

# -PA ————— Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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Edited By David E. Hess, Crisci Associates

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## Senate Passes Climate Change Action Plan Legislation

Senate passage of climate-change legislation offers cause for thanksgiving, Brian Hill, President and CEO of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, said this week.

[Senate Bill 266](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware), requiring DEP to inventory greenhouse gases and create a climate change action plan, passed the Senate by a vote of 47 to 3 (Senators Eichelberger (R-Blair), Folmer (R-Lebanon) and Regola (R-Westmoreland) voted no). It is very similar to [House Bill 110](#) (Vitali-D-Delaware) which passed the House earlier this month.

“As we pause to give thanks this week, let us give thanks both for our bounty and for those who are working keep our Commonwealth bountiful,” Hill said. “Science is telling us that climate change will bring about a decline in milk and fruit production in Pennsylvania, that many farmers will need to change what crops they grow and deal with more invasive weeds, and that trout, smallmouth bass and ducks and other migrating birds may be severely impacted.

“These and other impacts can be reduced if we take decisive action to address climate change,” Hill said.

"This measure brings together representatives of business, environmental groups, farmers and others to develop strategies for studying and responding to climate change. It provides a sound, science-based roadmap for action," said Sen. Erickson.

"Climate change is presenting a myriad of challenges as well as opportunities, and Pennsylvania must be prepared to deal with both," said Sen. Erickson. "Senate Bill 266 provides the best framework to study climate change in Pennsylvania, and incorporate a diverse range of views that will allow the Commonwealth to reduce greenhouse gases through cutting edge, jobs-producing technologies and innovative thinking."

Senate Bill 266 and House Bill 110 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,



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“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.”

Noting that the same policies and initiatives that address climate change would support energy independence, reduced energy costs, cleaner air and water, and economic development and job creation, he urged the General Assembly to give prompt final approval to this vital legislation.

For more information, contact the [Pennsylvania Environmental Council](#).

**NewsClip:** [Editorial: Economy, Environment At Stake Unless Carbon Reduced Senate Acts on Climate Change](#)  
[The Latest Climate Report Should Be Call to Action](#)

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### Session Schedule

The Senate will return to voting session November 27 and 28. The House does not

return to voting session until December 3.

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## On the Hill

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### On the Senate/House Agenda

The Senate has the following committee meetings scheduled next week—

### Calendars

**House (December 3):** [House Bill 1281](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring municipalities to protect the Appalachian Trail.

### Committees

**Senate:** Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policies will meet to consider [Special Session Senate Bill 4](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) establishing alternative energy research and development tax credits; [Special Session Senate Bill 6](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) establishing a solar installation tax credit; [Special Session Senate Bill 8](#) (Wozniak-D-Cambria) excluding insulation and other energy conservation materials from Sales Tax; [Special Session Senate Bill 22](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) increasing the reimbursement for alternative vehicle fuels from five to ten cents per gallon; [Special Session Senate Bill 25](#) (Waugh-R-York) adding “sugars, lignins” to the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards; [Special Session Senate Bill 26](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) requiring state-owned vehicles to be fueled with biofuels; [Special Session Senate Bill 31](#) (D.White-R-Indiana) adding a more specific definition of low-impact hydropower and [Special Session Senate Bill 36](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) Biodiesel Study and Production Incentive Act which will trigger mandates for the use of biodiesel based on biodiesel fuel production capacity for production sold to distributors in Pennsylvania

### Senate/House Bills Moving/Bills Introduced

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

#### Senate

**Brownfield Covenants:** [House Bill 43](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) providing for uniform environmental covenants for brownfields projects was amended, passed by the Senate and returns to the House for a concurrence vote.

**Climate Change:** [Senate Bill 266](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) requiring DEP to inventory greenhouse gases and create a climate change action plan was passed by the Senate 47 to 3

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(Senators Eichelberger (R-Blair), Folmer (R-Lebanon) and Regola (R-Westmoreland) voted no) and was referred to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee for consideration.

**Farmland Conservation:** [Senate Resolution 195](#) (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to review the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program was adopted by the Senate.

### House

**Great Lakes Compact:** [House Bill 1705](#) (Harkins-D-Erie) authorizing Pennsylvania to join the Great Lakes Basin Water Resources Compact was referred to the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

**Impact Fees:** [House Bill 1525](#) (Steil-R-Bucks) authorizing impact fees and transportation capital improvement plans was amended and reported from the House Local Government Committee and re-referred to House Appropriations Committee.

**Development Moratorium:** [House Bill 904](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) amending the Municipalities Planning Code to allow local governments to enact development moratoriums was passed over in the House Local Government Committee, but 16 different amendments were distributed to Committee members for their review.

### Bills Introduced

These bills were introduced this week--

**Flood Prevention:** [Senate Bill 1157](#) (Orie-R-Allegheny) establishing the Flood Prevention and Remediation Fund Act utilizing 12 percent of the liquor tax and depositing it in the Environmental Stewardship Fund.

**Bowman's Hill:** [Senate Bill 1166](#) (McIlhinney-R-Bucks) transferring certain state lands to the Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve Association.

**Hybrid Car Rebate:** [Special Session Senate Bill 11](#) (Dinniman-D-Chester) establishing a rebate program for hybrid vehicles.

**Green Employment Credit:** [Special Session Senate Bill 34](#) (Tartaglione-D-Philadelphia) establishing a green employment tax credit.

**Demand-Side Management:** [Special Session Senate Bill 35](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) requiring electric distribution companies to establish a demand-side and energy efficiency program.

**Biodiesel Mandate:** [Special Session Senate Bill 36](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) Biodiesel Study and Production Incentive Act which will trigger mandates for the use of biodiesel

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based on biodiesel fuel production capacity for production sold to distributors in Pennsylvania.

**Smart Meters:** [House Bill 2017](#) (Freeman-D-Lehigh) requiring electric distribution companies to install smart electric meters for customers and as [Special Session House Bill 38](#) (Freeman).

