

# — PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on  
Environmental  
Issues in  
Pennsylvania*

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**Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci**

**July 10, 2006**

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## **Watershed Groups Should Report Flood-Damaged Projects to County EMA Officials**

Watershed groups are reminded that damage to watershed restoration projects caused by the recent flooding should be reported to county emergency management agencies so they can be included in damage assessments forwarded to state and federal emergency management agencies.

Several watershed groups have reported significant damage to mine drainage treatment and other watershed projects completed with state Growing Greener and other funding as a result of the recent floods.

The cost to repair or rebuild these facilities may be covered by emergency flood restoration aid, but they cannot even be considered if the damages are not part of a county flood damage assessment.

President Bush this week added 15 more Pennsylvania counties to the federal disaster declaration-- Berks, Bradford, Bucks, Chester, Columbia, Dauphin, Franklin, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Luzerne, Montgomery, Montour, Northampton, Northumberland and Pike. Previously announced counties included in the federal disaster declaration were Monroe, Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming.

Pennsylvania has officially declared these counties as state disaster areas: Adams, Armstrong, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Bradford, Bucks, Carbon, Centre, Chester, Clinton, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Lycoming, Mifflin, Monroe, Montgomery, Montour, Northampton, Northumberland, Perry, Philadelphia, Pike, Potter, Schuylkill, Snyder, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, Wayne, Wyoming and York counties.

If you have flood-damaged watershed projects in any of these areas, report it to the county emergency management and conservation district officials.

Staff from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and FEMA will work with county officials to set up Disaster Recovery Centers in various locations



Flooding Blew Out the Audenreid Mine Discharge Tunnel Where It Attached to the Newly Dedicated Treatment System in Schuylkill County.

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throughout the affected areas. DRCs are a one-stop shop for disaster related questions, getting help filling out forms and gathering more information about what assistance is available.

While visiting a DRC is not necessary, it is imperative that individual residents applying for disaster assistance call FEMA's toll-free number 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), TTY 1-800-462-7585 or [register on-line](#).

Gov. Rendell said state local and federal damage assessment teams continue to document the effects of the flooding on residences and businesses in counties across Pennsylvania in an effort to get assistance to Commonwealth citizens and business owners recovering from floods.

The Department of Environmental Protection is also now offer free home water well testing through their [Northcentral](#) and [Northeastern](#) offices.

Additional flood safety information and weather updates can be found at [www.PAFLOODING.state.pa.us](http://www.PAFLOODING.state.pa.us).

**NewsClips:** [Flood Ranks as 4th Worst on Delaware River](#)  
[Many Rehabilitated Streams Survive Flood](#)  
[Heavy Rains Spoil Fun at 35 State Parks](#)  
[5 More Counties Added to Disaster Declaration](#)  
[Conservation District Evaluating County Streams](#)  
[Rain Puts Groundwater Levels Near Normal](#)  
[Flood Can't Put Brakes on River Trip](#)  
[Editorial: Direct the Johnstown Flood Tax to Today's Flood Victims](#)

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### Session Schedule

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## On the Hill

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### Bills On the Governor's Desk

Several bills were signed into law by the Governor Friday, but several remain on his desk awaiting action. Here's the rundown....

**State Budget/Tax Changes:** The state budget is in [House Bill 2499](#) and the related tax bills implementing budget agreements are in [House Bill 859](#) (Tax Code), [Senate Bill 300](#) (Tax Code), [House Bill 1992](#) (Fiscal Code) and [House Bill 185](#) (Education). House Bill 2499 has been signed by the Governor as Act 2A.

**In-Lieu of Tax Payments:** [Senate Bill 868](#) (Scarnati-R-Warren) increasing the in-lieu of tax payments for State Forest and Game Lands from \$1.20 to \$3.60, funded by gaming revenues was signed into law by the Governor as Act 102.

**Conservation District Funding:** [Senate Bill 1224](#) (Wenger-R-Lancaster) creating the Conservation District Fund was signed into law by the Governor as Act 110.

**Environmental Capital Budget:** [House Bill 2317](#) (Feese-R-Lycoming) establishing the 2005-2006 Capital Budget for flood control, Keystone Recreation, Environmental Stewardship projects is with the Governor.

**Storage Tanks:** [House Bill 1195](#) (Yudichak-D-Luzerne) that makes changes to the program to help underground tank owners upgrade tanks is on the Governor's desk for his action.

**Oil and Gas Leases:** [Senate Bill 594](#) (MJ White-R-Venango) establishing the Dormant Oil and Gas Act to create trusts for prior oil and gas well owners is with the Governor for his action.

**Penalties for Non-Native Fish:** [House Bill 1320](#) (Reichley-R-Berks) establishing penalties for the sale, transport, possession or release of non-native injurious fish is on the Governor's desk for his action.

### **EXIT Signs Trigger Radiation Monitors, Leak Tritium into Landfills**

Unsuspecting demolition contractors and building owners disposing of self-illuminating EXIT signs containing tritium are responsible for triggering radiation alarms at landfills and causing tritium to get into landfill leachate.

