation program has helped Pennsylvania become a leader in the number of farms and acres preserved, and is a model for other programs nationwide," Sen. Brubaker said.

"However, many people testified during the listening sessions that there are ways in which we can change and improve upon this successful program, which is why I am asking for a full review of a wide variety of parameters," Sen. Brubaker continued. "Then, using this information, this Committee will be able to develop a plan of action to direct funds to their most effective use and also keep farmland available for future generations."

The Committee also approved Senate Resolution 193, which commemorates the 20th anniversary of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania. The Center is an agency of the General Assembly that provides assistance, conducts research and develops policy based on rural conditions and needs.

Each year, the Center approves one-year grants to qualified members of state universities and Penn State University to conduct applied research or identify local strategies that can result in legislative or policy recommendations. It also publishes a Rural Access Guide that provides information about state, federal and nonprofit/foundation grants, loans and technical assistance resources.

"Rural life, enjoyed by more than three million Pennsylvanians, has both its benefits and its unique challenges, such as income gaps and less access to health care and other resources," Sen. Brubaker said. "The Center for Rural Pennsylvania provides critical support to these rural and small communities to help them maintain their vitality and way of life, and I am proud to honor them for their long history of service to the Commonwealth."

[Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery), updating the Conservation District Law prompted by the 2005 review by the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, was passed over by the Committee, but Sen. Brubaker said it would be brought back for consideration at their November 28 meeting.

### **Rep. Phillips' Lyme Disease Task Force Bill Subject of House Hearing**

The controversial treatment of Lyme disease – and whether it should be covered by health insurance – was the topic of a public hearing held this week by the House Health and Human Services Committee.

"The number of Lyme disease cases in Pennsylvania continues to climb, and because this condition is difficult to diagnose and to treat, people need to be very aware of the effects of this tick-borne disease," said Rep. Phillips. "My legislation would help raise awareness about this condition, make it easier for people to get treatment and prevent doctors from being discouraged from treating patients."



Lyme disease is a potentially serious disease carried by deer ticks, and symptoms vary from one person to another. Usually, patients develop a rash that may have a ring-shaped appearance similar to a bull's eye, along with flu-like achiness, fatigue, and low-grade fever. Some patients, however, never get the rash and other early symptoms, but may go on to develop arthritis, neurological disorders, heart problems, and visual impairments. Some patients have lived with the disease for years before it is ultimately diagnosed.

Because Lyme disease is often difficult to diagnose and a complicated condition to treat, physicians may be reluctant to treat Lyme disease due to the potential for disciplinary

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action, even if they are practicing medicine with the best resources and information available to them, Rep. Phillips said.

[House Bill 798](#) (Phillips-R-Northumberland) calls for the creation of a task force to help the state Department of Health investigate and make recommendations for the education, prevention and treatment of Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases.

“Anyone who spends any amount of time outdoors, because of their occupation or for recreation, are at risk,” Rep. Phillips said.

Specifically, the task force would be charged with raising awareness of the long-term effects of the misdiagnosis of Lyme disease, developing a program of public information and education regarding Lyme disease and disseminating information on Lyme disease to the general public in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

In addition, the legislation calls for all health care policies to cover prescribed treatment for Lyme disease and related tick-borne diseases as prescribed by the patient’s attending physician.

The bill would also establish parameters for professional misconduct proceedings when an insurance provider or other professional or business entity files a complaint against a physician for treatment of Lyme disease. The physician will be informed of the complaint filed against him or her and receive a copy of the complaint upon request.

All those who testified agreed that public awareness and education is important, especially in preventing the tick-borne disease and in getting early diagnosis and treatment. Two separate treatments presently exist, with one calling for the use of long-term antibiotics, and that is where the controversy has arisen.

At issue during Thursday’s hearing was a provision in the bill calling for mandatory insurance coverage for the long-term use of antibiotics to treat Lyme disease. Four physicians who have collectively spent more than 100 years treating Lyme disease patients testified on Thursday.

The medical experts, from Philadelphia, Chester County, Harrisburg and New York, were divided on their support of the bill. Supporters of the bill believe that if a treatment works and helps a patient with Lyme disease recover, insurance should cover the cost.

However, critics argued that long-term antibiotic treatment carries risks for serious side effects as well as the growing threat of antibiotic resistance.

Supporters countered this by testifying that insurance companies that deny such coverage are essentially denying patients’ access to care. In addition, they contend that without such treatment, medical costs for Lyme disease patients run into the millions of dollars each year.

“The treatment that is being prescribed for Lyme disease should be a personal decision between the physician and the patient, not the insurance company,” Rep. Phillips said.

In addition to the physicians offering testimony, three patients who have suffered from the disease shared their stories and challenges with regard to diagnosis and coverage for treatment.

Rep. Phillips’ legislation has been passed in previous House sessions, but has not moved in the state Senate. The hearing was the second the Committee has held on the bill in the past couple of months.

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Testimony was presented by: [Dr. Michael Buckley and Dr. John Goldman](#) for the Infectious Diseases Society of America, [Dr. Ann Corson](#), member International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society, [Dr. Donald Goldsmith](#), Pennsylvania Rheumatology Society, Dr. Daniel Cameron, International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society, [Julia Wagner](#), [Joseph Kamp](#) and [Nicole Lecrone](#) offered comments on their family's experience and [Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania](#).

The chairs of the Health and Human Services Committee are Rep. Oliver (D-Philadelphia) and Rep. Kenny (R-Montgomery).

Visit the Department of Health's [Lyme Disease webpage](#) for more information.

**Link:** [Deer Population Growth, Development Caused Dramatic Increase in Lyme Disease](#)

### House Environmental Committee to Meet on Energy Session Bills

House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider several Special Energy Session bills on renewable transportation fuels, weatherization and home energy efficiency. They include:

- [Special Session House Bill 2](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) mandating the sale of transportation fuels with renewable content;
- [Special Session House Bill 12](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing an energy efficient home assistance program at the Housing Finance Agency; and
- [Special Session House Bill 33](#) (Vereb-R-Montgomery) providing additional funding for the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program

Rep. Bud George (D-Clearfield) chairs the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee and Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) serves as Minority chair.