**Electric Rate Caps:** [House Bill 2049](#) (Dermondy-D-Allegheny) providing for a transition to market-based electric rates after rate caps expire and as [Special Session House Bill 39](#) (Dermondy).

**Biodiesel Mandate:** [Special Session House Bill 42](#) (Kessler-D-Berks) providing for a biodiesel fuel mandate.

**Radon Month:** [House Resolution 513](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) designating January 2008 as Radon Action Month.

### House Environmental Committee Reported Out 3 Energy Session Bills

House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee reported out three 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 (same as House Bill 1202 that passed the House previously);
- [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 held a hearing this week 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.

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

[Kathleen McGinty](#), Department of Environmental Protection Secretary, outlined the goals of Gov. Rendell's proposals dealing with the rate caps issue saying that 2010 is looming and electric customers need a transition plan to prevent rate shock. She was also critical of the Public Utility Commission's handling of the transition saying, "Unfortunately, the Competition Act is not being implemented in a manner that promotes low, stable rates over time."

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Sen. Boscola said the Senate Democratic Caucus has taken a position supporting a five year extension of the existing electric rate caps to which Secretary McGinty responded that course of action would not be her first choice.

[Wendell Holland](#), Chairman of the Public Utility Commission, said the PUC put in place regulations outlining how utilities were to submit plans for making the transition to market-based rates in September and encouraged the Senate to give the Commission flexible authority to deal with rate mitigation plans.

Chairman Holland noted the Commission has been praised for its handling of rate transition plans, even by groups in Pike County which experienced an over 70 percent increase in electric rates initially.

[Commissioner Tyrone Christy](#) said the primary problem facing Pennsylvania was the way the PJM Interconnect sets prices in the wholesale electric market. He noted that if a company bought 10,000 megawatts and 1 MW was from natural gas sources and 9,999 from much cheaper coal-fired power plants, the price paid by companies would be based on the natural gas price.

Commissioners [Jim Cawley](#) and [Kim Pizzigrilli](#) also presented comments.

[Irwin “Sonny” Popowsky](#), Consumer Advocate of Pennsylvania, again urged the Senate to adopt a least cost standard for utilities as they build a portfolio of electric suppliers with short and long-term contracts.

[William Lloyd](#), Small Business Advocate, supported the development of transition rules by the Public Utility Commission by rulemaking rather than by legislation, which, he said, would be less favorable to small businesses.

[Morgan O’Brien](#), Duquesne Light, said Duquesne has been without rate caps for over five years and their residential and small business rates are lower today than they were 15 years ago, but made recommendations on changing the bill so the company could offer other rate options.

[Paul Bonney](#), PECO Energy, said Pennsylvania’s competitive electric market has brought substantial benefits to the state, but rate caps cannot continue forever and expressed support for Senate Bill 1134.

[Stephen Feld](#), FirstEnergy, [Douglas Krall](#), PPL, [Ray Valdes](#), Allegheny Power, [Richard Hudson](#), Retail Energy Supply Association, and [W.Scott Miller](#), Constellation Energy Resources also presented testimony to the Committee.

### **Eight Bills On Agenda for Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policies**

The Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policies will meet next week and is expected to consider eight bills addressing a variety of energy issues. The Committee is expected to consider:

- [Special Session Senate Bill 4](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) establishing alternative energy research and development tax credits;
- [Special Session Senate Bill 6](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) establishing a solar installation tax credit;
- [Special Session Senate Bill 8](#) (Wozniak-D-Cambria) excluding insulation and other energy conservation materials from Sales Tax;
- [Special Session Senate Bill 22](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) increasing the reimbursement for alternative vehicle fuels from five to ten cents per gallon;

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- [Special Session Senate Bill 25](#) (Waugh-R-York) adding “sugars, lignins” to the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards;
  - [Special Session Senate Bill 26](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) requiring state-owned vehicles to be fueled with biofuels;
  - [Special Session Senate Bill 31](#) (D.White-R-Indiana) adding a more specific definition of low-impact hydropower; and
  - [Special Session Senate Bill 36](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) Biodiesel Study and Production Incentive Act which will trigger mandates for the use of biodiesel based on biodiesel fuel production capacity for production sold to distributors in Pennsylvania
- The [Energy Policies Committee](#) is chair by Sen. Mary Jo White and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne).

### Environmental Synopsis Focuses on Innovative Mine Reclamation Project

The [November issue](#) of Environmental Synopsis recaps a tour of an innovative mine reclamation site in Schuylkill County that combines reclamation, biomass cultivation and the use of poultry manure.

The Synopsis is published by the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#).

Other articles in this issue cover climate change, clean cars, Great Lakes cleanup and federal funding for water supply and wastewater treatment systems.

Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) chairs the Joint Committee and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) serves as vice-chair.

### Other News

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#### Butler Conservation District Honors Margaret Dunn as Conservation Educator

The [Butler County Conservation District](#) recently honored Margaret H. Dunn with the Conservation Educator of the Year Award at the Butler Farm-City Banquet sponsored by the Butler Rotary and the Agricultural Community.

David Lamperski, Conservation District Director, remarked on Dunn’s “hands-on” approach to education and the success of the public-private partnership approach with the mining industry and local, state, and federal agencies, landowners, students, and volunteers.

Dunn noted that for more than a decade the [Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition](#) and [Stream Restoration Inc.](#), a non-profit organization, have focused on providing educational opportunities relating to environmentally-friendly techniques to address the impacts from abandoned coal mine drainage in Butler County.

Recognizing the talents of the people in the area to effectively “get the word out” and receiving support from volunteers and funding from the public and private sectors, an estimate of over 20,000 people of all ages and interest levels have benefited.