At a hearing by the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee on June 28, David Allard, Director of DEP's Bureau of Radiation Protection, explained how broken EXIT signs containing tubes of radioactive tritium end up in landfills and trigger the monitors.

Frequently demolition contractors and building owners do not know they have an EXIT sign that contains radioactive materials because the special labels that include identifying information and disposal instructions have been painted over or has come off.

The EXIT signs containing tritium are the self-illuminating type that are not lighted by any other means. Contractors and building owners remodeling or disposing of these signs are required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to either return them to their manufacturer or treat them like low-level radioactive waste and not dispose of them in the regular trash.

Broken EXIT signs can leak tritium into a landfill and then into the leachate that is treated and released into local streams or through a municipal wastewater plant. Allard said DEP did a special two-year study that sampled water down stream from discharge points for treated landfill leachate near drinking water intakes and found no levels that threatened public health. DEP has also added tritium to the regular quarterly groundwater and discharge monitoring done by landfills.

Allard noted dilution is the primary means of dealing with any tritium concentrations in water that may be found to be a health hazard. Tritium is extremely difficult to remove from water because it is technically radioactive hydrogen.

There are an estimated 2 to 3 million EXIT signs containing tritium in the U.S..

Several Senators suggested that an education campaign is needed to teach demolition and other contractors and building owners about how to identify EXIT signs containing tritium and how to properly dispose of them.

Since 2000, over 170 landfills, municipal waste incinerators and waste transfer stations have installed radiation monitors required by DEP. Each waste truck pass through the monitors before going into the facility to detect sources of radiation.

Most often, according to Allard, the monitors are triggered by radioactive material from animals or human patients who have undergone a nuclear medicine treatment.

When the monitor is triggered, staff at the facilities are trained to identify the radiation source using a special radiation monitor. If a radiation source is above certain levels established in DEP's rules or if it cannot be identified, DEP staff is called to the site.

The vehicle is then isolated and a search is conducted through the waste to find and properly deal with the radiation source.

To watch the hearing online or to get copies of all testimony presented, visit the [Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee webpage](#).

Senator Mary Jo White (R-Venango) chairs the Senate Environmental Committee along with Senator Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) who is the Minority Chairman.

## **In Other News**

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### **\$600 Million to Be Spent At Keystone Generating to Reduce Air Pollution, Mercury**

The owners of the 1,700-megawatt, Keystone Generating Station have approved the investment of approximately \$600 million for the installation of state-of-the-art flue gas desulfurization systems, or scrubbers, at the facility.

The primary benefit of the scrubbers is removal of approximately 98 percent of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) from plant emissions. This equipment will provide the secondary benefits of removing substantial amounts of mercury and particulate matter.

Construction is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2006 and the scrubbers are scheduled to be in operation in 2009, with Unit 1 coming online in the spring and Unit 2 following later in the year.

"This significant investment is important from both an environmental and community perspective," said Jim Lafontaine, Keystone plant manager. "We are investing in cleaner air and the long-term economic viability of Keystone, while creating 800 temporary construction jobs and 20 permanent full-time jobs. The project will contribute an estimated \$100 million to the local economy."

In simple terms, a scrubber works by spraying a mixture of limestone and water into gases created during the coal combustion process. As the SO<sub>2</sub> in the gases comes in contact with the mixture, it is absorbed and neutralized by the limestone.

A byproduct of this process is commercial grade gypsum, the primary component of wallboard. The Keystone plant intends to sell the gypsum produced to wallboard manufacturers which turns a waste stream into a resource.

"Not only is a scrubber the right thing to do environmentally, it also makes good business sense," said Joe Walkovich, Manager – Operations Oversight, Keystone - Conemaugh Project Office. "Scrubbers will give us more flexibility in the type of fuels that we will be able to use from the local coal market."

The Keystone Generating Station, located about 15 miles from Indiana in Shelocta, Pa., is comprised of two 850-megawatt, coal-fired generating units. Reliant Energy is the operator of the facility which is jointly owned by a group of seven co-owners, including Atlantic City Electric (2.47 percent); Constellation Power Source Generation, Inc. (20.99 percent); NRG Energy (3.7 percent); Reliant Energy (16.67 percent); PPL Generation (12.34 percent); Exelon Generating Company, LLC (20.99 percent); and PSEG Fossil LLC (22.84).

The scrubbers are the second major environmental control investment that has been made at the station in the last three years. In 2003, nitrogen oxide control technology was added to both units. The new environmental control line-up will also significantly reduce mercury emissions.

**NewsClip:** [Power Plants Getting Cleanup](#)

## **Reliant Energy Invests \$250 Million to Reduce Air Pollution, Mercury at Cheswick**

Reliant Energy announced plans this week to install a state-of-the-art flue gas desulfurization system at its 580-megawatt, Cheswick Generating Station in Springdale, PA south of Pittsburgh.