### Senate Committee Hearing on Transition to Market-Based Electricity Rates

The Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee will hold a hearing November 20 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.

Expected to testify are: Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen McGinty, Wendell Holland, Chairman of the Public Utility Commission, and Commissioners Cawley, Pizzigrilli and Christie, Irwin Popowsky, Consumer Advocate, and William Lloyd, Small Business Advocate, Margan O'Brien, Duquesne Light, Paul Bonney, Exelon/PECO, Stephen Feld, First Energy, Doug Krall, PPL, Peter Toomey, Allegheny Power, the Retail Energy Suppliers Association and Constellation Energy Resources.

The Committee is chaired by Sen. Robert Tomlinson (R-Bucks) and the Democratic chair is Sen. Lisa Boscola (D-Lehigh).

### Environmental Issues Forum to Hear About Pittsburgh E-Waste Recycling Program

The November 19 Environmental Issues Forum will hear a presentation by Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh on its E-Waste Recycling Program.

The Forums are sponsored by the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee and will start at noon in Room 60 East Wing, Capitol Building.

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The Joint Committee is chaired by Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) serves as vice-chairman.

(See separate story on [December 11 Electronics Waste Forum](#) co-sponsored by the Joint Conservation Committee.)

**Link:** [DEP Supports Ban on Electronics Waste Going to Landfills](#)

### Other News

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#### A Helping Hand for Appalachia in the Clean Streams Practicum

The [Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team](#) held part three of the highly successful Clean Streams Practicum training program the last weekend of October at Twin Falls State Park near Mullens, WV.

ACCWT is a partnership between AmeriCorps VISTA and the Office of Surface Mining. They place full-time, paid volunteers into the oft forgotten hollers of Appalachia; those tight-knit communities devastated by abandoned mine drainage and other coal legacy troubles. ACCWT is currently active in eight states across coal country.



Stream Team at Blackleggs Creek, Indiana County

This is the first of two fall trainings, one for northern coalfields groups (PA, OH, MD, N. WV) and one for southern coalfields groups (S. WV, VA, TN, KY, AL) in mid-November. These meetings are the final component of a year-long pilot project, providing assistance to Appalachian watershed groups working to build capacity across the region.

The Clean Streams Practicum began last spring with two identical three day long trainings held in March and April. The group was split into Northern and Southern Coalfields to accommodate the large size of the group. Over the summer, 31 Summer Associate positions were placed throughout coal country with the attendees, at no cost to them. The purpose being to implement the practicum project they designed at training.

These endeavors ranged from macro invertebrate (a.k.a. bug) sampling to updating a membership database, to using a GPS unit to map a watershed. The program was so successful that the AmeriCorps VISTA program highlighted it as one of the best of the year.

After the incredibly productive summer practicum period, the Northern Coalfields Watershed Groups were brought back to Twin Falls this autumn to discuss their accomplishments and to continue learning about the varied resources available. The Southern Coalfields groups will attend an identical event in mid-November.

Dr. T. Allan Comp, director of ACCWT, gave opening remarks, and then participants were given the opportunity to introduce themselves. Next, the diligent OSM/VISTAs from the ACCWT office in Beckley, WV, took turns speaking while they gave the annual report. It was during this time and with much excitement that they announced the hiring of their first full-time, permanent staff member, April Trent who holds a master's degree in Strategic Leadership.

Next, Sarah Walters, a 2-month-new OSM/VISTA spoke to the group about the resources made available by the Eastern Coal Regional Roundtable to watershed groups in

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Appalachia. Mike and Mary Steinmaus of Rural Action in SE Ohio ended the opening night with a stimulating presentation entitled, “How to Approach Sustainability in Coal Country”.

Saturday began early but that didn’t slow down Peggy Mathews of Mathews Consulting. She spent her morning helping seasoned OSM/VISTAs and their sponsors write a fundraising plan. Meanwhile, Sonja Carlborg led a training session on grant writing for newbie OSM/VISTAs and sponsors.

After lunch on Saturday, EPA’s Bonnie Thie spoke about Targeted Watershed Assessment grants followed by Eric Stockton of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Eric discussed grant opportunities with ARC. Duncan Wilson, coordinator of the practicum, presented Eric with a card of appreciation for ARC’s financial support of the practicum training, which provided sponsorship to distressed county groups. Cards were also signed for two other sponsors who helped to make the practicum possible, Patagonia and Southern Partners Fund. The ACCWT is very grateful to all of these groups for their generous support.

Late on Saturday afternoon the newer OSM/VISTAs learned about water monitoring from Greg Taylor, OSM/VISTA of the Upper Guyandotte Watershed Association in Mullens, WV and Evan Hansen of Downstream Strategies. Meanwhile, the rest of the participants discussed their ideas on how to solve the “wicked” issues of coal country. This topic was in follow-up, exploring the results of a recent report by the Kettering Foundation called “Engaging Communities”. Stacy Bouchard has recently joined the ACCWT staff as an OSM/VISTA who will work to further explore the reasons why people volunteer, particularly in Appalachia.

After all the seriousness of the day, it was a nice break to go into town to the Mullens Opportunity Center where the Rural Appalachian Improvement League or RAIL for short, had a dinner prepared to welcome the conferees. An Indian re-enactor entertained the group as “Outacite Ostenaco” as they enjoyed their repast, recounting the colorful history of the area. It was a lovely way to end the day.

Sunday ended early after presentations on Trail Development by Peggy Pings of the National Park Service, the Army Corps of Engineers by Randy Campbell, and Brownfield grants by Nicole Clarke of SRA International. Dr. Comp ended the day at noon and sent attendees home with a boxed lunch to-go.

