



WELCOME!

Welcome to the new quarterly e-newsletter of the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). We'll share helpful information on OEJ work and policies, important DEP news, government resources, education opportunities, best practices from community partners, and new developments on issues that may affect EJ communities.

Know someone who'd benefit from this information? Please share and [invite them to subscribe](#). Please help us spread the word! And we want to hear your thoughts on stories/topics you'd like to see.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Our mission is to ensure that Pennsylvanians who are most at risk from pollution and other environmental impacts are informed about DEP policies and practices and have a voice in DEP's decision-making processes. Our goals are to minimize environmental impacts, empower communities, and foster economic development opportunities.

OEJ supports Pennsylvania communities that are 30 percent minority and/or 20 percent low-income and traditionally have endured adverse environmental impacts along with challenges accessing information and resources. These communities are known as [Environmental Justice Areas](#).

We welcome your suggestions or inquiries about our work, programs, or policies. Please contact us at RA-EPOEJ@pa.gov, or contact any of the OEJ staff listed below directly.

Staff

- Director: Allison Acevedo, (484) 250-5818, alacevedo@pa.gov
- Western Region Coordinator: Nora Alwine, Pittsburgh, (412) 442-4137, nalwine@pa.gov
- Central Region Coordinator: John Brakeall, Harrisburg, (717) 783-9731, jbrakeall@pa.gov
- Eastern Region: Coordinator coming soon



Allison Acevedo, Director of DEP's Office of Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice Advisory Board

The Environmental Justice Advisory Board consists of 15 members statewide who:

- Provide guidance to DEP and the Office of Environmental Justice on public participation in permitting and other activities
- Review and makes recommendations about DEP regulations and policies that affect communities of color and low-income communities
- Help identify and promote action against environmental inequities in Pennsylvania

Board meetings are quarterly and open to the public. The next meeting is November 13, 2018, in Harrisburg. For more information, please visit the [Environmental Justice Advisory Board website](#).

NEWS FROM OEJ

Environmental Education Grant Program Application Now Open; Webinar To Help Applicants With Process

DEP's Environmental Education Grant is now open and accepting applications through January 11, 2019. Mini-grants up to \$3,000 are available for a one-year project and general grants up to \$25,000 are also available for two-year projects. The grant funds are used for projects ranging from hands-on lessons for students, teacher training programs, outdoor learning resources and conservation education for adults. Environmental justice, climate change, and water are program priorities and applications in these areas will receive priority for DEP funding.

Join us for an informative webinar at noon on November 15, 2018, to learn about the grant requirements and the application process. [Register here for the upcoming webinar](#).



Students learn how to build a rain garden

Roundtable Discussions Underway to Identify Local Environmental Issues

OEJ is interested in hosting roundtable discussions in localities around the state to bring residents and DEP staff together for an open dialogue to identify environmental justice issues and how best to address them.

We want to hear from you! Please [contact us](#) if you'd like to discuss planning a roundtable in your area.

- In August, DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell and OEJ hosted a roundtable discussion in Donora. Twenty residents shared their concerns on issues such as litter and recycling. Local government officials, school district representatives, non-profit leaders, and other community members participated.
- In October, OEJ held a roundtable discussion in Shamokin attended by 28 individuals from academia, business, non-profit organizations, and local, state and federal government agencies. Participants discussed DEP's regulatory and permit process, brownfields redevelopment, electronics waste recycling, acid mine drainage, clean energy, illegal dumping, and workforce and economic development.



EJ roundtable in Shamokin

Help Us Bring Environmental Education to Your Community

OEJ is collaborating with DEP's Environmental Education and Information Center (EEIC) to bring environmental education opportunities to our OEJ community network. What are your community's environmental education needs? If your organization is interested in environmental education from DEP, please complete this [Environmental Education survey](#) to let us know what environmental education areas your organization is seeking. OEJ and the EEIC will work together to develop and deliver programming based on your responses starting in spring 2019.