Construction of the \$250 million project is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 2007, creating approximately 400 construction jobs and 20 permanent jobs at the plant. Capital expenditures for the project are in line with the company's previously disclosed capital budget and will be incurred from 2007 through 2009. The scrubber is scheduled to begin operation in the fourth quarter 2009.

"This investment demonstrates our commitment to both the environment as well as the local community," said Joel Staff, chairman and chief executive officer, Reliant Energy. "Installation of a scrubber at Cheswick will create construction jobs and improve the long-term economic viability of the plant, while contributing to cleaner air in the state."

The scrubber will remove approximately 98 percent of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) from the plant's flue gas, lowering historical SO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Cheswick by approximately 40,000 tons per year.

Another important benefit of the scrubber is mercury removal. Operating in conjunction with the plant's existing nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) controls, the system will remove between 80 percent and 90 percent of the mercury in bituminous coal. In addition, the scrubber will reduce current particulate emissions by an additional 62 percent.

Plans call for gypsum from the Cheswick plant to be sold to wallboard manufacturers, turning a waste stream into a usable resource.

"Installation of the scrubber will provide both environmental and economic benefits," said Dave Freysinger, senior vice president, generation operations, Reliant Energy. "In addition to emissions reductions and creation of jobs, the scrubber will allow the flexibility to source coal from local coal markets."

**NewsClip:** [Power Plants Getting Cleanup](#)

## **U.S. Releases of Mercury Decline Significantly**

Domestic releases and uses of mercury have decreased significantly over the last 25 years, according to the "[EPA's Roadmap for Mercury](#)" report released this week by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

U.S. mercury air emissions have been reduced by 45 percent since 1990, and mercury use in products and processes decreased 83 percent between 1980 and 1997.

In Pennsylvania, mercury emissions from just one source—coal-fired power plants—have been reduced by 33 percent from 1999 to 2004.

The EPA roadmap focuses on six key areas: 1) addressing mercury releases to the environment; 2) addressing mercury uses in products and industrial processes which can lead to releases to the environment; 3) managing commodity-grade mercury supplies; 4) communicating risks to the public; 5) addressing international mercury sources and 6) conducting mercury research and monitoring.

In the last 15 years, EPA has focused its mercury reduction efforts on large point sources of air emissions from municipal waste combustors or incinerators, medical waste incinerators and hazardous waste combustors.

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More recently, EPA has focused its efforts on industrial boilers, chlor-alkali facilities and a Bush Administration regulation that, for the first time, will achieve a 70 percent reduction in mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants, when fully implemented. EPA now has standards in place limiting mercury air releases from most major known industrial sources in the United States.

"EPA's Roadmap for Mercury," the first-ever comprehensive overview of agency mercury activities, describes progress and ongoing efforts in reducing mercury in the environment, both domestically and internationally.

The roadmap highlights the agency's decade-plus efforts to address mercury risks to human health and the environment. The roadmap will also help the agency maximize coordination of its diverse efforts in advancing EPA's long-term goal of reducing risks associated with mercury.

In addition to providing a roadmap for EPA activities, the report provides important information about EPA's mercury efforts to other federal agencies, our partners in state, tribal and local governments and to the public.

"We're moving in the right direction – mercury emissions have declined dramatically over the past two decades," said Susan Hazen, acting assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances. "This report details previous and current activities that have contributed to these mercury reductions, and it will help outline EPA's overall effort to continue protecting public health and the environment."

As part of the agency's ongoing efforts to reduce mercury emissions, EPA has also signed a proposed Significant New Use Rule (SNUR) this week. Automakers voluntarily discontinued uses of elemental mercury switches in convenience light assemblies and anti-lock brake systems in post-2003 cars sold in America.

This proposed SNUR, issued under the Toxic Substances Control Act, would give EPA an opportunity to evaluate any resumed use of mercury in these switches and, if necessary, to prohibit or limit such activity before it occurs to prevent unreasonable risk of harm to human health or the environment.

EPA is also working to advance the state of the science surrounding mercury, while taking action now to help reduce risks. Major offices at EPA are continuing to work to better understand the sources of mercury and how it impacts human health and the environment. At the same time, the agency is focusing on risk communication and outreach activities that will help the public reduce exposure to mercury.

A [copy of the Roadmap](#), the proposed SNUR and other information on the agency's efforts to reduce mercury are available on [EPA's Mercury webpage](#).

### **Rendell Calls for Improved Preparedness Surrounding Nuclear Power Plants**

Gov. Rendell called this week for support of legislation introduced in the Senate and House that would increase the funds available to Pennsylvania for disaster preparedness and planning programs for nuclear power plants.

The legislation increases the fees charged to owners of nuclear power plants. There has not been a significant increase in the amount Pennsylvania operators pay over the past 14 years.

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The monies generated would be channeled, primarily, to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the Department of Environmental Protection, which are responsible for ensuring plant safety, leading preparedness efforts and helping to review preparedness procedures.