Looking to the future for the Clean Streams Practicum: Last year, Hanna Wheeler, while serving as the OSM/VISTA for the Eastern Coal Regional Roundtable wrote a proposal called “Hope and Hard Work” for the EPA watershed capacity-building grant program. It was announced at training that the proposal was chosen. The grant will be used to replicate the Clean Streams Practicum program on a larger basis for the next three years.

*Contributed by Stefanie Chitester, an OSM/VISTA volunteer with the Western PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation who also serves part-time with the Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team. She can be contacted by sending email to: [stefaniechitester@yahoo.com](mailto:stefaniechitester@yahoo.com).*

## PA American Water Accepting Entries for Watershed Art Contest

Pennsylvania American Water is accepting entries for its [sixth annual Protect Our Watersheds art contest](#). Deadline for entries is February 8.

Open to fifth-grade classes in schools served by Pennsylvania American Water -- or to individual fifth-graders who live in communities served by the company -- the contest encourages students to utilize their artistic talents to express the importance of protecting Pennsylvania's watersheds and water resources. As part of the entry, students are asked to write a short description of how watershed protection impacts them personally.

"The art contest is a fun and creative way for students to learn about the importance of protecting our most valuable natural resource: water," said Kathy Pape, president, Pennsylvania American Water. "These students are the future stewards of our land and resources, so it's critical that we help to increase their understanding of the impact humans have -- positively and negatively -- on our watersheds and ultimately on our drinking water sources."

The company received over 260 entries from across the state for the 2006 contest.

Contest applications are being mailed to elementary schools served by Pennsylvania American Water. Winners will be selected based on creative vision, artistic talent, understanding of watershed protection and the ability to communicate that understanding.

In total, six students will be recognized statewide, with a first-, second- and third-place winner selected from Eastern and Western Pennsylvania. First-place winners will be rewarded with a \$100 gift card to the Discovery Channel's online store. Two second- and third-place winners will be awarded a \$50 and \$25 gift card, respectively.

In addition, the first-place winners will compete for the grand prize, which will comprise having her/his artwork printed on "Bloomers" cards distributed by Pennsylvania American Water. Bloomers are seed-filled cards that, when planted and tended, produce a variety of wildflowers.

All entrants will receive a Watershed Champion certificate. Awards will be presented in May during Watershed month.

For additional information -- or to obtain contest materials -- visit the [Pennsylvania American Water's website](#) or contact Communications Manager Joi Corrado at 717-531-3228 or send email to: [jcorrado@amwater.com](mailto:jcorrado@amwater.com).

**Link:** [2006 Pennsylvania American Watershed Art Contest Winners](#)

### **Insurance Dept. Proposes to Double Fee on Gasoline Sales for Tank Cleanups**

The Department of Insurance [has proposed almost doubling](#) the per gallon fee on gasoline to support underground storage tank cleanups, in spite of a statement from its actuarial consultant that no increase was needed for more than eight years.

The Department of Insurance representative on the Underground Storage Tank Indemnification Board formally proposed the increase of the fee from \$.011 to \$.02 per gallon, which would generate about \$45 million annually.

The final-omitted regulation containing the fee increase, which is not subject to public comment, was submitted to the Independent Regulatory Review Commission last week and IRRC will meet to consider the regulation December 6.

Milliman, the actuarial firm, reported to the Underground Storage Tank Indemnification Board on September 21 that, "On September 29, 2003, the Board

established an objective of having positive Cash and Invested Assets for a projection period of at least five years. Based on this criterion, no change in fees is necessary as the project shows USTIF having positive Cash and Invested Assets through the middle of the July 1, 2015-2016 fiscal year.”

### **EPA Partners Recognized for Improvements to Environment, Balance Sheets**

Members of two U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [partnership programs were recognized](#) for reducing and recycling materials, and for cutting back or eliminating over 4 million pounds of priority chemicals, including two Pennsylvania companies--

- **Prior Coated Metals, Inc.** in Allentown, Pa, produces millions of pounds of pre-painted metal every year, serving both the consumer and building products markets. Prior Coated Metals reduced their naphthalene use by 2,609 pounds by replacing their reducing solvent with a naphthalene-free solvent.
- **PolyOne Corporation** - LeHigh Valley Site in Bethlehem, Pa, manufactures high quality color and additive master batches used in the wire and cable, molding, film, and general products industries. PolyOne met their NPEP goal of reducing 14,000 pounds of lead by eliminating the use of lead stabilizers in PVC color concentrates.

"Today, it seems like everyone is catching 'green fever,'" said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. "By taking voluntary steps that improve our quality of life and the quality of our environment, communities, businesses and individuals are keeping America's 'green' momentum moving forward."

EPA is presenting awards to 31 [WasteWise](#) and 17 [National Partnership for Environmental Priorities](#) partners. Award-winning WasteWise partners used smart waste management methods to reduce waste and recycle several million tons of materials.

WasteWise partners not only reduce waste, but also are addressing global climate change. By decreasing the demand on raw materials through waste reduction and recycling, these organizations are improving operations, reducing costs, and minimizing their environmental footprints.

NPEP partners are being recognized for reducing or removing significant priority chemicals, such as lead or mercury. The 17 NPEP partners' combined efforts reduced or eliminated nearly 4 million pounds of priority and other environmentally harmful chemicals. Partners include manufacturers, businesses, cities, universities, and airports.

NPEP was formed in 2002 and is a partnership of public and private organizations that pledge to reduce priority chemicals. WasteWise was formed in 1994 and promotes reducing, reusing, and recycling waste.

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

### **Recycled Electronics, Demanufacturing Forum Set for December 11**

The [Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center](#) will host a Recycled Electronics & Demanufacturing Economic Development Forum on December 11 in Harrisburg.

