

NEWS AND VIEWS

TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, DEP SECRETARY

Start the New Year By Nominating A Leader By Patrick McDonnell, Secretary

The end of the year is always a great time to reflect on achievements. The commonwealth would be a different place if not for the great work of many Pennsylvanians who tackle the full range of environmental challenges, from local creek cleanups to city-wide sustainability.

The 2018 Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence honor individuals and organizations whose dedicated efforts and achievements have improved air, land, and water quality in Pennsylvania. The awards are open to any Pennsylvania business, government agency, educational institution, organization, and individuals that participated in the development of a project that demonstrates environmental stewardship and economic development in the commonwealth. I encourage all of you who have worked tirelessly to improve our environment to [apply for the 2018 Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence](#).

TOP STORIES

AeroAggregates Paves the Way to a Greener Future

Philadelphia manufacturer [AeroAggregates turns the scourge of recycling](#)—mixed glass—into an ultralightweight foam aggregate now being used to build streets in the city. This success is a model of innovative manufacturing by a locally owned and operated company and the winning partnerships between the Wolf administration, local governments, and the private sector.

Pennsylvania recycled more than 20 million tons of materials in 2014. DEP not only supports municipalities and businesses with technical expertise and funding for their recycling programs, but also helps fund the Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center, which assists companies like AeroAggregates in manufacturing and marketing products made from recycled materials that can pave the way to a greener future for the commonwealth.

Video: [DEP Partners Celebrate First North American Use of PA-Manufactured Recycled Glass Construction Foam](#)

Grant Funding Announced for 121 Projects with One Goal: Clean Local Waters

DEP has selected 121 projects organized by local governments and nonprofits from Lake Erie to the Delaware Estuary to receive more than \$21 million in grant funding. Their shared goal: cleaning up and protecting Pennsylvania's creeks, rivers, lakes, and coastal zones.

Fifty-one projects in Pennsylvania's part (43 counties) of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed will receive Growing Greener Grants, reflecting the [ramped-up state and federal funding commitment](#) to Pennsylvania's federal mandate to reduce nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment pollution in the watershed.

Fifty-five projects in the 24 counties beyond the watershed will receive Growing Greener grants. Together, the 106 projects will receive just over \$20.7 million to implement stormwater basins, streambank fencing, and many other best management practices. Fifteen projects in the Lake Erie and Delaware Estuary coastal zones were awarded nearly \$550,000 for green stormwater infrastructure, greenway planning, and shoreline enhancement. Will your neighborhood benefit from one of these projects? Check out the lists of [Growing Greener projects](#) and [Coastal Zone Management projects](#) and see if one is near you.

Stormwater Grant Assists Derry Township in Reducing Rainwater Runoff, Improving Water Quality

DEP's South-central Regional Director Joe Adams joined local officials to showcase [Derry Township's recently completed stormwater management project](#), which will lead to improved water quality in local streams in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Nearly one-third of the lot was repaved with porous asphalt beds, which will absorb rainwater, promote groundwater recharge, reduce the volume of stormwater runoff, and improve water quality flowing into nearby Spring Creek. Additionally, more than 3,500 square feet of vegetative islands and shade trees were added to help absorb rainwater.



NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

A New Life for Monocacy Creek

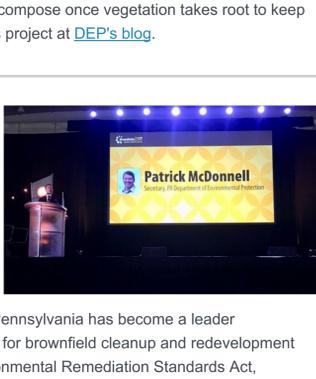
It's OUT with the railroad ties and IN with the rocks and natural flow of the stream! That's the new life for Monocacy Creek in Bethlehem.

For nearly 40 years, old railroad ties embedded into the creek's banks controlled erosion and limited the amount of sediment that had accumulated. Those ties also acted as barriers to channel the flow of the stream.

With assistance from the Growing Greener Grant program, those railroad ties were ripped from the banks, old structures on the stream were also dismantled, and the creek sediment was removed.

One highlight of the project was the installation of several fish hatcheries along the stream. Those structures provided an area where fish can grow and be released, creating more opportunities for fishermen to catch fish during the season.

The creek bank also now has a more natural cover: a coconut fiber mat designed by the Wildlands Conservancy. Over the years, the mat will naturally decompose once vegetation takes root to keep the newly created bank in place. Read more about this project at [DEP's blog](#).



Brownfield Projects Represent Opportunity, Jobs, Growth, and Quality of Life

On December 5, Secretary McDonnell kicked off the 2017 National Brownfields Training Conference in Pittsburgh.

The annual conference brings together brownfields professionals from throughout the nation. Pittsburgh, with its rich industrial heritage, hosted the first conference more than 20 years ago. Over the years, Pennsylvania has become a leader in [brownfields redevelopment](#). DEP is the lead agency for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment through the authority of the Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Standards Act, established in 1995.

This year, conference attendees not only participated in educational sessions, trainings, and discussions, they also toured some of the brownfields sites around the southwest region. Those who see the greatest impact from redeveloped brownfield sites are communities and surrounding neighborhoods. One small example that has a huge impact on communities are the many brownfield sites that become newly developed health care centers.

As a prime example of the innovation characteristic of land recycling, this year's conference featured live project pitching, similar to the format on "[Shark Bait](#)." Presenters from throughout the country pitched projects to a team of developers for feedback and potential backing.