The Governor said his administration had worked with the operators to agree to an equitable increase that places Pennsylvania on par with other states that host nuclear power plants.

The Governor thanked Sen. Don White (R-Indiana) and Rep. Thomas D. Tigue (D-Luzerne) who are sponsoring the emergency preparedness funds legislation in their respective chambers—[Senate Bill 1276](#).

"This effort to strengthen preparedness has bi-partisan support in the General Assembly and we look forward to working with the Legislature to pass these bills and then, with the nuclear plant operators, to make these changes to continue to ensure the protection of all Pennsylvanians," the Governor said.

"We have made tremendous progress in our preparedness activities in the past three years, and the Governor's comprehensive approach to review our readiness efforts will benefit all Pennsylvanians, whether businesses or individuals," said PEMA Director James Joseph. "The nuclear industry has recently made significant enhancements to their preparedness programs, and we want to make sure that all efforts are coordinated with the industry and our federal and local emergency management partners."

Information on steps that businesses or individuals should take to improve their readiness efforts for all hazards can be found on the state's [Emergency Preparedness Guide webpage](#).

**NewsClips:** [Bill Would Increase State Fee on Nuclear Power Plants](#)

## PA Electric Power Generation Conference Set for September



The Electric Power Generation Association will host the [2006 Power Generation Conference](#) in Hershey on September 7 & 8.

Conference participants will hear a variety of presentations on issues of critical importance to the electric power industry and its regulators, including operations, wholesale market, environmental and safety issues.

For an agenda and registration information, visit the [2006 Power General Conference webpage](#).

## American Water's Environmental Grants Fund 3 PA Watershed Projects

Pennsylvania American Water announced the awarding of three grants to watershed projects under its [American Water Environmental Grant Program](#) this week.

The grantees are suburban Pittsburgh's Blitz on Banksville Beautification, the Township of Spring (Berks County) and the Octoraro Watershed Association (Chester County). The three organizations will receive a share of grant funds totaling \$25,900.

"We have been extremely pleased with the calibre of projects received in the last two years for this program. There are organizations across the state that are making a difference everyday in our watersheds," said Dan Warnock, president, Pennsylvania

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American Water. “Through American Water’s Environmental Grant Program, we’re seeking to invest in these organizations and support the people behind the projects, who are looking to the future by improving the sustainability of our water resources.”

The Blitz on Banksville Beautification grant will support a project to restore native plants to the stream bank of the Saw Mill Run tributary in the Banksville Wildlife Sanctuary. This unnamed tributary is impacted by roadways, storm water runoff, suspected raw sewage contamination and invasive species. Through removal of invasive plants and the re-establishment of native plant species, Blitz on Banksville Beautification will aim to restore this highly altered urban stream as a habitat to support native biodiversity.

The Township of Spring’s grant will establish a municipal oil recycling center which will encourage the recycling of used oil and motor oil. A goal will be to ensure that the oil is handled in a safe and responsible manner, while conserving a valuable resource and preventing environmental damage. An innovative component of the grant will be the installation of a used oil furnace. Collected oil, slated for recycling, will be beneficially used as a heat source for the township garage.

The [Octoraro Watershed Association’s](#) project involves completing a reforestation and streamside buffer restoration project at two sites within the watershed. The Octoraro Watershed was recently ranked among the highest priority watersheds needing water quality restoration due to elevated nitrate levels in Chester County. The project will involve removing invasive species and planting native species and will involve the community in the project.

Projects were judged based on criteria including clarity of project goals and projected impact, nature and strength of collaboration with the community, as well as evidence that the project will provide sustainable environmental results.

American Water launched the Environmental Grant Program in January 2005 in Pennsylvania. The success of the pilot program in 2005 in Pennsylvania encouraged American Water to offer again its Environmental Grant Program, but to expand it to include six states in addition to Pennsylvania.

For more information, visit the [American Water Environmental Grant Program webpage](#).

### **EPA Watershed Assessment and Protection Grant Apps Due August 15**

Applications for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s [Assessment and Watershed Protection Program Grants](#) are due August 15.

Eligible projects include developing effective and comprehensive programs for watershed protection, restoration, and management. All projects funded through AWPPGs must contribute to the overall development and improvement of watershed programs.

AWPPG funds may not be used solely for the operational support of specific watershed projects, support for the implementation of individual watershed projects, the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for specific waterbodies, or for in-depth monitoring for individual waterbodies.

For more information, visit the [Request for Proposals webpage](#).

## **Delaware Estuary Watershed Grant Applications Due July 17**

The [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#), in cooperation with the [Partnership for the Delaware Estuary](#), announced a Request for Proposals for approximately \$800,000 in new funds under the [2006 Delaware Estuary Watershed Grants Program](#).

Proposals are due July 17.

Under the 2006 DEWGP grants of \$10,000 to \$50,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis. The maximum amount will be awarded to projects that provide for physical restoration of habitat and/or demonstrate innovative or regional approaches for improving the Delaware Estuary Watershed.