The forum is in partnership with the [Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee.](#)

The forum will gather industry leaders to identify economic development opportunities for demanufacturing of electronics scrap in Pennsylvania.

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The quantity and complex composition of electronics scrap presents challenges for the demand-side of recycling. As such, invited guests and RMC partners will participate in a facilitated discussion to identify demand-side electronics demanufacturing and sustainable electronics management opportunities.

Nationally, it is estimated 2 million tons of electronics scrap is generated annually. In addition to demanufacturing electronics scrap into marketable fractions, some electronics can be reused and refurbished. At present, it is estimated that 200 jobs are created to repair, refurbish, or demanufacture electronics scrap for every one job created in disposal of the same.

For more information about the RMC's Recycled Electronics & Demanufacturing Economic Development Forum, contact Tim Breneisen, Recycling Program Manager, by sending email to: [tbreneisen@parmc.org](mailto:tbreneisen@parmc.org) or calling 717-948-6719.

**Link:** [DEP Supports Ban on Electronics Waste Going to Landfills](#)

### Student Winners of Radon Poster Contest Announced

Three Pennsylvania students are advancing to national competition after winning the state's radon poster contest, which is designed to raise awareness about this potentially dangerous gas.

The National Safety Council and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sponsored the radon poster contest for students ages 9 through 14. The Pennsylvania winners are:

- First place: Maria Lydon, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, a sixth-grade student at Keystone Oaks Middle School in Pittsburgh. Maria's teacher is Nadine Pisani;
- Second place: Colleen Devine, Edinboro, Erie County, a seventh-grade student at Villa Maria Elementary School in Erie. Colleen's teacher is Mary Wright; and
- Third place: Angelika Wyzlie, East Stroudsburg, Monroe County, a sixth-grade student at J.T. Lambert Intermediate School in East Stroudsburg. Angelika's teacher is Sheila Bove.

The students' posters will enter the national competition, where the winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in January in Washington, D.C.

Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that occurs naturally in rocks and soil through the breakdown of uranium. Radon enters homes through cracks in basements and foundations and can build to levels above what the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers healthy.

The only way to know the radon level is to test, which most homeowners can do with kits they can buy for about \$25 at hardware, outdoor supply, lawn and garden, and department stores.

Testing should be done during colder months when windows and doors are closed, and on the lowest level of the home on which you live, such as a finished basement.

Radon mitigation systems can cost anywhere from about \$700 to \$1,200. Anyone in Pennsylvania who conducts radon testing or installs mitigation systems on a home, other than the home in which they live, must be certified by DEP. Builders can also use radon resistant construction techniques when building new homes.

Information on radon, including a list of certified radon professionals, can be found by calling 1-800-23-RADON, or by visiting DEP's [Radon webpage](#).

## **\$5.4 Million in Energy Harvest Grants Announced to Support 28 Projects**

The Department of Environmental Protection this week announced \$5.4 million in [Energy Harvest Grants](#) to support 28 projects. The grants will leverage almost \$14 million in private investments and create or retain more than 100 jobs.

“The rising energy prices we face today are creating challenges for our families and businesses,” said Gov. Rendell. “What’s more, our dependence on foreign fuels is threatening our national security and way of life. This is unacceptable.

“Rather than continuing to rely on oil supplies that may come from politically unstable or hostile nations, or electricity derived from dirtier fossil fuels, we’re investing in our future by supporting the development of alternative and renewable energy technologies that will strengthen our economy, create new jobs, and protect our environment. These projects illustrate the interest and commitment that companies, universities and other organizations have expressed in investing in Pennsylvania’s new energy economy and creating opportunities here.”

Including the projects announced this week, Energy Harvest has invested almost \$26 million and leveraged \$66 million in private investments.

The projects receiving support will generate 18.5 million kilowatt hours of clean electricity; replace 3.1 billion BTUs of natural gas and 225,000 gallons of petroleum-based fuels; reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 29 million pounds; and remove 204,000 pounds of sulfur dioxide and 56,000 pounds of nitrogen oxide. Sulfur dioxide emissions are a major source of acid rain. Nitrogen oxides combine with volatile organic compounds to form smog.

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

## **Penn State: Clean, Carbon-Neutral Hydrogen on the Horizon**

Hydrogen as an everyday, environmentally friendly fuel source may be closer than we think, according to Penn State researchers at the [Hydrogen Research Center](#).

"The energy focus is currently on ethanol as a fuel, but economical ethanol from cellulose is 10 years down the road," says Bruce E. Logan, Kappe professor of environmental engineering. "First you need to break cellulose down to sugars and then bacteria can convert them to ethanol."

Logan and Shaoan Cheng, research associate, suggest a method based on microbial fuel cells to convert cellulose and other biodegradable organic materials directly into hydrogen in November 12 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences online.

The researchers used naturally occurring bacteria in a microbial electrolysis cell with acetic acid - the acid found in vinegar. Acetic acid is also the predominant acid produced by fermentation of glucose or cellulose. The anode was granulated graphite, the cathode was carbon with a platinum catalyst, and they used an off-the-shelf anion exchange membrane. The bacteria consume the acetic acid and release electrons and protons creating up to 0.3 volts. When more than 0.2 volts are added from an outside source, hydrogen gas bubbles up from the liquid.

"This process produces 288 percent more energy in hydrogen than the electrical energy that is added to the process," says Logan.

Water hydrolysis, a standard method for producing hydrogen, is only 50 to 70 percent efficient. Even if the microbial electrolysis cell process is set up to bleed off some of the hydrogen to produce the added energy boost needed to sustain hydrogen production, the process still creates 144 percent more available energy than the electrical energy used to produce it.

For those who think that a hydrogen economy is far in the future, Logan suggests that hydrogen produced from cellulose and other renewable organic materials could be blended with natural gas for use in natural gas vehicles.

"We drive a lot of vehicles on natural gas already. Natural gas is essentially methane," says Logan. "Methane burns fairly cleanly, but if we add hydrogen it burns even more cleanly and works fine in existing natural gas combustion vehicles."