DEP EJ staff answer questions about Environmental Justice

EJ IN ACTION

Carol Parenzan, EJAB Member, Teaches Citizen Science to Young Offenders

Carol Parenzan, Middle Susquehanna Riverkeeper and member of the Environmental Justice Advisory Board, recently helped spearhead a program to educate young incarcerated citizens to become stewards of their environment. The Quehanna Boot Camp Watershed Steward Prison Project, supported by the provided hands-on environmental education for the young people, many of whom had rarely spent extended time outdoors. Read more about the project in [Waterkeeper Magazine](#).

NEW LAW TO KNOW

Wastewater Systems Replacement of Customer Lead Service Lines

In October, Governor Tom Wolf signed [legislation](#) that authorizes water and wastewater systems regulated by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to recover costs to replace residential lead services lines and damaged sewer laterals. The bill, originally sponsored by Rep. Charlton (R-Delaware), will become effective at the end of December 2018.

SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH

Who's Considered an Environmentalist?

A new research study titled, "[Diverse Segments of the U.S. Public Underestimate the Environmental Concerns of Minority and Low-Income Americans](#)," shows that while communities of color and low-income areas are most worried about environmental concerns, they're least likely to be viewed as environmentalists. The study was co-authored by Adam Pearson, of Pomona, University of Pomona; Rainer Romero-Canyas of Environmental Defense Fund and Columbia; Matthew Ballew of Yale University; and Dylan Larson-Konar of Environmental Defense Fund and the University of Florida, Gainesville.

The researchers found that the term "environmentalist" is mostly associated with well-educated white people. They also found that perceptions around the diversity of environmental work could be changed with the use of specific messaging and other efforts. This study could potentially influence how environmental advocacy groups organize diversity efforts and engage communities of color and low-income constituencies. Request a copy of the study [here](#).

DEP RESOURCES AT THE READY

Regional Offices Around the State

Did you know DEP has six regional offices in Pennsylvania? They're a great resource for help with your local environmental questions and concerns. Find the DEP office in your region at [Regional Resources](#). Community Information pages provide information on specific environmental issues located in each of DEP's six regions. Explore the Community Information pages by clicking [Regional Resources](#) > (region of interest) > Community Information.

Environmental Complaint Line

DEP has a toll-free statewide line for Pennsylvanians to report environmental problems in their community. You can report any environmental complaint at no cost by calling 866-255-5158 or by calling your regional office. You can also submit an electronic [Environmental Complaint Form](#). All reports are confidential, and DEP staff must respond to each report.

Environmental Emergency Hotline

Spills and other emergencies should be reported immediately to DEP by telephone to the nearest [regional office](#) or by calling 1-800-541-2050. DEP maintains 24-hour phone lines in each region which are monitored 24/7/365 for dispatching response personnel to emergencies and incidents within DEP's purview.

Grant Opportunities

Bookmark these pages for information on grants provided by DEP:

- [Small Business Advantage Grant](#)
- [Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant](#)
- [Alternative and Clean Energy Program](#)
- [Business in Our Sites](#)
- [Industrial Sites Reuse Program](#)
- [Solar Energy Program](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- November 13: EJAB/Citizens Advisory Council meeting in Harrisburg. [Details here](#).
- November 15: Free Webinar on Environmental Education Grant Program Process. [Register here](#).

OTHER STATE AGENCY NEWS

Nominate Your Favorite Local Leader for a Governor's Award

Know a local government leader who demonstrates exceptional dedication to improving public services? Each year, the Governor's Awards for Local Government Excellence are presented to local government leaders who have demonstrated exceptional dedication to improving public services through innovative projects or initiatives. [Submit your nomination](#) now through December 14, 2018.

HELPFUL FEDERAL RESOURCES

Air Quality Program Helps Communities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has an Air Quality Flag Program to alert communities to bad air quality days. Your organization can sign up to participate in the program and alert community members to help reduce their exposure to air pollution. Please [visit the EPA website](#) for more information.

