



TEACHING GREEN



TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, DEP SECRETARY

Welcome, Educators!

Fall has arrived, and so have some great opportunities that may support your teaching/learning goals throughout the school year. Check them out below, and please share this newsletter with your colleagues. Have comments or suggestions for newsletter content? Drop me a line at gimyers@pa.gov. Thank you for all you do to foster environmental literacy in Pennsylvania.



— Bert Myers, Director, [Environmental Education and Information Center](#), Department of Environmental Protection, Harrisburg

Air Quality

Fly an Air Quality Flag

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and DEP invite your school to fly an air quality flag! Children and teens – especially those who have asthma or are active outdoors – are among those most affected by poor air quality. Through the [Air Quality Flag Program](#), schools across the country display a flag every day, alerting students of the quality of the air they breathe.

The flag's color matches the color of the Air Quality Index: Green for good air quality, red for unhealthy air quality, and so on.

By joining the program, you help your school community learn about air quality and protect the health of students and others at risk. Flags are free, an easy-to-use app gives you the Air Quality Index daily, and the program offers many related educational activities and materials.



Environmental Literacy

Take a Survey to Support Environmental Education in Pennsylvania

Public, private, and charter schools statewide are encouraged to complete the [Environmental Literacy Indicator Tool](#), a federally directed survey that collects information from all public school districts in states in the Mid-Atlantic Region every two years to help advance the implementation of environmental education efforts in schools.

The deadline to complete the survey is October 15. If you have any questions, please contact Tamara Peffer, Environment and Ecology Curriculum Advisor, Pennsylvania Department of Education, at tpeffer@pa.gov or 717-772-0842.

Envirothon

Carmichaels High School Team Takes Third Place at International Envirothon

Another round of kudos to Carmichaels Area High School! After winning the Pennsylvania Envirothon, this remarkable team of students from Greene County went on to take third place in a field of 56 teams from around the world at the National Conservation Federation Envirothon competition, held at North Carolina State University July 28-August 2.

For more information on the Envirothon program, visit the [Envirothon website](#) or contact your county conservation district.



The Carmichaels Area High School Envirothon team attends the awards ceremony. From left: Megan Patton (coach), Ryan Swartz, Joey Kurincak, Christina Adams, Stephen Zaco, Jacob Hair, and Kevin Willis (coach).

Grants

2020 Environmental Education Grants Open October 31! Application Instructions Webinar Offered November 18

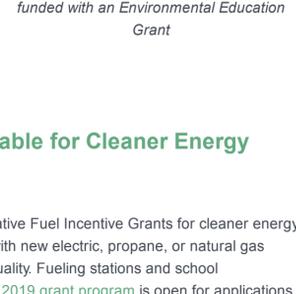
DEP is pleased to start accepting applications for 2020 Environmental Education Grants on October 31.

Approximately \$300,000 is available, and the deadline to apply is December 31.

Environmental justice, climate change, and water quality are priority topics. Large-scale projects may be awarded up to \$85,000; local projects may receive up to \$3,000.

Bert Myers will lead a free 75-minute webinar on how to apply on November 18 at 1:00 pm. This is ideal both for first-time applicants and for returning applicants looking for additional guidance.

Find application instructions and webinar registration at [Environmental Education Grants Program](#). DEP has awarded 1,965 environmental education grants, totaling \$11.3 million to date.



Wildlands Conservancy's "Climate Change in Our Watershed" middle school program, funded with an Environmental Education Grant

2019 Alternative Fuel Grants Available for Cleaner Energy School Buses

Did you know school districts can apply for DEP Alternative Fuel Incentive Grants for cleaner energy school buses? Apply now to replace old diesel buses with new electric, propane, or natural gas powered buses for reduced emissions and better air quality. Fueling stations and school administrator vehicles are eligible for funding, too. The [2019 grant program](#) is open for applications through December 13.

Land

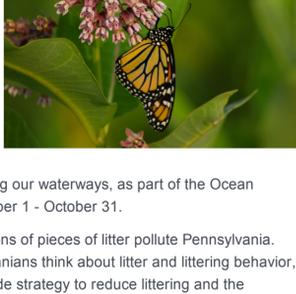
Develop Students Into Litter Prevention Leaders

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB) can connect you with many programs and resources to enable students to take an active role in protecting and improving their environment through recycling, litter awareness, and community stewardship. For more information on KPB, contact Stephanie Larson at slarson@keepbeautiful.org or 724-836-4121.

[Litter Free School Zone](#): This program encourages K-12 students to keep their school grounds litter free and raise public awareness regarding litter, for example, by displaying a Litter Free School Zone sign outside their school.

[Youth Initiatives: A Starter Guide](#): This comprehensive tool from Keep America Beautiful engages, educates and inspires K-12 students to be the next generation of environmental and community stewards. For more information contact Katie Joblon, kjoblon@kab.org.

[Monarch Watch](#): This program provides free milkweed plants to schools and educational nonprofits to enable students to develop monarch and other pollinator habitat using native vegetation. Your local Penn State Extension office or Conservation District office may also provide valuable information. Check out this [list of resources by county](#).



[Pick Up Pennsylvania: Supporting the International Coastal Cleanup](#): Coordinate a Pick Up Pennsylvania cleanup event at your school to keep litter from polluting our waterways, as part of the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup, September 1 - October 31.