The people that have generously shared their gift of teaching include: Dave Johnson and Wil Taylor at the [Jennings Environmental Education Center](#) by demonstrating innovative passive treatment technology, by writing [Accepting the Challenge](#), a primer about the history, cause, and solutions to abandoned mine drainage, and by working in

partnership with [RiverQuest](#) to provide student education activities for the annual [Ohio River Watershed Celebration](#); Bob Beran of [Beran Environmental Services, Inc.](#) by providing opportunities to school students and youth groups to plant and learn about the value of wetlands; Melissa Busler, by writing and editing various student activity books and the monthly newsletter, “*The Catalyst*”; Dave Lamperski of the [Connoquenessing Watershed Alliance](#) by supporting the installation of a passive treatment system for the environmental education program at [Camp Lutherlyn](#); and Dr. Fred Brenner of [Grove City College](#), Dr. Dean DeNicola of [Slippery Rock University](#), and Dr. Helen Boylan of [Westminster College](#), who provide on-going student research projects to support the watershed restoration efforts.

**Link:** [Margaret Dunn on Watershed Partnerships](#)

### **DCNR Adds Pennypack, Redbank Watersheds to PA Rivers Conservation Registry**

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week approved the addition of the Redbank and Pennypack watersheds to the [Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry](#).

The [Redbank Creek Watershed](#), in Armstrong, Clarion, Clearfield and Jefferson counties, successfully completed the conservation planning process.

The [Pennypack Creek Watershed](#), in Bucks, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties, also completed its Conservation Plan.

### **Save the Date: 2008 Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference, Shad Symposium**

The Wildlands Conservancy, Lehigh County Conservation District, Fish and Boat Commission and other partners will hold the 2008 Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference and Shad Symposium on March 28 at the Holiday Inn in Fogelsville.

The conference will bring together watershed groups, municipal officials, educators, scientists, technical experts, agencies, industry representatives and the public to discuss effective ways to clean up watershed, forge partnership and maximize the resources in the Lehigh Valley.

A special Shad Symposium will also be held in conjunction with the Conference to address topics of interest in the restoration of the American Shad to the Delaware and Lehigh Rivers.

Significant sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Rebecca Kennedy, Lehigh County Conservation District at 610-391-9583, ext. 18 or send email to: [rkennedy@lehighconservation.org](mailto:rkennedy@lehighconservation.org) for more information.

### **Goodwill Recycles 1 Million Pounds of Computers/Monitors in Pittsburgh**

Michael Smith, President/CEO of [Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh](#), presented an overview of their [computer recycling program](#) as part of the Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee’s Environmental Issues Forum this week.

Since the program began over 1 million pounds of computer equipment has been recycled or refurbished by the Goodwill program that takes in over 20,000 computers every year.



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In addition to recovering valuable materials and reselling computers, the program is designed to provide work experience and skills training for up to 100 welfare-to-work participants.

Goodwill sells refurbished computers and monitors through a special ComputerWorks of South Side located at 2600 East Carson Street in Pittsburgh and through its other retail outlets in the Pittsburgh Region.

Goodwill partners with Dell computer's Reconnect Pittsburgh Project, the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County and the Department of Public Welfare to run the program.

Smith says the program depends on individual donations of computers, but encourages any businesses looking to retire their computer equipment to contact Goodwill in Pittsburgh and become part of this no-cost program.

The Goodwill program only accepts computers and monitors for recycling, not other electronics.

Goodwill also offers the "Kil-A-Byte" program to businesses and individuals to provide a safe, affordable and guaranteed way to permanently destroy information on computer hard drives that meets Department of Defense and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act requirements.

Individuals and businesses can also recycle their inkjet and laser printer cartridges through "[Operation Good-Brother](#)" that provides additional work experiences for disabled and welfare-to-work participants. For more information on how to participate, call 800-290-4444.

Smith noted Goodwill, which was founded in 1902, was one of the original recycling organizations for clothes, household goods and other items.

For more information, visit the [Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh website](#) or call 412-481-9005.

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

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

### PA CleanWays Hosts Dumpsite Tour in Bedford County December 5

[PA CleanWays](#), the Trash Free Potomac Initiative and the Department of Environmental Protection will hold a tour of illegal dumpsites in Bedford County on December 5.

The objective of the tour is to inform residents about illegal dumping problems in the area and the steps individuals, local governments and companies can take to cleanup and prevent problems in the future.

The tour will start at 9:00 a.m. at the Gateway Travel Center, Breezewood Exit of the Turnpike and will be followed by a complimentary lunch. Rain date is December 10.

For more information, contact Barb Smerkar at 724-836-4121 or send email to: [bsmerkar@pacleanways.org](mailto:bsmerkar@pacleanways.org) .

### \$1.25 Million from Sustainable Energy Fund Helps Reduce Greenhouse Gases

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Last year [Sustainable Energy Fund](#) provided over \$1.1 million in financing – and another \$150,000 in grants – for 20 projects that reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 6,900 tons. That’s like removing 1,260 cars from our roads.

“The past year was exciting and challenging,” noted SEF President and CEO Jennifer Hopkins. “Over the next year, the SEF plans to continue our mission to promote, develop, and invest in clean energy initiatives to benefit residential, commercial, institutional and industrial customers within the PPL service territory and beyond. We look forward to new and exciting challenges next year.”

“Over the past year,” she added, “efforts were made to align SEF infrastructure, resources, and goals to the fulfillment of our mission. PRI projects are reviewed for financial sustainability, replicability, and feasibility,” she said.”

Major SEF investments included:

- \$750,000 for Pittsburgh-based Plextronics, which develops technology for organic solar cells;
- \$300,000 for Wanner Pride n’ Joy Farm in Lancaster. The 600-head dairy farm located in the Lancaster County, received funding for the installation of an anaerobic digester for electrical production and reduction of greenhouse gases; and
- \$125,000 for Shazaam Realty of Kingston. The SEF committed to fund a portion of an energy-efficient building on Kingston’s Market Street. The Luzerne County business is demolishing an old building and erecting a 4,700 square foot modern energy efficient building on a 1.2 acre site.

During 2006-2007, SEF continued to provide a turnkey energy partnership funding to regional municipalities. Focused on traffic signals, SEF support starts with an energy audit then projects dollars saved by changing the traffic signals to light-emitting diodes.