Projects will be considered for DEWGP funding that are located in the boundaries of the Delaware Estuary, as established by the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Delaware Estuary.

For more information visit [2006 Delaware Estuary Watershed Grants Program webpage](#).

## **EPA Watershed Funding Webpage Puts Funding Opportunities in One Place**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has opened a new [Watershed Funding webpage](#) designed to provide a “one-stop-shop” for watershed project and organization funding.

The pages contain links to tools, databases, and resources about grants, funding, and fundraising. It is designed to help nonprofit watershed organizations, state and local governments, and funders home in on the most appropriate financial resources for improving watershed health.

For more information, visit the [Watershed Funding webpage](#).

## **New Nutrient Management Regulations to Improve Water Quality**

Phosphorus in manure will be regulated for the first time, along with nitrogen, under new final regulations adopted by the State Conservation Commissions.

Nearly 1,000 farms are subject to the regulations, with an additional 1,400 farms voluntarily complying with the requirements, which include developing a nutrient management plan with specialists certified by the Department of Agriculture.

The new regulations are a balance between properly applying manure generated on high-density animal operations – those with more than 2,000 pounds of animals per acre – without overly restricting the movement of nutrients throughout the state, according to the Department of Agriculture.

The regulations include not only phosphorous management, but also exporting manure from farms, manure setbacks from water sources, seasonal application, manure stacking, soil testing and financial assistance.

A standard management plan format was designed to ensure consistency in reporting, and a method of documenting manure exported off the farm was also developed.

The State Conservation Commission worked with the departments of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Penn State University, other agricultural industry leaders and the public to develop the new requirements.

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The State Conservation Commission provides educational and technical assistance and financial aid to farmers for proper nutrient management. To date, more than \$12 million has been provided to Pennsylvania farmers to help them comply with the regulations.

For detailed information on the new regulations, visit the [Nutrient Management webpage](#) or contact nutrient management specialist Doug Goodlander at 717-787-8821 or [dgoodlande@state.pa.us](mailto:dgoodlande@state.pa.us), or contact your local conservation district.

### **PENNVEST Sets Deadlines for Drinking Water, Sewage Applications**

The [Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority](#) announced application deadlines for drinking water, wastewater, stormwater and other assistance for the remainder of 2006 and into 2007--

- August 29 is the deadline for consideration at the October 24 PENNVEST meeting;
- November 14 is the deadline for the January 23 meeting; and
- February 20 is the deadline for the April 17 meeting.

For more information contact Elaine Keisling at PENNVEST by sending email to: [akeislling@state.pa.us](mailto:akeislling@state.pa.us) or call 717-783-4494.

### **Pennsylvania Celebrates Lake Awareness Month in July**

The [Pennsylvania Lake Management Society](#), a citizens' group formed to promote understanding and management of lakes and reservoirs and their watersheds, invites Pennsylvanians to celebrate Lake Awareness Month in July.

Pennsylvania has at least 3,956 lakes and reservoirs located within its boundaries. At least 356 of these are publicly accessible lakes, with a variety of public uses ranging from water supply for municipal, industrial or agricultural uses to recreational pursuits ranging from fishing to swimming and boating.

PALMS provides support and technical advice to local lake property owners and groups through various means ranging from an annual conference to informational fact sheets and a website.

For more information on how you can protect and restore lakes, visit the [Pennsylvania Lake Management Society website](#).

### **Upper Susquehanna Conference to be Held September 23**

The Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies, Bucknell University and Geisinger Medical Center are sponsoring the [Upper Susquehanna "From the Branches to the Confluence" Conference](#) in Lewsburg on September 23.

The registration deadline is July 30.

The purposes of the conference are to discuss the components that should go into an annual State of the River report, showcase key initiatives, and promote further collaboration between area universities, government agencies and nonprofit organizations to improve the health of the watershed and its communities.

Each session will feature short presentations, with the bulk of the time devoted to discussion. A reception and poster viewing session will provide additional opportunities

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for the exchange of information on specific initiatives. All participants are encouraged to consider presenting a poster.

The keynote speaker for the event will be Will Baker, President, Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

For more information contact Hannah Holm, conference coordinator, by sending email to: [hholm@bucknell.edu](mailto:hholm@bucknell.edu) or download the [Conference agenda and registration form](#).

**Link:** [Heartland Coalition Works to Heal Middle/Upper Susquehanna Watershed](#)

### **Last Call for American Water Works Assn. Summer Workshop Series**

Summer training workshops sponsored by the [PA American Water Works Association](#) are filling up fast, so be sure to reserve your slots.

Training sessions on water-related disease microorganisms, basics of drinking water taste and odor assessment and control, electronic safety and maintenance and other training is available.

PA-AWWA is also sponsoring a Waterfest II on August 24 in Harrisburg that will feature a variety of workshops and demonstrations.

Visit the [PA American Water Works Association website](#) for more information and to register.