The range of efficiencies of hydrogen production based on electrical energy and energy in a variety of organic substances is between 63 and 82 percent. Both lactic acid and acetic acid achieve 82 percent, while untreated cellulose is 63 percent efficient. Glucose is 64 percent efficient.

Another potential use for microbial-electrolysis-cell produced hydrogen is in fertilizer manufacture. Currently fertilizer is produced in large factories and trucked to farms. With microbial electrolysis cells, very large farms or farm cooperatives could produce hydrogen from wood chips and then through a common process use the nitrogen in the air to produce ammonia or nitric acid. Both of these are used directly as fertilizer or the ammonia could be used to make ammonium nitrate, sulfate or phosphate.

The researchers have filed for a patent on this work. Air Products and Chemicals, Inc. and the National Science Foundation supported this work.

For more information, contact Dr. Logan at 814-863-7908 or send e-mail at [blogan@psu.edu](mailto:blogan@psu.edu).

### **Bayer Plants Trees With Chartiers Valley Intermediate School Students**

[Bayer employee-volunteers](#) and [Chartiers Valley Intermediate School](#) third-graders rolled up their sleeves, grabbed their spades and planted trees on the school's campus, as the company announced that it has joined the United Nations Environment Programme's Plant for the Planet: [The Billion Tree Campaign](#).

UNEP's Billion Tree Campaign, which strives to combat climate change by encouraging individuals and organizations to plant at least one billion trees around the world by the end of 2007.

Earlier this spring, Bayer AG in Germany pledged to help plant trees in Nairobi. Also, Bayer Corporation in the United States pledged \$100,000 from the Bayer Foundation to the [National Arbor Day Foundation](#) to help plant 100,000 trees in an effort to reforest America's national parks damaged by fire, drought, disease and disaster.

In addition, through its local [Making Science Make Sense program](#), Bayer is providing free environmental education CDs to Chartiers Valley Intermediate School students and teachers. The CDs feature fun facts about trees and the environment, hands-on science activities and several MSMS audio series segments, like "Why do leaves change colors?" and "Why do pruned trees grow fuller?"

"Making Science Make Sense is about providing students with the kind of quality hands-on, inquiry-based science education that builds science literacy," said Dr. Attila Molnar, President and CEO, Bayer Corporation. "With the Billion Tree Campaign, we at

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Bayer are able to help students make the connection between science literacy and climate, while reinforcing the notion that everyone has a responsibility when it comes to environmental protection -- from the largest companies like Bayer that are working to develop innovative and environmentally sound products and practices, to private citizens who can help by carpooling, shutting off light switches, and, in this case, planting trees."

The impact of trees on climate is well documented. For example, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, one acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and puts out four tons of oxygen, enough to meet the annual needs of 18 people. In addition, the net cooling effect of a young, healthy tree is equivalent to 10 room-size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.

"Trees are vital to a healthy community and planting trees today is helping to leave a legacy for future generations," said Ronald Yasher, principal of Chartiers Valley Intermediate School, which is one of Bayer's partner schools. "We are extremely grateful for Bayer's strong support for this and other programs."

Making Science Make Sense is Bayer's company-wide initiative that advances science literacy through hands-on, inquiry-based science learning, employee volunteerism and public education. Currently, Bayer's Pittsburgh site is one of 12 Bayer sites around the country that operate local MSMS programs, which together feature a national volunteer corps of more than 1,000 employees.

In Pittsburgh, more than 150 employee-volunteers take an active role in improving science education in local schools through the Bayer Association for Science in Communities. Its goals are to spark and nurture children's natural curiosity, and cultivate a better understanding of what science is and what scientists do. Bayer also has transformed a portion of its 258-acre campus to be used as a [Wildlife Habitat Council](#) Corporate Lands for Learning site. Local elementary school students are led by Bayer and Wildlife Habitat Council volunteers in hands-on, inquiry-based environmental learning activities.

In addition, more than a dozen years ago, Bayer created ASSET Inc. ([Achieving Student Success through Excellence in Teaching](#)), an independent non-profit organization to implement hands-on, inquiry-based science education reform.

Since July 2006, Gov. Edward Rendell has awarded \$23 million to ASSET to roll out its program to elementary schools across the state of Pennsylvania. Starting with five schools in two districts in 1994, today ASSET serves 160 school districts across 47 Pennsylvania counties and directly impacts more than 4,400 teachers and 180,000 students.

More recently, the company in partnership with Carnegie Science Center's SciTech Initiative and Pittsburgh Filmmakers presents the C.A.U.S.E. Challenge High School Film Festival. An environmental film festival, C.A.U.S.E. stands for "Creating Awareness and Understanding of our Surrounding Environment."

### **Allegheny County Health Dept. Sponsoring Global Warming Poster Contest**

The Allegheny County Health Department is sponsoring its ninth annual environmental poster contest for students in grades 6-8 with the theme of "Global Warming."

The deadline for entries is February 22. Winners will be announced in conjunction with Earth Day celebrations next April.

The goal of the contest is to help students learn about the causes, effects and possible solutions to climate change.

For additional information, please call the Allegheny County Health Department at 412-687-ACHD or send email to: Jayme Graham at [jgraham@achd.net](mailto:jgraham@achd.net) .

### **M&T Bank Launches \$50 Million Municipal Energy Efficiency Loan Fund**

[M&T Bank](#) this week announced a new financing program offering competitive interest rates and technical assistance for local governments and municipal authorities in Pennsylvania to implement energy saving improvements.

The bank has targeted \$50 million to finance energy performance leases and loans for governments and municipal authorities installing new energy-efficient lighting, adding digital HVAC management systems to better control building temperatures, upgrading mechanical systems and completing other capital projects to save energy.