SEF funds the audit and change-out with a loan, which municipalities repay through the saved dollars. The program is accomplished without cost to taxpayers. LED’s save 90 percent over traditional signals. Participating municipalities include Bloomsburg, Clarion, Hamburg, Minersville, Mount Carmel, Muhlenberg Township, Northampton, Pottsville, St. Clair and Shenandoah.

Also during the 2006-2007 business year, the SEF approved financing for the following project:

- City of Allentown, Lehigh County: \$5,000. Light-emitting diode fixtures, a first for eastern Pennsylvania, were installed outside Allentown City Hall at no cost to the City. An SEF demonstration project, the LED lights are expected to have an operating life from 50,000 to 100,000 hours making them virtually maintenance free;
- Solar Scholars: \$81,802. Through the SEF’s Solar Scholars Program, Pennsylvania college students design and implement photo-voltaic technology systems on their campuses to generate electricity. Six participating schools are Bucknell, Clarion, Mercyhurst, Messiah, Penn State and Villanova;
- Pine Street Housing, Hazleton, Luzerne County: \$33,000. The grant assists Hazelton’s Pine Street Neighborhood Project create 25 single-family green homes using renewable energy, energy conservation and efficiency, sustainable energy design, materials and construction methods. The model project is the first of its kind in Northeastern Pennsylvania;
- AFC First Financial, Allentown, Lehigh County: \$5,000. This grant enabled AFC First Financial to sponsor seminars for home contractors promoting the Keystone Help Loan

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Program. Part of a Webinar effort, the goal is to make contractors aware of the loan program. Over 1,000 loans resulted from the seminars;

- Wilson College, Chambersburg, Franklin County: \$11,588. SEF funding helped develop and deliver a hands-on demonstration of renewable energy in wind, PV, and solar. Also included in the grant is the development of a sustainable energy curriculum for an undergraduate course and community workshops; and
- Twin Valley School District, Elverson, Chester County: \$12,250. Elverson's Twin Valley School District designed and built an aesthetically pleasing, energy efficient educational facility. The new Twin Valley Elementary Center, a model for high performance green building, will be open to other schools and businesses for tours and information Tides Center, Allegheny County: \$1,908. SEF enabled PCIEP to assist 10 member colleges and universities complete campus greenhouse gas inventories.

SEF President Hopkins noted that plans for 2007-2008 are very exciting. "The vision of the Sustainable Energy Fund remains strong. We are currently working on establishing a residential energy program that would benefit the ratepayers of PPL," she noted. "We are analyzing different options and hopefully will develop an ongoing program to help residential rate payers manage energy costs.

"We are also implementing a strategy to financially support small business in preparation of the PPL rate cap removal slated for January 1, 2010. We are working with other partners and hope to unveil a new program in the coming year.

For more information, visit the [Sustainable Energy Fund website](#).

### Villanova University Unveils New Solar Electric System

The [Villanova University College of Engineering](#) unveiled a new Solar Electric System comprised of 24 180-watt crystalline silicon solar panels atop its Center for Engineering Education and Research last week.

The output from the five-foot by two-foot solar panels is conditioned to provide high quality AC power for the building using an inverter. The panels will provide up to 4,000 watts of power to offset utility-supplied power for the CEER building.

"The installation of the solar panels will play an important role in enhancing undergraduate and graduate research and teaching," said Gary Gabriele, Dean of the Villanova University College of Engineering. "The panels also complement the College of Engineering's already substantial presence in work on environmental sustainability."

This Solar Electric System is the University's first renewable energy source to provide clean, pollution-free power on campus. Funded by a \$15,000 matching-grant provided by The [Sustainable Energy Fund of Central Eastern Pennsylvania](#) and supported by PPL, the project will help train Villanova students in the design and installation of solar electric systems. Five Villanova electrical engineering students were involved in the initial phase of the project.

Villanova University is one of only six colleges and universities supported by the [Solar Scholars Program](#). Solar Scholars is an innovative solar energy educational program created by the Sustainable Energy Fund of Central Eastern Pennsylvania, designed to provide college students and faculty a unique hands-on exposure to the application of solar technology as a renewable energy source. Other members of the six-college coalition in this solar-energy initiative include Penn State University, Bucknell University, Clarion University, Messiah College and Mercyhurst College.

“The SEF is proud to assist Villanova University in the implementation of this unique renewable energy training program,” said Jennifer Hopkins, President of SEF. “Solar Scholars was a very competitive grant competition, and Villanova’s existing sustainability focus contributed to winning this award.”

Villanova is firmly committed to issues of environmental sustainability. Last May, the University’s president, Father Donohue, signed the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment.

The ACUPCC is dedicated to the critical research and education needed to end global warming. Two buildings on campus, a new College of Nursing and a new School of Law, are being built according to LEED-certified specifications. The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—LEED—Green Building Rating System, developed by the United States Green Building Council, provides a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction.

### **Penn State Leads DOE Consortium on Hydrogen Energy Research**

Hydrogen energy research at Penn State expands with leadership of a newly established U.S. Department of Energy consortium funded for three years by the DOE's Nuclear Energy Research Initiative.

Penn State will lead a consortium, funded for three years for \$2.4 million, to investigate thermochemical hydrogen production. Other members of the consortium include Argonne National Laboratory, University of South Carolina and Tulane University.

One aim of the program is to develop a number of thermochemical cycles for producing hydrogen on a commercial scale through advanced nuclear energy systems. In a thermochemical cycle, water and heat are the input, hydrogen and oxygen are the only products, and all other chemicals are recycled.

The objective of the consortium research-"Advanced Electrochemical Technologies for Hydrogen Production by Alternative Thermochemical Cycles"-is to establish the most efficient technologies for hydrogen production compatible with nuclear-generated heat sources.

Researchers will investigate a number of prospective thermochemical cycles and key reactions via experimental work and process simulation to evaluate their efficiency and viability for future sustainable energy infrastructure. Serguei Lvov, professor of energy and mineral engineering, will serve as director of the consortium.