### **Green Building Alliance Promotes Workshops in Pittsburgh Region**

The Green Building Alliance is promoting several upcoming workshops in the Pittsburgh Region covering the important topics of entering the green building market, commissioning green building projects and advanced energy efficiency.

On July 19 the Alliance will hold a breakfast program called, “Green Building Products: Positioning Southwestern PA as a U.S. Manufacturing Center” from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. at the Engineers Society of Western PA. [Registration is available online](#).

On July 26 GBA is hosting a program entitled, “Commissioning LEED-NC Projects” which outlines the benefits of LEED certification and reviews LEED new construction requirements. [A program brochure is available online](#).

On August 10-12 ASHRAE will hold its annual regional conference in Pittsburgh covering a variety of green building topics. [The agenda and registration information is available online](#).

More information about these and other green building topics is available on the [Green Building Alliance website](#).

### **DEP Sets Public Hearing on Changes to Lancaster Ozone Control Plan**

On August 8 the Department of Environmental Protection [will hold a public hearing](#) in Lancaster on proposed changes to requirements to control ground-level ozone pollution in Lancaster County. DEP proposes to reclassify Lancaster as an ozone attainment area.

Comments are due on the plan and request by August 11.

For a copy of the proposed request and changes to the maintenance requirements, visit [DEP’s Air Plans webpage](#) (*scroll down page*).

### **DEP Publishes Updated List of Available Emission Reduction Credits**

The Department of Environmental Protection this week published a notice of availability of emission reduction credits, by company, in the state's Emission Credit Registry and a summary of recent transactions ([July 8 PaB 3601](#)).

Included in the Registry are credits for nitrogen oxide, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur oxides and particulate matter.

Credits in the Registry can be used to satisfy new source review requirements and to trade and sell to companies that need them or have an excess.

For more information contact DEP's Bureau of Air Quality, 717-787-4325 or go to DEP's [Emissions Credit Registry background paper](#).

### **Boating Fatalities at Near Record Pace**

The Fish and Boat Commission this week reports there have been 18 recreational boating fatalities to date in Pennsylvania in 2006.

"With two double fatality accidents over the holiday weekend, there have been more fatalities than any time since 1982," declared Dr. Douglas Austen, PFBC Executive Director.

"Anything that can go wrong seems to be happening. Boaters have been killed this year by capsizing or falling overboard from boats, going over dams, and colliding with other craft. The majority of the fatalities happened when a small boat capsized. The sad thing is that all the fatalities were preventable," said Dan Martin, PFBC Boating Safety Education Manager.

The number one way to be safe on the water is to wear a life jacket. Eighty percent of all recreational boating fatalities could be prevented if the victim had been wearing a Coast Guard approved life jacket at the time of the accident.

For more information about boating or to obtain information on boating courses, visit the Commission's [Boating Safety webpage](#).

### **DCNR Awards \$23 Million for Recreation and Conservation Projects**

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources this week awarded more than [\\$23 million in conservation and recreation projects](#) designed to help revitalize communities and protect natural resources.

Funding for the grants comes from Growing Greener II, a voter-approved \$625 million bond issue, and the Keystone '93 Fund, a DCNR fund generated from a portion of the realty transfer tax.

Statewide, the grants will fund a variety of projects and impact six swimming pools; 59 playgrounds; 53 sports courts and fields; 50 trails; and 49 planning projects for regional efforts, parks, greenways and rivers conservation.

It will also continue the TreeVitalize effort to restore tree cover in southeastern Pennsylvania; expand Better Models for Development smart growth efforts; continue the adopt-a-greenway program; and improve outreach and education efforts, including birding trail guides and river sojourns.

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The list also includes more than \$1.2 million for projects in the 12 counties in the northcentral region that make up the Pennsylvania Wilds, providing support for important community infrastructure improvements that will make them attractive places for economic investments.

Since November, the Rendell Administration has announced \$31.5 million in upgrades and improvements to state parks and forests under Growing Greener II, and almost \$14.5 million in open space protection.

DCNR received 436 applications looking for more than \$69 million in assistance in this grant round.

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

**Link:** [Final State Budget Restores Some Environmental Funding Cuts, Not Big Ones](#)

### DCNR Accepting Nominations for Trails Advisory Board

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is [accepting nominations for members to the PA Recreational Trails Advisory Board](#) through August 18.

The Board's main responsibilities include advising the agency on the use of federal funding for trail improvement, reviewing and ranking trail project applications and presenting an annual report to the Secretary of accomplishments, including recommendations for changes in the program.

To obtain a nomination form, contact Vanyla Tierney, PA Recreational Trails Program, by sending email to [vtierney@state.pa.us](mailto:vtierney@state.pa.us) or call 717-787-2316.

### See & Hear

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#### Webcast Features Discussion of Watershed-Based NPDES Permitting

On July 19 the EPA Watershed Academy will host another in its series of free webcasts, this time featuring a discussion of watershed-based NPDES permitting.