Pennsylvania municipalities, and their taxpayers, are expected to face higher energy costs after all remaining rate caps expire by the end of 2010.

"This funding will help municipalities get in front of the rate cap expiration issue by completing energy savings projects now. We intend to offer competitive rates and flexible loan and lease terms to help these local governments and their taxpayers maximize potential energy savings," said David A. Worthing, vice president and group manager of government banking for M&T Bank in Pennsylvania

M&T has a long history of financing energy performance leases and the bank's understanding of the energy contracting industry allows M&T to offer creative financing alternatives. Applications for financing of \$500,000 or less may be eligible for a streamlined approval process

"We think a dedicated financing program will make it easier for other local governments to complete projects that they identify as being good for their citizens and the environment," Worthing said.

M&T's funding can be used in conjunction with other grants and low-interest loans provided to local governments through the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority.

### **Electric Competition Spurs Efficiency, Puts Risks on Investors, Not Consumers**

Jonathan Lesser, a Ph.D. economist and nationally known expert on competitive electricity markets, this week said "Electric industry restructuring has provided real and measurable benefits to Pennsylvania consumers and businesses."

Lesser made his remarks in a white paper written on behalf of the [Electric Power Generation Association](#) and the Electric Power Supply Association, two groups that support competitive electricity markets.

In support of his point that competition has produced measurable benefits, Lesser pointed out that since Pennsylvania restructured its electric industry in 1996, "The state's nuclear plants alone generate almost two million megawatt-hours more electricity, enough to power almost 170,000 homes."

Lesser's paper, titled "[The Benefits of Electric Restructuring to Pennsylvania Consumers](#)," makes several other points about restructuring, including:

**Traditional regulation had shortcomings:** Lesser said, "Prior to electric competition in Pennsylvania, retail customers in Pennsylvania absorbed significant and steady rate increases resulting from a number of factors, including inefficient operations, construction cost overruns and higher fuel prices."

**Competition has benefited Pennsylvania customers:** As Lesser put it, "Pennsylvanians have benefited by millions of dollars each year from more efficient generation with increased output and lower operating costs and new market entrants providing both innovative generation and demand side response programs."

**Shifting of risk from ratepayers to investors:** "Pennsylvania consumers," Lesser said, "no longer bear the financial risks of failed generating plants or cost overruns, as they did under the old regulatory system." Instead, he said competition has "shifted generation construction and operation risk from consumers, provided market incentives to improve plant efficiency and promoted competition and innovation in retail electric markets."

**Markets provide best answer to price increases:** Lesser acknowledged that higher prices are expected after multi-year rate caps expire in the next few years. However, he argued, "It is the market itself that provides a self-correcting mechanism to resolve transient price increases."

Instead of more regulation, Lesser said, "The better answer is to apply competitive procurement principles, while at the same time pursuing rate mitigation strategies such as energy efficiency and demand response programs and rate phase in and budget plans to ease the transition to market prices for all consumers."

Lesser concluded, "There are no 'silver bullets' policymakers can use to prevent an increase in electric prices. Neither regulation nor competition can prevent the tremendous increases in worldwide demand for fossil fuels that have driven electric prices higher. But, unlike more regulation, competition can provide the lowest available cost."

[A copy of Lesser's white paper](#) is available online.

**NewsClip:** [Rendell Backs Reasonable Extended Rate Caps](#)

## **DCNR Increases Fees for State Park Facilities 2008**

For the first time since 2001, fees for overnight accommodations, boating and picnic pavilions will be increased to help maintain the quality of State Parks and support their operation and maintenance.

The [new price schedule](#) will be effective on January 1. (*official notice*)

"An overnight stay in a state park cabin or a family reunion picnic at one of our pavilions is still a great bargain," DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis said. "This new pricing schedule makes Pennsylvania state parks comparable to neighboring states, and is well below the inflation rate for the period since 2001.

"Pennsylvania remains one of only a few states that do not charge an entrance fee to visit our state parks," Secretary DiBerardinis said.

For 2008, prices will represent about a 10 percent increase over the current rates, with the exception of camping where the base price will increase by \$3 per night. In 2009, prices will increase about 10 percent over the 2008 prices with a camping base increase of \$2 per night.

Elsewhere, a rustic campsite with no electricity on a weeknight now costs \$10. The cost will increase to \$13 next year. Fees that are added for weekends, sites with electricity, modern campsites and other additional amenities will also be modestly increased. A modern cabin that sleeps eight for a week at the current weekly rate without sales tax is \$371. The 2008 rate will be \$408.

"Since 2002, we have invested more than \$175 million in state park facilities by upgrading bathhouses and restrooms; improving marinas; repairing and replacing dams

that create lakes; improving environmental education centers; adding trails and other recreational opportunities; and working to eliminate a backlog of maintenance," Secretary DiBerardinis said. "All of the money collected through state park fees is used for their operation and maintenance, and we will use this price increase to continue that work."

Reservations made prior to January 1 for the use of facilities in 2008 will not be affected by the new price schedule, unless the reservations are changed after January 1.

[The new fee schedule is available online.](#) To make an online reservation at a Pennsylvania state park, visit [www.visitPAparks.com](http://www.visitPAparks.com).

### **Lehigh/Berks Air Quality Partnership Honors Tom DiLazaro**



The LehighValley/Berks County Air Quality Partnership, the American Lung Association of Pennsylvania and Woman’s Club of Allentown presented the 37th Annual R. Emmet Doherty Clean Air Award to Thomas DiLazaro, former DEP Air Quality program manager, during a ceremony yesterday at Cedar Crest College in Allentown.

<http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/news/cwp/view.asp?a=3&q=531723>

“Tom has long been committed to improving air quality in the Lehigh Valley and promoting the efforts of the Air Quality Partnership to educate residents about how they can reduce air pollution,” said Keith Williams, chairperson of the Lehigh Valley/Berks County Air Quality Partnership. “His many years of service to the Commonwealth, his dedication to enforcing Pennsylvania’s air quality laws and regulations and his enthusiastic support of the Air Quality Partnership of Lehigh Valley/Berks County make him a very worthy recipient of this year’s R. Emmet Doherty Clean Air Award.”