"Energy dependence and the large increase in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere are serious concerns today," says Lvov, who serves as the director of the Electrochemical Laboratory at the Penn State Energy Institute. "Substituting hydrogen for fossil fuels and the use of electric power/heat from nuclear reactors rather than fossil fuels, would increase energy independence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

Research conducted by the consortium members will rely on expertise in particular areas. Joint data analysis and selection of prospective directions and systems will be made at review meetings. It is also anticipated that consortium activities will be a part of the International Nuclear Energy Research Initiative, Lvov says, and a strong collaboration with Atomic Energy Canada, Ltd. and a number of Canadian universities will be developed.

Penn State leads one of the 11 university-led teams tapped to conduct state-of-the-art research on nuclear energy with a total funding amount of \$30.7 million.

For more information, visit the [Hydrogen Research Center webpage](#). Dr. Lvov can be contact at 814-863-8677.

### **Gas Costs Top Regional Concern in Commuter Services Poll**

When asked to name the single most important problem facing them daily, regional commuters cite rising gasoline prices over healthcare or taxes. Gas costs are a factor not only in household budgets, but in job choices, although few regional employers help workers with the problem.

A poll just conducted by [Commuter Services of South Central Pennsylvania](#) reveals rarely seen nearly unanimous or overwhelming agreement on several issues related to gasoline costs and traffic congestion.

When it comes to battling traffic congestion, commuter alternatives (such as carpools and transit) get very strong public support over options like highway construction. Many who drive alone would switch if they had more options, could overcome barriers or knew of resources, such as the region's Commuter Services programs. There is a hard core minority, however, who would not switch no matter what.

The poll reveals widespread support for more alternatives, as well as for investment of public dollars to promote them.

This is the first such public opinion poll on these issues in the region, which includes Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York counties, where Commuter Services provides its free congestion reduction programs.

Asked about their most important household problem, 17 percent say it is gas and energy prices, which is mentioned twice as much as either healthcare or economic issues and three times as often as taxes. When asked to rate their level of concern, 97 percent say they are very or somewhat concerned about the increase in gasoline costs.

Four families out of 10 make sacrifices in other household necessities to meet the rising cost of their commute. Nearly 30 percent said that the rising gas cost has a significant impact, with 45 percent reporting a moderate impact.

More than 7 out of 10 responders (71 percent) say it is good public policy for government to invest in programs that promote commuter options.

The survey reveals little regional support for new highways as an alternative to address traffic congestion.

Nearly 90 percent are very or somewhat concerned about the increase in traffic congestion, but they don't prefer more roads to solve the problem. A whopping 92 percent think it is somewhat or very important to provide buses, light rail or train service to alleviate congestion, cut gas consumption and help the environment.

Increasing mass transit (favored by 54 percent) and promoting more use of commute options (favored by 47 percent) as solutions rank well above building new roads (14 percent) and expanding existing ones (34 percent). Only one in 10 favors a solution such as dedicated carpool lanes.

There is a hard core of commuters (up to 40 percent) who would not consider alternatives, but the rest are open to options with some help.

In the poll, 85 percent said they drive alone. The majority interested in other options report major barriers: not having someone with whom to carpool (mentioned by 36

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percent), no transit/train service (27 percent), along with shift work and unpredictable work schedules (20 percent).

Half of those polled would be more likely to use an alternative if they had a free, guaranteed ride home in emergencies, which Commuter Services already offers along with a confidential ridematching database.

If they were to switch, nearly half of the people are interested in carpooling with 19 percent preferring transit and 24 percent wanting to use a train. The latter two preferences may be relatively equal given the survey's 4 percent margin of error.

Six in 10 people see the need for express bus service from their area to another town.

Four in 10 of those polled prefer the freedom and convenience of driving alone no matter how long the commute, its cost or consequences on the environment.

For more information, visit the [Commuter Services of South Central Pennsylvania website](#) or call 1-866-579-RIDE.

### Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve Open House December 1

The [Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve](#) at Saint Vincent College will host a Christmas Open House with the theme, "Where the Holidays Meet Nature," on December 1 from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Events are planned throughout the day to celebrate this 50-acre sanctuary for plants, wildlife and research. The Reserve also includes a restored barn and the Lochry Blockhouse, an American Revolutionary War era building.

The day will include caroling, children's nature crafts, winter hikes and other crafters. There will also be various vendors and items available including: Women of the Cloud Forest, country style, glass block lights, sweatshirts, Little Mahoning Creek Pottery, rag rugs, knitted items, baked goods and much more.

In addition, music, hot drinks and walks on the nature trails will be provided. The nature trails throughout the Reserve are open year-round, seven days a week, from dusk until dawn. The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve also offers one-hour program/tours for groups during hours of operation. A donation is requested.

The Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve was established in memory of Winnie Palmer, golf legend Arnold Palmer's late wife. Prior to her death in 1999, Mrs. Palmer, a friend of Saint Vincent and former Board of Directors member, mentioned thoughts of protecting the land from over development and preserving the view of the College from Route 30.

To be added to the mailing list, send an e-mail to Angela Belli, Environmental Education Program Director, send email to: [angela.belli@email.stvincent.edu](mailto:angela.belli@email.stvincent.edu) or call 724-537-5284 for more information.

The Reserve is located adjacent to Saint Vincent College at 744 Walzer Way just off Route 981.

### John James Audubon Mill Grove Home Holiday Open House December 2

John James Audubon's [Mill Grove home](#) in Montgomery County will hold an open house on December 2 to celebrate the holiday season and nature.

This annual celebration brings the outside in and [Pennsylvania Audubon](#), who operates the home, decked the halls of the Audubon art museum with natural decorations

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and whimsical teasel critters. A critter scavenger hunt for the children as well as musical presentations and holiday treats await you.

A costumed artist will impersonate John James Audubon and draws birds in his studio. The museum gift shop is open for holiday shopping and admission is free from 1:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Mill Grove is located in Audubon, Pa adjacent to the Valley Forge National Military Park. For directions and more information, visit the [Mill Grove webpage](#).