[Litter Behavior and Attitude Online Public Survey](#): Millions of pieces of litter pollute Pennsylvania. DEP, PennDOT, and KPB want to know what Pennsylvanians think about litter and littering behavior, as part of research to inform development of a statewide strategy to reduce littering and the enormous cost of cleanup. Have your students share their views! Survey closes October 18.

[Tools for Schools](#): These online tools and resources from KPB are intended to engage educators and students in litter prevention and cleanup and recycling activities.

[America Recycles Day, November 15](#): This is the only nationally recognized day dedicated to the promotion of recycling in the United States. Participating in this campaign by organizing a local recycling event is a great way to educate students, their families, and community leaders.

[PepsiCo Recycle Rally](#): Whether you've been recycling for years or just recently started, the Recycle Rally provides tools to bring fresh excitement to recycling at your school.

Radon

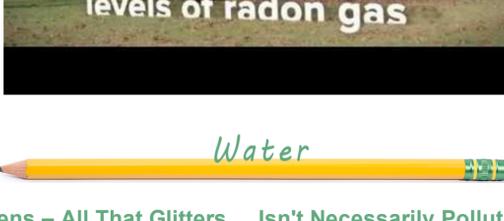
Radon School Poster Contest Open

About 40 percent of Pennsylvania homes have elevated levels of radon, an invisible and odorless gas that enters through cracks in the foundation and is the second leading cause of lung cancer. Doing a simple canister test is the only way to detect radon in the home.

The DEP Radiation Protection Program is holding a Radon School Poster Contest to help spread awareness of this health risk. The contest is open to students ages 9-14 years old. Students are encouraged to combine science and art to create a poster that shows radon's physical aspects or harmful effects or the importance of testing for radon in the home.

The deadline for poster submission is November 8, and teachers may submit the top three posters from their school. DEP will select the three best posters statewide and notify teachers of the winners on November 22. Winners will receive Amazon gift cards, and DEP will feature the posters in statewide educational outreach.

For instructions and a submission form, please email Maria Coons, DEP Radiation Protection Program, at macoons@pa.gov.

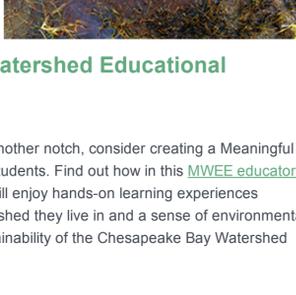


Water

Oil Sheens – All That Glitters ... Isn't Necessarily Pollution

One of the most visible and obvious signs of water pollution is an oil sheen. Seeing a shiny, translucent reflection on a pond or lake just looks wrong – but did you know that not all sheens are the result of pollution?

[Check out this DEP blog post on oil sheens](#) to learn how to tell the difference between naturally occurring sheens and those that are the result of pollution, and what you should do if you discover a sheen caused by pollution.



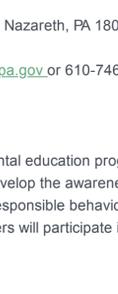
Educator's Guide to Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences

If you want to take your water education program up another notch, consider creating a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) for your students. Find out how in this [MWEE educator's guide from the Chesapeake Bay Program](#). Students will enjoy hands-on learning experiences designed to foster a lifelong relationship with the watershed they live in and a sense of environmental ethics and stewardship essential to the long-term sustainability of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and all watersheds.

Workshops and Training

Watershed Education Workshop

Watershed Education (WE) is an award-winning, inquiry-based, interdisciplinary curriculum for grades 6-12. Developed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of State Parks, WE helps educators use local natural resources as a teaching tool. Students participate in data collection and analysis, community networking and partnerships, stewardship, and service learning activities. Educators attending this workshop will receive the curriculum and additional resource materials.



- **Wednesday, October 16, 7:45 am – 5:00 pm**
- **Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center**, 400 Belfast Rd., Nazareth, PA 18064
- **Cost:** \$25 payable at the event
- **Pre-registration is required;** contact Rick Wiltraut at rwiltraut@pa.gov or 610-746-2801

Project WILD Educator Workshop

Project WILD is a K-12 interdisciplinary conservation and environmental education program emphasizing wildlife. The goal is to enable students of any age to develop the awareness, knowledge, skills, and commitment to result in informed decisions, responsible behavior, and constructive actions concerning wildlife and the environment. Teachers will participate in hands-on activities and receive the new *Project WILD* teacher manual.

- **Wednesday, October 23, 8:30 am – 3:00 pm**
- **Kinzua Bridge State Park**, 296 Viaduct Rd., Kane, PA 16740
- **Cost:** \$10
- **Pre-registration is required;** contact Rick Wiltraut at rwiltraut@pa.gov or 610-746-2801

Stroud Water Research Center Fall Workshops

Stroud Water Research Center offers numerous high-quality workshops for educators throughout the fall. See their [events calendar](#).

Save the Date for These Events in 2020:

- Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators and Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society Joint Conference and Expo, March 17-20, 2020 – Plan to be in Seven Springs for two great conferences combined into one.
- Dive Deeper Youth Water Educator's Summit, October 1, 2020 – Penn State Extension's Dive Deeper Summit will return to Harrisburg. If you'd like to be contacted when registration opens, add your email at the [summit web page](#).

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 400 Market Street Harrisburg, PA 17101



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