The Clean Air Award recognizes the efforts of a local business, organization or individual for improving air quality in the greater Lehigh Valley region. First presented in 1970, the award is named in honor of R. Emmet Doherty, a former director of the Lehigh Valley Pollution Control District who monitored air quality and championed air pollution reduction during his 19 years of service.

Tom DiLazaro retired from DEP in June 2007 after 34 years of service. DiLazaro worked in several different capacities in the DER/DEP Air Quality Program, including as an Air Pollution Control Engineer. He was appointed Air Quality Program Manager in May 1993 and also served as the supervisor of DEP’s Bethlehem District Office. He earned his Bachelor and Master’s Degree in Engineering from Penn State. DiLazaro is married with two children and resides in Nazareth.

DiLazaro worked with the Lehigh Valley/Berks County Air Quality Partnership to develop and continue the Ride Free on Ozone Action Days in conjunction with the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA). DEP, the partnership and LANTA sponsor Ride Free program, which has been operating since 2001.

Bus rides on LANTA’s Lehigh and Northampton County routes are free when DEP Air Quality meteorologists forecast an Ozone Action Day. In 2002, LANTA realized a 54 percent increase in its number of riders, as well as a significant reduction in ozone-producing automobile traffic.

He also worked with Partnership chairperson Keith Williams (recipient of the 2006 R. Emmet Doherty Award) on other air quality educational and promotional events such as developing nightly ozone and particulate announcements on WFMZ-TV weather

broadcasts, Ozone Free BBQs with WFMZ-TV, Air Quality Nights at Reading Phillies games and a gas-can exchange program that provided over 600 free, low-vapor containers and allowed residents to turn in their old gasoline containers.

The Lehigh Valley/Berks County Air Quality Partnership is a coalition of individuals, businesses, governments and community groups that educates the public about the dangers of ground-level ozone and particulate matter, and encourages people to take voluntary actions to reduce their contributions to air pollution.

For more information, visit the [PA Air Quality Partnership webpage](#).

### Larry Williamson to Be Honored as “Conservationist of the Year”

The [Central Pennsylvania Conservancy](#) will honor the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources’ Larry Williamson as the 2007 Conservationist of the Year at their annual awards dinner on December 5 in Harrisburg.

Williamson was nominated through a solicitation of nominees from over 35 conservation organizations. He also received the [2007 Lifetime Leadership Award](#) from the PA Land Trust Association.

Williamson has spent over 35 years working in conservation, serving most recently as DCNR Deputy Secretary for Conservation and Technical Services. Under his leadership, the Bureau has funded over 8,000 park, recreation, greenways, heritage preservation, rivers conservation and open space protection projects totaling close to half a billion dollars.

Notable conservation programs he helped initiate and implement include County Natural Areas Inventories, Gateway Gardens, the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, PA Heritage Parks Program, Rivers Conservation, Rails-to-Trails and PA Recreational Trails programs, the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Key 93) Program and the Growing Greener Program. He is one of the founding fathers of Pennsylvania’s Greenways plan and program.

Williamson has requested that any gifts or special recognition on his behalf be directed toward the Clifford L. Jones Stewardship Fund. Sponsorship proceeds from this evening’s event will also be directed to this fund. It is through responsible stewardship we are assured our good work today will be here for generations to enjoy.

For more information, contact Debra Bowman, Central PA Conservancy, by calling 717-233-0221 or send email to: [dbowman@centralpaconservancy.org](mailto:dbowman@centralpaconservancy.org).



## Spotlight

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### The REAP Program: New Conservation Dollars for PA Farms

By Lamonte Garber, Senior Agricultural Consultant  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation



Farms throughout Pennsylvania – be they large, small or somewhere in between – will soon be able to earn valuable

state tax credits in exchange for a wide variety of farm improvements.

The [Resource Enhancement and Protection Act](#), or “REAP,” offers transferable state tax credits to farmers anywhere in the Commonwealth who install eligible soil and water conservation practices. In this column and for three more to follow, *Lancaster Farming* will be providing up-to-date information on how farmers can participate in the program.

This past July the General Assembly and Gov. Rendell passed REAP as part of Act 55. Since then, the State Conservation Commission and the Department of Agriculture have been working double-time to get ready for the application process. SCC staff expects that final guidelines for the program will be approved on November 14th, with applications available on December 1.

REAP tax credits provide a dollar-for-dollar reduction to a farmer’s state income tax, which is better than a tax deduction which only reduces taxable income. REAP tax credits can benefit any farmer, even those with limited tax liability. Farmers have the option to use the credits to reduce their own tax liability, (using all at once, or by spreading out for up to fifteen years) or they may choose to sell them (after one year) to another taxpayer. What’s more, businesses that partner with farms to help pay for improvements can receive the tax credits instead of the farmer.

Tax credits will be awarded only AFTER the completion or installation of a conservation practice, and only those practices or purchases dated after October 23, 2007 are eligible. While the SCC is still finalizing the list of eligible practices, barnyard improvements, grazing systems, manure management systems, no-till planting equipment and cropland erosion controls are likely to be included. Conservation and nutrient plan development are also eligible for tax credits. Most practices can earn credits covering 50-75 percent of project costs. The state can issue up to \$10 million in tax credits through June 2008.

Tax credits are issued on a first-come, first-served basis. A pre-application can reserve tax credits in a farmer’s name before he or she undertakes a project. Up to \$150,000 per agricultural operation is available over the life of the program.