### Game Commission Offers Wild Gift Ideas for the Holidays

Is the thought of struggling through holiday shopping crowds unbearable? Dozens of wildlife-related gifts are just a click away at the Game Commission's "[The Outdoor Shop](#)."

One gift that's always in demand is the agency's full-color calendar, which sells for \$8.95, and features a fantastic collection of seasonal wildlife photos taken by agency employees and retirees.

Photos included in the 2008 calendar were taken by: Willard C. Hill, retired Game Lands Management Supervisor in the Southcentral Region; Timothy C. Flanigan, retired Bedford County Wildlife Conservation Officer; Jacob Dingel, radio dispatcher in the Northwest Region Office; Coy D. Hill, retired Deputy Wildlife Conservation Officer from Fulton County; and Lori Richardson, Wildlife Conservation Education Specialist in the Harrisburg headquarters.

Know someone who wants to see and learn more about Pennsylvania's white-tailed deer, black bear and elk? For the price of \$5 - which includes tax - you can receive any one of the agency's three award-winning videos: On the Trail of Pennsylvania's Black Bears; Pennsylvania Whitetails, Living with Change; and Pennsylvania Elk: Reclaiming the Alleghenies.

The Game Commission also has three holiday ornaments that sell for \$7.95 each. A limited edition ceramic ornament three inches in diameter features a cardinal, a classic symbol of the holiday season. The two pewter ornaments, measuring 2.5 inches in diameter, feature a cardinal on one and a version of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's logo on the other.

The Game Commission also has fewer than 100 of the special collector six-inch patches made in 2005 to honor of 25 years of the Working Together for Wildlife Program. At a cost of \$20 (tax included), the patch includes six birds and mammals that have been featured species on previous patches, which normally measure four inches in diameter. Species from previous WTFW patches featured on the collectible patch are: eastern bluebird (1984); a red fox (1991); beaver (1995); and peregrine falcon (1996). It also features a flying squirrel (1980-early 1990s) and male cardinal (since 1990s), which have been on the agency's companion "WE NEED WILDLIFE" patch.

All revenues generated from these items support the Game Commission's wildlife management programs. Created in 1895 to restore Pennsylvania's wildlife, the Game Commission is responsible for managing all wild birds and mammals, as well as the 1.4 million acres of State Game Lands it has purchased over the years with hunting and furtaking license dollars to safeguard wildlife habitat.

In addition to being available on the agency's website, all items are available by contacting the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Department MS, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797; or by calling toll free 1-888-888-3459.

Many of the items are available for sale over-the-counter at the Harrisburg office and six region offices. State sales tax is applied to many of the items.

### **Dr. Arthur Socolow, Former State Geologist, Receives 2007 Ian Campbell Medal**

Dr. Arthur A. Socolow, former Pennsylvania state geologist, has been named the recipient of the "2007 Medal" in honor of Ian Campbell. Socolow was presented the award at the Geological Society of America Presidential Address Ceremony in Denver, Col.

In 1957, Socolow joined the Pennsylvania Geological Survey where and worked as director and state geologist until 1986. After stepping down as director, he began working as a consulting geologist, focusing on projects addressing environmental geology, engineering geology, mineral resources evaluation and ground water development.

Having authored more than 100 papers and publications, Socolow has served on numerous advisory committees including for the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Department of Energy, National Research Council, and the Interstate Oil Compact Commission. In addition, Socolow has been president of the Association of American State Geologists, the Geologic Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Association of Stratigraphic Nomenclature.

Socolow is the 26th recipient of this award that is given annually in memory of Ian Campbell, a renowned American geologist of accomplishment and influence.

## **Opinion**

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### **Pennsylvania Must Fund Hazardous Sites Cleanup By Senate Majority Leader Dominic Pileggi**

When the annual state budget was passed in mid-July, it did not include any funding for the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund – one of the most important programs in state government.

Pennsylvania's Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act, often referred to as HSCA, provides funding for many vital environmental cleanups. Perhaps most importantly, it pays for the state's portion of the federal Superfund program, which cleans up abandoned hazardous waste sites.

In large part because of our industrial heritage, Pennsylvania currently has at least 269 Superfund sites, according to the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Our commitment to HSCA is not optional.

HSCA also provides funding to clean up other contaminated sites, to investigate illegal hazardous waste disposals and methamphetamine labs, to allow the Department of Environmental Protection to stabilize serious chemical spills, and to maintain a statewide emergency response network.

In June and July, the administration sought to pay for this key program by increasing the tax on trash, which would affect every homeowner and business in the state.

HSCA is such an important priority that we should find a way to fund it from existing state revenues. We should not rely on a tax increase very unlikely to pass the General Assembly.





In October, the Senate passed [Senate Bill 1100](#), legislation I introduced to transfer about \$17 million to HSCA from legislative accounts for the current fiscal year. Recent estimates indicate that amount is enough to keep the program afloat through the end of June. By using money from legislative accounts, we ensure that no state program is cut to fund HSCA.

The Senate also passed legislation, [Senate Bill 1068](#), to ensure that any fines or penalties levied for violations of HSCA are used to fund HSCA-related environmental activities, rather than being used for other government programs.

Going forward, Senate Bill 1100 would dedicate \$40 million in existing revenues for HSCA from the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax in fiscal year 2008-2009 through fiscal year 2010-2011. That tax is scheduled to be eliminated at the end of 2010; this proposal will not delay that phase-out.

In other words, my legislation will ensure that HSCA is properly funded for the next four years. During this time, we can work to find a longer-term funding source.

Senate Bill 1100 passed the Senate unanimously. I hope the House will also act quickly, so that it can be sent to the governor for his signature by the end of November and Pennsylvania's very real environmental needs can continue to be met.

*Sen. Dominic Pileggi* (R-Delaware) is the Majority Leader in the Pennsylvania state Senate. He was first elected to the Senate in 2002. More information about state issues can be found on his website, [www.senatorpileggi.com](http://www.senatorpileggi.com).

