

News

from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection



Tom Wolf, Governor | John Quigley, Acting Secretary



DEP Calendar of Events

Feb. 25

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) workshop -- Permit Compliance Session, 8:30 a.m., Pittsburgh Marriott North, 100 Cranberry Woods Dr., Cranberry Twp. Contact: Joyce Rivers, 717-901-7055.

Feb. 26

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Workshop -- Permit Compliance Session, Pittsburgh Marriott North, 100 Cranberry Woods Dr., Cranberry Twp. Contact: Joyce Rivers, 717-901-7055.

March 3

DEP Storage Tank Advisory Committee meeting, 10 a.m., Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg.

Contact: Charles M. Swokel, 717-772-5806

March 10

DEP Board of Coal Mine Safety meeting, 10 a.m., DEP Cambria Office, 286 Industrial Park Rd., Ebensburg. Contact: Allison D. Gaida, 724-404-3147.

March 11

DEP Certification Program Advisory Committee (CPAC) meeting, 9 a.m., Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Cheri Sansoni, 717-772-5158.

March 17

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) workshop -- TMDL Plan/Chesapeake Bay

DEP Enhances Advisory Role in Conventional Oil and Gas Regulation Development



The new advisory committee will focus on issues related to the conventional oil and gas industry.

HARRISBURG -- DEP this week announced the formation of a new Conventional Oil and Gas Advisory Committee (COGAC) to increase transparency and communication about the regulation of the conventional oil and gas drilling industry.

"Creating this advisory committee will increase dialogue between DEP and the regulated community as well as broaden the interests we hear from," Acting DEP Secretary John Quigley said. "Improving communication among all stake holders and our department will foster stronger environmental safeguards in the future."

COGAC will advise DEP on matters related to conventional oil and gas extraction practices and regulations and will be structured similarly to DEP's existing Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board.

[Read more.](#)

Hundreds Attend Public Session for Proposed Power Plant in Westmoreland County

Pollutant Reduction Plan Session , 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Holiday Inn Lansdale, 1750 Sumneytown Pike, Kulpsville. Contact: Joyce Rivers, 717-901-7055.

March 17

Environmental Quality Board (EQB) meeting, 9 a.m., Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St. Harrisburg
Contact: Jen Swan, 717-783-8727 .

March 17

Citizens Advisory Council meeting, 10 a.m., Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg.
Contact: Jennifer Swan, 717-783-8727.



Upcoming Webinars

March 10

DEP Webinar on Riparian Buffer Equivalency, 10 a.m. Click [here](#) to register.

March 10

DEP Webinar on Riparian Buffer Offsetting, 1 p.m. Click [here](#) to register.

March 11

DEP Webinar on Riparian Buffer Equivalency, 10 a.m. Click [here](#) to register.

March 11

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Public Input

March 16

Deadline to comment on the removal of the Baghurst Alley Site, Upper Salford Township, Montgomery Co.; and Chem Fab, Doylestown Borough and Doylestown Township, Bucks County, from Pa. Priority List of Hazardous Sites for Remedial Response.
Contact: Ragesh Patel, 610-250-5900.



Staff from DEP and Tenaska Pennsylvania Partners listen to testimony at the Feb. 11 public hearing.

PITTSBURGH -- Nearly 300 residents attended a DEP public hearing on Feb. 11 about a proposal by Tenaska Pennsylvania Partners to build a natural gas-fired power plant in South Huntington Twp., Westmoreland County.

Representatives from DEP's Clean Water and Air Quality programs responded to questions and listened to testimony. Tenaska officials also participated in the question and answer session.

In order to begin construction, the company must obtain an air quality plan approval and a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from DEP.

In the air quality plan approval application, Tenaska requests permission to construct and temporarily operate the gas-fired facility. The company's NPDES application requests to discharge water used to cool the power generation equipment into the Youghiogheny River.

DEP has issued draft approvals for both requests which include conditions specifying how these air emissions and waste-water discharges must be controlled.

Anyone wanting to submit written comments should address them to: The Department of Environmental Protection, 400 Waterfront Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Please note on the envelope that you are commenting on the Tenaska proposals. The public comment period will close on Feb. 23.

DEP Launches Mine Subsidence Insurance Notification Campaign



Since 1961, more than \$28 million in claims have been paid to Pennsylvania homeowners.

PITTSBURGH -- DEP's Mine Subsidence Insurance (MSI)



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Program is sending out notices to about 2,000 property owners in Pleasant Hills Borough, Allegheny County, to alert them of abandoned coal mines beneath their property, increasing their risk of damage from mine subsidence.

The notices include maps that show undermined areas beneath property owners' homes. The long-abandoned mines can deteriorate and collapse, causing the surface to sink. This mine subsidence can cause expensive-to-repair cracks in foundations and walls. In extreme cases, subsidence can render buildings uninhabitable.

Standard homeowners insurance rarely covers mine subsidence damage, leaving the property owner with the repair expense. DEP offers affordable MSI to protect homeowners from potential damages caused by mine subsidence.

[Read more.](#)

DEP to Facilitate Cleanup of Illegal Dump Piles in Carbon, Schuylkill Counties



This illegal dump pile in East Penn Twp., Carbon Co. is one of six to be cleaned up this spring.

WILKES-BARRE -- DEP has hired a contractor to clean up six piles of illegally dumped waste scattered throughout Carbon and Schuylkill counties after the responsible party has failed to complete the work.

The piles were discovered last summer after residents called DEP to complain. Staff from DEP's Northeast Regional Office investigated the complaints and determined that hauler Michael Stine of Northampton County was the responsible party. The piles contained construction and demolition debris. Some were dumped on private property while others were dumped on borough-owned properties.

An order was issued in November 2014 giving Stine 60 days to clean up all of the piles. The department also revoked his waste hauling permit.

Earlier this month, DEP hired URS, a state-lead contractor, to do the clean-up work. The contract calls for costs not to exceed \$30,000 and work should begin in late March. Money to pay for the clean-up will come from the Solid Waste Abatement Fund, that is funded by fines haulers pay for violating state environmental laws.

Reminder: March 2 is Deadline to Apply for Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence



HARRISBURG -- DEP reminds Pennsylvania businesses, farms, government agencies, educational institutions, non-profit organizations and individuals who have created or participated in the development of a project that promotes environmental stewardship and economic development to apply for the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence by March 2.

Eligible projects must have been completed between Aug. 1, 2013 and July 31, 2014. Projects should showcase technological advances, promote renewable energy solutions, reduce environmental threats, provide environmentally responsible economic opportunity, foster environmental education or restore watersheds.

Projects will be selected based on environmental protection, partnership, public service, environmental education and outreach, pollution prevention, economic impact and innovative technology.

Winners will be recognized in April during an awards ceremony and dinner hosted by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

The award application and guidelines are available on DEP's website. For more information, visit www.dep.state.pa.us, keyword: Governor's Award.