To be eligible, farmers must have a current conservation plan that meets state erosion control guidelines. Concentrated Animal Operations will also need a nutrient management plan. Any animal concentration areas causing runoff problems (barnyards, outdoor feedlots, exercise lots, etc.) must be evaluated and improved as part of a REAP application. A farmer who will be receiving project funds from another government program may also qualify for REAP tax credits, but the tax credits cannot apply to that portion of project costs covered by government funds. All projects and equipment must meet SCC standards and be maintained for a time period specified by the SCC.

Farmers who would like to receive an information packet on REAP should send an email to [REAP@cbf.org](mailto:REAP@cbf.org) or send their name and address to Chesapeake Bay Foundation, attn: REAP, 614 North Front Street, Suite G, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

Information is also online at the [CBF REAP webpage](#) and at [State Conservation Commission REAP webpage](#).

## **Grants & Awards**

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## PA Environment Digest – Crisci Associates

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 27** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for January 22 Meeting](#).
- **November 30** – [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** – [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 14** – DEP [Environmental Education Grants](#).
- **December 15** – DEP [Growing Greener Innovative Technology Grants](#)
- **December 15** – DEP [New or Innovative Water/Wastewater 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 8** – **NEW**. [PA American Water Watershed Art Contest](#)
- **February 19** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **February 22**—**NEW**. [Allegheny County Global Warming Poster Contest](#)
- **March 31** – PAEP [Karl Mason Environmental Award](#).
- **April 2** – [WREN Water Resources Education Project Grants](#)

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

### Quick Clips

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

[Op-Ed: Two Decades of Recycling Put Cash, Energy in Bank](#)

[Editorial: Recycling, But First Reduce and Reuse](#)

[First Year of Lancaster's Refuse and Recycling Programs Produced Phenomenal Results](#)

[Legislators Look at Ways to Curb Scrap Metal Thefts](#)

[DEP Approves New Bucks County Landfill](#)

[Op-Ed: Take the Classroom Outdoors](#)

[Op-Ed: Schools Need to Teach Environmental Literacy](#)

[Define Litterbug, Decry in School](#)

[Going for Green Anti-Dumping Program](#)

[More Women Taking Up Hunting](#)

[Presque Isle Accepting Deer Hunt Applications](#)  
[Trail Cams: The New Invisibility](#)  
[A Walkable Delaware Waterfront?](#)  
[Township Borrows Money for Open Space](#)  
[Chester County Landscapes2 Website Gets Upgrade](#)  
[Rendell Backs Reasonable Extended Rate Caps](#)  
[Pittsburgh Council Says Green Buildings Can Be Bigger](#)  
[Building Green. Builders Learn It's a Win Win Win Situation](#)  
[Philly's Green Eagles](#)  
[Businesses Are Reducing Energy Costs](#)  
[DEP Issues Air Quality Approval for Northeast Ethanol Plant](#)  
[Educating Consumers on Energy](#)  
[Editorial: Focus on Home to Save on Energy Costs in PA](#)  
[Editorial: Put More Energy Into Energy Bill](#)  
[Natural Gas Pipelines Eyed for Western PA](#)  
[Editorial: Problem With Low-Level Radioactive Waste Will Resolve Itself](#)  
[Area Hospitals Go Green](#)  
[Conservationists Buys LeNature's Property](#)  
[Hazardous Sites Cleanup Funding Bill Passed by Senate](#)  
[Field: Your Carbon Footprint](#)  
[Lancaster Acting Locally on World Climate Pact](#)  
[Column: Weather Channel Founder Debunks Global Warming](#)  
[DEP, Environmentalists Pledge Cooperation on Coal Ash](#)  
[DEP Underscores Importance of Environmental Justice](#)

## **Watershed NewsClips**

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

[An Unusual Stream-Saving Effort – Masonic Home](#)  
[Lebanon OKs Cash to Help Get Natural Resources Grants](#)  
[Editorial: A Plan for the Delaware](#)  
[The Debate Over Fluoride in Our Tap Water](#)  
[Sewage Upgrade Costs to Hit Home](#)  
[Plan for Delaware River's Edge is Warmly Greeted](#)  
[Fish & Boat Commission, District Attorney Announce Norfolk Southern Settlement](#)  
[Rain Doesn't Dent Drought](#)  
[DEP Drains Pittsburgh Hill District Mine Pool](#)

## **Regulations**

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The Department of Environmental Protection [published notice](#) of informational meetings and opportunity to comment on proposed designation of nonattainment areas for fine particulate.

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – November 17, 2007](#)

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

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

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

## Technical Guidance & Permits

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The Department of Environmental Protection published notice of changes to the list of companies certified to perform radon-related activities ([PaB page 6177](#))

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

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

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

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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 19** – Environmental Issues Forum presentation by Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh’s E-Waste Recycling Program sponsored by the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee. Room 60 East Wing. Noon.
- **November 20** – 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**—**NEW**. House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee meets to consider [Special Session House Bill 2](#) (Gerber-D-Montgomery) mandating the sale of transportation fuels with renewable content, [Special Session House Bill 12](#) (DePasquale-D-York) establishing an energy efficient home assistance program at the Housing Finance Agency, [Special Session House Bill 33](#) (Vereb-R-Montgomery) providing additional funding for the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program. Room G-50 Irvis Building. 9:30.
- **November 20**—**NEW**. House Local Government Committee meets to consider [House Bill 904](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) authorizing a temporary development moratorium, [House Bill 1525](#) (Steil-R-Bucks) authorizing impact fees and transportation capital improvement plans. Room 60 East Wing. 9:30.
- **November 20** – **CANCELLED**. Environmental Quality Board. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.

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- **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](#)

### [Environmental Education Workshop/Training Calendar](#)

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

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

## **Helpful Web Links**

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### [PA Environment Digest Video Blog](#)

[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**

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Send your stories about environmental issues, programs and positive actions to **PA Environment Digest** - [DHess@CrisciAssociates.com](mailto:DHess@CrisciAssociates.com) or go to [www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com](http://www.PaEnvironmentDigest.com) .

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