## Opinion

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### Promoting Environmental Literacy in School Settings

**Dr. Alec Bodzin**

**Lehigh University Environmental Initiative**



Are citizens in the United States environmentally literate? Are our schools doing a good job preparing our children to be environmentally literate? When our kids read in the newspaper about issues pertaining to energy use, global climate change, and pollution, do they have a deep meaningful understanding about these issues or just some superficial awareness?

While it seems that environmental issues are often displayed in the media, a recent Roper research report showed that most Americans believe they know more about the environment than they actually do.

According to this report, 45 million Americans think the ocean is a source of fresh water; 120 million think spray cans still have CFCs in them even though CFCs were banned in 1978; another 120 million people think disposable diapers are the leading problem with landfills when they actually represent about 1 percent of the problem; and 130 million believe that hydropower is America's top energy source, when it accounts for just 10 percent of the total.

Even more disconcerting, the Roper report states there is little difference in environmental knowledge levels between the average American and those who sit on

governing bodies, town councils, and in corporate board rooms, and whose decisions often have wider ramifications on the environment.

On top of this, Richard Louv in his book, “Last Child in the Woods”, has called our attention to a recent widespread problem in our country called “nature-deficit disorder.” Simply put, many American children are not outside playing and discovering nature as compared to past generations. Instead, recreational playtime for many children is spent indoors messing around within a virtual world on the Internet, watching TV, or being kept indoors by parents for safety concerns. The time is ripe to promote environmental literacy in our schools.

The creation of an environmentally literate citizenry is considered a primary goal of environmental education. Environmental education goals include developing citizens that are aware of and concerned about the environment and its associated problems. To achieve these goals, our K-12 schools need to provide each and every student with opportunities to acquire knowledge, values, attitudes and commitment to protect and improve the environment.

There are different levels to environmental literacy. The lowest level involves simple environmental awareness. Most people have heard of water and air pollution, energy efficiency, climate change, habitat loss, and solid waste. Current school structures with high accountability state testing in the sciences and social sciences will ensure that classroom learners are exposed to terminology used in environmental studies and understand ecological concepts.

Unfortunately, some states today only have mandatory testing in mathematics, reading and writing. Consequently, as recent reports have shown, many elementary schools offer about half as much science instruction as they did before the No Child Left Behind law was enacted and school time for social studies learning occurs much less often. Pennsylvania students will take the PSSA test in science for the first time in 2008.

Another level of environmental literacy involves taking action with personal conduct that contributes favorably to the environment. These are often simple things people can do such as turning off the light switch or turning off the computer to save electricity, taking alternative transportation to work such as the bus or riding a bicycle or purchasing a hybrid vehicle to conserve gasoline, turning off the faucet while you brush your teeth or shave to conserve water, and reducing the amount solid waste you produce by reusing containers, recycling products, and buying items with less packaging materials.

While many environmentally conscious classroom teachers do a good job advocating such action, the actual practice of students is less likely to occur unless adults at home model and reinforce these practices. School-based activities can model good environmental practices.

Classroom curricula can integrate environmental activities into the traditional disciplines by creating compost gardens and wildlife habitat areas – students can write about their experiences with journaling activities.

Monitoring and reducing the waste stream for each classroom, monitoring and reducing the school’s energy use, and using free Web-based tools such as “ecological footprint calculators” to determine environmental impacts of daily activities are each classroom experiences that align to standards in mathematics.

A number of schools across the United States have been using the environment as an integrated context (EIC) for learning across the curriculum. Evidence gathered from a Pew Charitable Trust study of 40 EIC schools indicate that students learn more effectively

with an environment-based context than with a traditional disciplinary approach to school subject learning. According to this study, “EIC appears to significantly improve student performance in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies, and enriches the overall school experience.”

While the EIC framework requires substantial change across the entire school-based curricula, environmental integration within the traditional school disciplines is an excellent starting place.

For example, in a fourth grade math lesson, a teacher tells his or her students to write down every item they throw away (food, milk container, plastic wrap, styrofoam tray, etc.) during lunch. The trash is collected in large bags and the height, width, and length of the bag is measured. When the students return from lunch, they share the items they discarded and then develop a way to compile this information. A chart displaying the total amount of each trash item type discarded is created. The students review their data and answer the following questions:

- If 10 students at a cafeteria table threw away enough trash to fill one bag, how many trash bags did our entire class fill? How much space would it take up? How much trash would be thrown away for each grade level in our school per day?
- Select an item on our chart. Calculate the amount of this item our class would throw away in a week, month, and school year. How much space would this trash take up?
- How much of this item would the entire fourth grade throw away in a week, month, and school year? What about the entire school?
- How could we reduce our amount of trash at lunch?
- Is anything recyclable?

A more comprehensive level of environmental literacy goes beyond awareness and personal action. It involves a deep knowledge and understanding of environmental concepts and skills that are at a much higher level to understand environmental issues, some that are quite complex.

This level of environmental literacy involves essential 21st century skills including problem-solving, critical thinking skills, and creative thinking. It involves hands-on experiences in a laboratory or in a field setting. It involves deep understanding of complex problems and careful consideration of a range of solutions and consequences.

This level of environmental literacy involves investigating such questions as: Why is biodiversity important? Does it really matter if there aren't so many species? What are the impacts of global climate change? How does human activity contribute to global climate change? How will the world's current population growth affect our planet's natural resources during the next 30-100 years?

A major challenge to educators in school settings is to provide meaningful learning experiences that promote environmental literacy at this comprehensive level.

The current political climate of high-stakes school testing in reading, writing, and mathematics is a major obstacle to help learners become aware and knowledgeable about the environment and foster environmental ethics that will have long lasting impacts.

Reading about the environment promotes literacy. Reading and “doing” promotes environmental literacy. For environmental literacy to be realized, all K-12 students need to be actively engaged in interdisciplinary environmental education curricula that emphasizes student-directed scientific discovery of their local environment. School curriculum needs to provide developmentally appropriate environmental experiences and activities at each grade level.

