

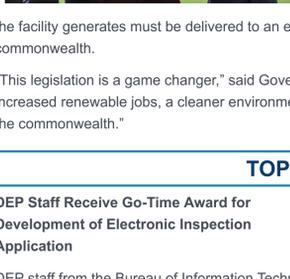
# NEWS AND VIEWS



TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, DEP SECRETARY

## It's a New Day for Solar in Pennsylvania

By Patrick McDonnell, Secretary



While the sky was overcast, I was honored to join Governor Tom Wolf this past week to announce a sunnier future for Pennsylvania solar power. We stood in front of the 2.6 megawatt array at Elizabethtown College while Governor Wolf announced that more of Pennsylvania's clean electricity would be coming from solar power generated in-state. Then, he signed the Administrative Code (Act 40), which requires that for a renewable facility to generate credits, the electricity

the facility generates must be delivered to an electricity distributor operating within the commonwealth.

"This legislation is a game changer," said Governor Wolf. "We are making sure that the benefits of increased renewable jobs, a cleaner environment, and a growing renewable economy will be felt in the commonwealth."

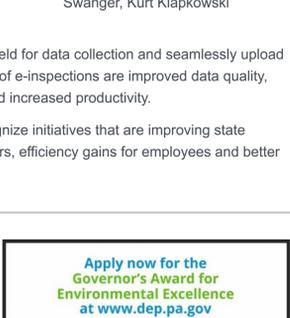
### TOP STORIES

#### DEP Staff Receive Go-Time Award for Development of Electronic Inspection Application

DEP staff from the Bureau of Information Technology and the Bureau of Oil and Gas Planning and Program Management received a Governor's Office of Transformation, Innovation, Management and Efficiency (GO-TIME) Award for partnering with PennDOT to develop an electronic application that enables DEP staff to conduct electronic inspections of oil and gas sites.

The app makes the inspection process more accurate and efficient, and eliminates the double entry of inspection data. Previously, inspectors filled out paper forms in the field, and then manually entered the information into the agency central database, EFACTS. Inspectors now use iPads in the field for data collection and seamlessly upload all of the information into EFACTS. Additional benefits of e-inspections are improved data quality, electronic supervisor approval, elimination of paper and increased productivity.

About the Awards: The annual GO-TIME awards recognize initiatives that are improving state government operation through cost savings to taxpayers, efficiency gains for employees and better customer service to the public.



Left to right: PennDOT Secretary Leslie Richards; Phil Petrina, PennDOT; DEP Staff: Rick Swank, Robert Rottet, Steve Brokenshire, Edward Tocci, Myron Suchodolski, Michael Hudak, Lucas Swanger, Kurt Klapkowski

#### Turn the Spotlight on Environmental Stewards

Pennsylvania 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.

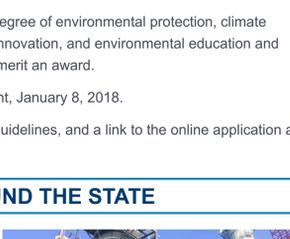
If you're one of them, please consider [applying](#) for a 2018 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. Or, nominate someone you know!

The award is open to all individuals, whether a project leader or participant, and to all schools, nonprofit organizations, businesses, farms, and government agencies.

Projects are evaluated on the basis of seven criteria: degree of environmental protection, climate change, sustainability, partnership, economic impact, innovation, and environmental education and outreach. A project doesn't have to meet all criteria to merit an award.

All applications should be submitted to DEP by midnight, January 8, 2018.

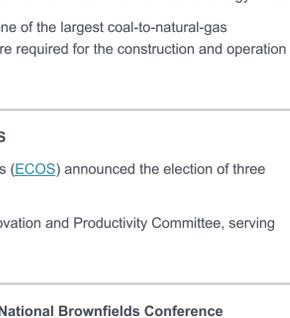
See past winners and find award criteria, submission guidelines, and a link to the online application at [Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence 2018](#).



### NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

#### Secretary McDonnell Tours Natural Gas Power Plant to Replace Coal-Fired Facility

Secretary McDonnell visited the Panda Hummel Station Power Project under construction in Shamokin Dam on Nov. 15. When completed, the facility will use efficient combined-cycle technology, fueled by natural gas, to supply the power needs of more than one million homes.



Left to right: DEP Staff: Muhammad Zaman; Joe Pickett, Dan Vitiello, Jared Dressler, Marcus Kohl, Patrick McDonnell, Megan Lehman

A coal-fired power plant previously on the site will be replaced with the natural gas facility, using advanced emissions-control technology to significantly reduce emissions of air pollutants and an evaporative cooling system which will use a fraction of the cooling water required by the retired facility.

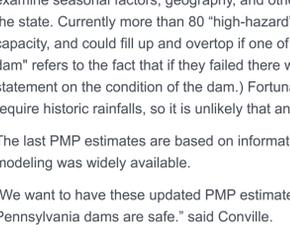
"This project will use our own natural gas resources to provide continuous, baseload power with a much lighter environmental footprint," said McDonnell. "It is exciting to see this investment in Pennsylvania infrastructure first-hand. Even during construction, this facility is already creating jobs that work to move us toward a cleaner energy future."

The facility is anticipated to open in 2018, and will be one of the largest coal-to-natural-gas replacements in the country. Numerous DEP permits are required for the construction and operation of the facility.