Pat Bradley, Assistant Chief of EPA's State and Regional Branch Water Permits Division, is scheduled to provide an overview of the benefits of this new tool for reducing water pollution on a watershed basis.

Watch EPA's [Watershed Academy Webcast webpage](#) for more details on times and links. For other online and live training opportunities, visit the [EPA Watershed Academy webpage](#).

Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)

## Opinion

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### **Watersheds - Communities Connected By Water** **By Senator Rob Wonderling**



For those of us who love the great outdoors, every day is Earth Day. Every day gives us an opportunity to be responsible stewards of all of the natural blessings that have been provided to us.

I recently came back from a Steelhead fishing expedition with my son Sam in Elk Creek, Erie County. Although we didn't catch anything for supper except a cold, we had an excellent time marveling at the beauty that is Pennsylvania.

As a lawmaker, a conservationist, and a father I am committed to leave a legacy of a cleaner environment for our children.

Clean, pure water is something most Americans take for granted.

Over the past 30 years, our Nation has succeeded in fighting back some of the most egregious threats to our waterways. Today's threats are more subtle. They involve things like the damage to a watershed that occurs when homeowners use too much fertilizer on their lawns, or when oil residues in a parking lot are washed into storm drains during a rainfall. These threats, known as non-point source pollution, are harder to address, but that doesn't mean they are any less harmful to the environment.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that non-point source pollution is the leading remaining cause of water quality degradation. Examples of non-point source pollution include, excess fertilizers, herbicides, and insecticides from agricultural lands and residential areas; oil, grease, and toxic chemicals from urban runoff and energy production; sediment from improperly managed construction sites, and eroding streambanks; salt from irrigation practices and acid drainage from abandoned mines; and bacteria and nutrients from livestock, pet wastes, and faulty septic systems.

The effects of non-point source pollutants on specific waters vary and may not always be fully assessed. However, we know that these pollutants have harmful effects on drinking water supplies, recreation, fisheries, and wildlife.

I once heard someone describe a watershed as communities connected by water. I really liked that because what happens in a community miles away can affect the quality of water in our neighborhood and others around it.

That's why it is so important for each of us to learn about how our own daily activities might be threatening the watersheds in which we live.

In the Senatorial district that I represent, the largest watershed is the Perkiomen Watershed. It encompasses 362 square miles and 57 municipalities in Berks, Bucks, Lehigh, and Montgomery counties.

Like most watersheds of this size, a strategic regional approach is necessary to enhance and maintain the quality of the watershed as a whole. Since 1964, the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy (PWC) has been working to improve the health and quality of the Perkiomen Creek Watershed through a commitment to conservation projects, stewardship programs, and environmental education.

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This is a critical effort since water from the Perkiomen Creek watershed reaches more than a million homes and businesses throughout the region, either through water authorities that draw directly from the creek or through numerous private and public wells that tap the local underground water supplies.

However, fulfilling the PWC mission of protecting and preserving the land and water resources of the Watershed is an ever increasing challenge due to a growing population and continuing economic development. The PWC has been focusing its resources and programs to address the diverse communities of the Upper and Lower Perkiomen, the East Branch, the Swamp, Unami, and Skippack Creek sub-watersheds.

The goal is to involve municipalities, businesses and schools in affecting positive environmental change in the communities where they live, work and play as well as increase the public's understanding of the philosophy that "The Land and the Water are One".

In the Lehigh Valley, the Little Lehigh Creek Watershed supplies drinking water to approximately 137,000 people in Emmaus, Allentown, and surrounding communities. From its origin in Berks County, it flows 24 miles through Lower Macungie and Salisbury Townships before being joined by the Jordan Creek and eventually flowing into the Lehigh River. Local environmental and conservation groups are partnering together in the Lehigh Valley to further clean up the watershed.

Pennsylvania's Growing Greener program is also helping to improve our watersheds. Growing Greener funds programs in four state agencies: the departments of Agriculture (farmland preservation) and Conservation and Natural Resources (state park and local recreation projects), and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (wastewater and drinking water improvements).

The Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) portion of Growing Greener supports the largest watershed restoration program in the country awarding more than \$163 million in watershed grants since 1999 and leveraging an additional \$397 million in funding from local project sponsors. The program controls pollution from agricultural and urban stormwater runoff, abandoned mine lands and oil and gas wells that are the cause of 96 percent of the water quality impairment in the Commonwealth.

Since its inception in 1999, Growing Greener has produced significant educational and environmental benefits for Pennsylvania's watersheds. So far, more than \$163 million has been awarded in watershed grants. Local sponsors have added another \$397 million to that effort in support of these projects.

As projects are completed over the next few years, Growing Greener will:

- Create or restore 5,931 acres of wetlands;
- Complete 737 miles of stream buffer restoration;
- Build 205 miles of stream improvement structures;
- Reclaim 5,239 acres of abandoned mine lands;
- Organize 139 watershed organizations;
- Restore 500 miles of streams from acid mine drainage; and
- Plug 1,670 oil and gas wells.