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Promoting environmental literacy is a core mission of the Lehigh Environmental Initiative. We advocate the integration of well-design, curricular environmental education materials at all grade levels in classroom settings. As part of our education and outreach mission, we have developed a [website, EnviroSci Inquiry](#) - that contains a variety of curricular activities and instructional resources designed to promote environmental literacy. Activities and curriculum supports range from exploring one's watershed area to investigating complex environmental issues.

The “Environmental Issues” section contains a range of curricular activities to actively engage learners to think deeply about issues pertaining to the environment. Investigating environmental issues involves analyzing data and evidence to formulate explanations. It also involves identifying solutions and taking positive action to resolve environmental issues.

For younger learners, the activity, Environmental Laws and Regulations in Pennsylvania, presents learners with environmental ethical dilemmas that involve critical thinking and decision-making. For more advanced learners, we've created a series of authentic role-playing environmental issues-based approach simulations. In these simulations, students investigate a real-world controversial issue from different perspectives.

After they complete their investigation, a public forum or debate is conducted to determine the next course of action on the issue. Investigations include: What is the most efficient and effective way to treat and clean up abandoned mine drainage in Pennsylvania? How can we change our land use practices to avoid the negative effects of sprawl? Who should be responsible for the investigation and remediation of the Stockertown sinkholes? Classroom debates on these issues offer learners a forum to think critically about the role that science plays in societal issues. These simulations also acknowledge the connection between the environmental sciences and the policy decisions individuals make about current social issues.

American schools at all levels need to do a much better job preparing our students to be environmentally literate. Students completing elementary school need to know more than a basic awareness of ecological concepts in order to pass a high-stakes test. Young children need to develop behaviors and actions that contribute favorably to the environment.

By the time students are in upper elementary school, they need to develop skills to think critically about environmental issues. In middle and high school, school curriculum needs to provide learners with experiences to be deeply involved in understanding complex environmental problems and issues that will not only affect them today, but in the years to come.

**Dr. Alec Bodzin** is Associate Professor of Science Education at Lehigh University's Technology-based Teacher Education Program and leads the [Environmental Initiative at Lehigh University](#). He can be contacted at 610-758-5095 or by sending email to: [amb4@lehigh.edu](mailto:amb4@lehigh.edu) .

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

## 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 [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** – [PA American Water Watershed Art Contest](#)
- **February 19** – PennVEST [Infrastructure Loans/Grants for April 15 Meeting](#).
- **February 22**— [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

[Diggin Her Work- Julie McMonagle](#)  
[Hunters, Anglers Targeted by State Lobbyist](#)  
[Hawks: 9,623 Miles and Counting](#)  
[For Kristan McKinne, Conservation Comes Naturally](#)  
[Berks County Trail's Lookout Showcases Fall](#)  
[Land Advocates Push Federal Tax Incentive](#)  
[Allegheny County Improves Air Pollution Permit System](#)  
[PA Tries Out Road Surfacing Material Containing Old Tires](#)  
[Pittsburgh to Reward Those Who are Going Green](#)  
[Op-Ed: Keep on Greening Pittsburgh](#)  
[Allegheny Power to Offer Wind Energy](#)

[Farmers Wait for Fair Electricity Payments](#)

[Ephrata Shops for Electricity Options](#)

[Editorial: Economy, Environment Will Suffer Unless Carbon Emissions Reduced](#)

## **Watershed NewsClips**

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

[State Pushes Eco-Friendly Farming](#)

[Drainage from Old Mines Not an Easy Fix](#)

[Editorial: Cleaning Up the Chesapeake Bay Not Complete](#)

[Almost 50 Percent of Drinking Wells in McKean Don't Meet Standards](#)

## **Regulations**

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No new regulations were published this week. [Pennsylvania Bulletin – November 24, 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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No new policy statements were published this week.

[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](#)

- **November 27**— **NEW**. Senate Special Session Committee on Energy Policies will meet to consider [Special Session Senate Bill 4](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) establishing alternative energy research and development tax credits; [Special Session Senate Bill 6](#) (Erickson-R-Delaware) establishing a solar installation tax credit; [Special Session Senate Bill 8](#) (Wozniak-D-Cambria) excluding insulation and other energy conservation materials from Sales Tax; [Special Session Senate Bill 22](#) (Tomlinson-R-Bucks) increasing the reimbursement for alternative vehicle fuels from five to ten cents per gallon; [Special Session Senate Bill 25](#) (Waugh-R-York) adding “sugars, lignins” to

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the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards; [Special Session Senate Bill 26](#) (Wonderling-R-Montgomery) requiring state-owned vehicles to be fueled with biofuels; [Special Session Senate Bill 31](#) (D.White-R-Indiana) adding a more specific definition of low-impact hydropower and [Special Session Senate Bill 36](#) (MJ.White-R-Venango) Biodiesel Study and Production Incentive Act which will trigger mandates for the use of biodiesel based on biodiesel fuel production capacity for production sold to distributors in Pennsylvania. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 12:00.

- **November 28**—**NEW**. Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee meets to consider [Senate Bill 1020](#) (Wonderline-R-Montgomery) updating the Conservation District Law and Senate Bill 1168 (Brubaker-R-Lancaster) making land preserved through non-profit land trusts eligible for property tax freezes. Hearing Room 1, North Office Building. 9:00.
- **November 29**—**NEW**. House Republican Policy Committee hearing on flooding issues. Bauerstown Volunteer Fire Department, Pittsburgh. 10:00.
- **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 5**— **NEW**. DCNR [Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **December 11**— **CANCELLED**. DEP [Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee](#) meeting.
- **December 12**—**NEW**. DEP [Sewage Advisory Committee](#) will discuss proposed changes to Chapter 73. 2nd Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson Building. 10:30.
- **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.
- **March 28**—**NEW**. Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference and Shad Symposium. Holiday Inn, Fogelsville.

### [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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## **Supporting Member PA Outdoor Writers Association**

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