Such projects bring services to communities which are often underserved, bringing essential services within walking distance for many residents. Cleaning up brownfield sites provides for better human health, promotes the city's cultural diversity, and meets the needs of individual neighborhoods. These projects transform communities with benefits of providing jobs, healthcare, housing opportunities, sustainability, energy conservation and so much more.

Pennsylvania and DEP were proud to host the conference. Brownfield redevelopment is a prime example of government that works, works together, and works with the private sector to improve communities.



ENVIRONMENTAL TIPS

Now is the time to winterize your home!

- Seal home air leaks and install insulation
- Set back your thermostat
- Have a professional tune up your furnace
- Close vents in unused rooms
- Weather-strip windows and exterior doors

An energy-efficient home saves money while you stay cozy!

SOCIAL SCENE

PA Department of Environmental Protection
@PennsylvaniaDEP

@SecMcDonnell Op-Ed: The Sun Is Rising on Pennsylvania's Solar Energy Development [ow.ly/IPFc30h9TgT](#)



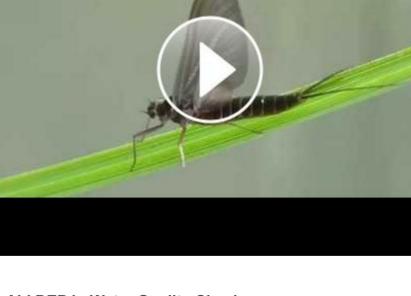
PA Department of Environmental Protection
@PennsylvaniaDEP

@GovernorTomWolf Administration Officials Tour New Agricultural, Environmental Learning Center at Philadelphia's Largest Head Start Center [ow.ly/dg9230h6wlk](#)
[@PAgriculture](#) [@PAdeptofEd](#) [@PHLSchools](#)

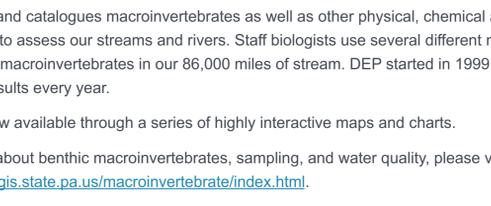


The Press Office
@GovernorsOffice

Today, @GovernorTomWolf announced that @PennsylvaniaDEP's Growing Greener program will support 106 projects to clean up local waters throughout PA, including portions of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.



NEW ON THE WEB



Underwater Insects Aid DEP in Water Quality Checks

They're creepy. They're crawly. They're also an excellent indicator of water quality. They're the aquatic insects and animals that live in Pennsylvania's rivers, lakes, and streams. Macroinvertebrates often get overlooked, but they are key in Pennsylvania's water quality.

DEP monitors and catalogues macroinvertebrates as well as other physical, chemical and biological characteristics to assess our streams and rivers. Staff biologists use several different methods to collect data on macroinvertebrates in our 86,000 miles of stream. DEP started in 1999 and has added new sample results every year.

That data is now available through a series of highly interactive maps and charts.

To learn more about benthic macroinvertebrates, sampling, and water quality, please visit <http://www.depgis.state.pa.us/macroinvertebrate/index.html>.

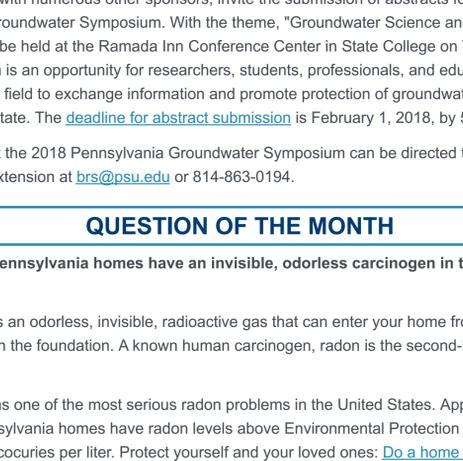
TOO GOOD NOT TO SHARE

Vote for the 2018 River of the Year!



US EPA Mid-Atlantic
@EPAregion3

Congrats to Phoenix Award Winner-Pennovation Center from Philadelphia for their Brownfields achievement. #Brownfields2017



CALL FOR ENTRIES

2018 Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium

In celebration of National Drinking Water Week, Penn State Extension's Master Well Owner Network and DEP, along with numerous other sponsors, invite the submission of abstracts for the 2018 Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium. With the theme, "Groundwater Science and Fiction," the Symposium will be held at the Ramada Inn Conference Center in State College on Tuesday, May 8, 2018. The forum is an opportunity for researchers, students, professionals, and educators working in the groundwater field to exchange information and promote protection of groundwater resources throughout the state. The [deadline for abstract submission](#) is February 1, 2018, by 5:00 p.m. EST.

Questions about the 2018 Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium can be directed to Bryan Swistock of Penn State Extension at brs@psu.edu or 814-863-0194.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

40 percent of Pennsylvania homes have an invisible, odorless carcinogen in their home. What is it?

Radon. Radon is an odorless, invisible, radioactive gas that can enter your home from the ground through cracks in the foundation. A known human carcinogen, radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer.

Pennsylvania has one of the most serious radon problems in the United States. Approximately 40 percent of Pennsylvania homes have radon levels above Environmental Protection Agency's action guideline of 4 picocuries per liter. Protect yourself and your loved ones: [Do a home radon test](#).

Have a question you would like to see featured as a question of the month? Submit your questions to ra-epnews@pa.gov.