In the Senate, I have signed on to [Senate Bill 291](#), which amends the Municipalities Planning Code to provide for watershed protection areas. This bill, introduced by Senator Joe Conti (R-Bucks), would add watersheds as appropriate entities for joint municipal zoning. Municipalities that joint zone by watershed will receive preference in grant

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applications to be administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The health and quality of our watersheds touches each of us. Focusing on watersheds will help transform the way Pennsylvanian's think about how they can make a difference for cleaner water. As people learn about the ways even small, individual actions can add up to big environmental consequences, they will become an active partner in our effort to leave Pennsylvania's waters purer than when we arrived.

To learn more about what you can do to improve your watershed contact your municipality, your local environmental organization or visit the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection website at [www.depweb.state.pa.us/dep](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/dep).

[Senator Wonderling](#) represents parts of Bucks, Lehigh, Montgomery and Northampton counties and has served in the Senate since 2002.

Courtesy: [Watershed Weekly](#)

### Quick Clips

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

[This Volunteer Program is for the Birds](#)  
[West Greene Student Wins Conservation Camp Scholarship](#)  
[Working to Keep Farmers on the Farm](#)  
[Lumbermen Shape Nature of the Region](#)  
[Ex-Marine Saves Land by Buying It](#)  
[Environmentally Friendly Gas Cans Still Surprising Some](#)  
[Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Exceeds Expectations](#)  
[Philadelphia Greening Up Its Act](#)  
[Gypsy Moth Damage is Done](#)  
[Power Plants Getting Cleanup](#)  
[Farmers to Benefit from New Energy Standards](#)  
[U.S. DOE Solicits Proposals for \\$170 Million in Solar Funding](#)  
[Oil and Gas Permits On Track to Set Record](#)  
[Gap Offers Free Tours of Butterfly Colony](#)

### Watershed NewsClips

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

[French Creek Sojourn Underway](#)  
[Many Rehabilitated Streams Survive Flood](#)  
[Susquehanna Expedition Resumes Trek to Chesapeake](#)  
[Flood Can't Put Brakes on River Trip](#)  
[Elk County Accepts Growing Greener Project Proposals](#)  
[Conservation District Evaluating County Streams](#)  
[Outdoors: Dunkard Creek Unknown Gem](#)

[5 More Counties Added to Disaster Declaration](#)  
[Invasive Species of Plants Add to Flood Damage Along Streams](#)  
[Water Runoff Seen as Developing Hazard](#)  
[Rain Puts Groundwater Levels Near Normal](#)  
[Editorial: Direct the Johnstown Flood Tax to Today's Flood Victims](#)  
[Fishermen Mourn Toxic Spill's Killing of Trout](#)  
[Fish Die, Birds Thrive](#)  
[Op-Ed: Pooling Efforts is Key to Water Control](#)

## **Regulations**

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The Susquehanna River Basin Commission published a series of proposed rule changes and the Independent Regulatory Review Commission approved several regulations. Find details here.

The [Susquehanna River Basin Commission published project changes](#) to regulations covering the review and approval of projects, hearings and enforcement actions. Comments due: September 1.

The [Independent Regulatory Review Commission](#) this week approved PennDOT's revised regulations covering the Vehicle Emission Inspection Program and the Building Energy Conservation Regulations of the Department of Community and Economic Development,

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – July 8, 2006](#)

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

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- **July 10** – [Southwest PA Air Quality Partnership](#) meeting. Schenley Park at Camp David Lawrence Pavilion. Pittsburgh. 11:30 to 1:30.
- **July 12** – DEP [Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board](#) meeting. DEP California District Mining Office, California, PA. 1:30.
- **July 12** – **CANCELLED**. DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee meeting.
- **July 12** – DEP [Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Advisory Board](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **July 18** – **CANCELLED**. Environmental Quality Board meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:00.
- **July 19** – [Governor’s Invasive Species Council](#) meeting. Agriculture Building, 2301 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg.
- **July 19** – [Delaware River Basin Commission meeting/hearing](#). West Trenton, NJ.
- **July 25** – [DEP Stormwater Manual Oversight Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 10:00.
- **August 29** – **CANCELLED**. State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators conference call.
- **September 13** – [DEP Water Resources Advisory Committee](#) meeting. Room 105 Rachel Carson Building. 9:30.
- **September 19-20** – [State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators](#). 10th Floor Rachel Carson Building. 10:00 and 8:30 respectively.
- **October 31-November 5** – [National Historic Preservation Conference](#). National Trust for Historic Preservation. Pittsburgh.

### [DEP Calendar of Events](#)

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

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

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

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

### **Helpful Web Links**

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[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](#)

Visit the [Professional Services Directory](#) and [Events Calendar](#)

## Stories Invited

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

**PA Environment Digest** is edited by David E. Hess, former Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and is published as a service to the clients of Holston & Crisci and the public. Holston & Crisci is a Harrisburg-based government and public affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Holston & Crisci call 717-234-1716.

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