#### Secretary McDonnell Elected as Vice Chair at ECOS

Earlier this month, The Environmental Council of States (ECOS) announced the election of three members to two-year terms as Vice Chairs.

Secretary McDonnell was elected vice chair of the Innovation and Productivity Committee, serving with Chair Misael Cabrera of Arizona.



#### 2017 National Brownfields Conference

Pittsburgh is the site for the premier brownfields and land revitalization event of the year. Leaders in sustainability will participate in training events, observe success stories first hand during mobile workshops, listen to experts regarding best practices for meeting brownfields challenges, and network with thousands of other stakeholders.

[This year's conference](#) programming and speakers will engage attendees on topics at the forefront of today's brownfields and economic development landscapes, challenging both emerging and seasoned professionals as well as a diverse range of brownfields stakeholders to think outside the norms when addressing land revitalization and redevelopment.

#### How a 75-Year-Old Flood Still Shapes Dam Safety Policy Today

When residents of Smethport, PA, awoke to a rainy day on July 7, 1942, they probably did not expect to be witnessing history, or setting dam safety policy decades later. The small town in McKean County in Pennsylvania's northern tier would soon be an entry in the history books, with the most rain ever recorded in a 12-hr period: a drenching 34 inches of rain in just 12 hours, with more than 28 inches of it falling in just 3 hours. This deadly storm event would go on to create a benchmark used today to determine if a dam would withstand the maximum amount of water that could fall in an area – and run downstream into a dam – without failing or being overtopped.

"The Smethport storm is a really good baseline when thinking about how much rain can fall in a single event," said Jonathan Conville, Acting Chief of Dam Safety. "Even though we use more recent data than that storm, it is still one of the most extreme cases of rainfall over a short period, so it's a good reference point."

Dams are evaluated as to whether they can withstand the Probable Maximum Precipitation (PMP) event for a given area. The PMP is determined by examining the weather patterns, previous storms, and other factors that could affect how much water might end up in a reservoir behind a dam – and how much would be needed for that dam to either fill up completely or otherwise fail. This data is important, as underestimating the PMP could lead to hazardous flooding that could threaten the lives and property of people living downstream.

DEP is now conducting a study to update the PMP thresholds for Pennsylvania. This study will examine seasonal factors, geography, and other factors to identify PMP thresholds for dams across the state. Currently more than 80 "high-hazard" dams have less than 50% of required spillway capacity, and could fill up and overtop if one of these maximum events were to occur. (A "high-hazard dam" refers to the fact that if they failed there would be catastrophic effects downstream. This is not a statement on the condition of the dam.) Fortunately, the PMP is an outlier figure – one that would require historic rainfalls, so it is unlikely that any of those 80 dams are in any danger today.

The last PMP estimates are based on information from 1978 and 1982 – long before computer modeling was widely available.

"We want to have these updated PMP estimates to accurately analyze each dam and ensure Pennsylvania dams are safe," said Conville.

### ENVIRONMENTAL TIPS



#### Your Home Can Be A Solar Array of Its Own

[Visit the DEP blog](#) for five insights from DEP staff on the value and ease of putting solar panels on your roof. Here's a sneak peek:

- Insight 1: You have ownership options.
- Insight 2: Technology's gotten cheaper.
- Insight 3: Installation is non-intrusive.
- Insight 4: You can store or sell excess energy.
- Insight 5: Pennsylvania's recent Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) border closing will have an impact.

### SOCIAL SCENE

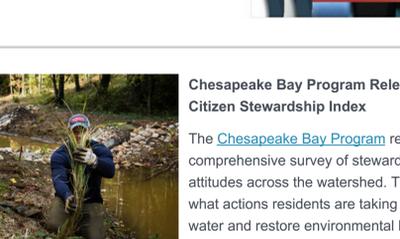
**Pennsylvania DEP** @PennsylvaniaDEP

**Wolf Administration & Carlisle Community Kick Off Transformation of Industrial Brownfield:** [ow.ly/VGwU30gi7rM](#)  
@PADCEDnews @DCNRnews



**Pennsylvania DEP** @PennsylvaniaDEP - Nov 15

Drones, maps, and an official proclamation from @GovernorTomWolf for #GISDay2017! We love being a part of #PAGISDay! As one of the State Government Departments, we talked about telling our story with Story Maps like this one on the Susquehanna → [ow.ly/Dh330g8zUq](#) #GISDay



**Pennsylvania DEP** @PennsylvaniaDEP

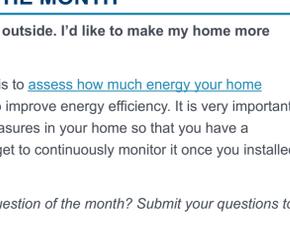
**States Release Framework for First-Ever National #EnergyEfficiency Registry:** [ow.ly/lqO930gi7rM](#) @theclimatereg



### NEW ON THE WEB

#### How can the Office of Pollution Prevention and Energy Assistance Help You?

If you are a business, trade organization, local government, school or institution and are looking for resources to help you save energy, visit DEP's new [Business Energy Pages](#). The Energy Office has created these pages to help Pennsylvanians like you make smarter energy choices.



#### Subscribe to Our Blog!

Earlier this year, we launched our agency blog, "[Our Common Wealth](#)." Through this new outreach tool, we emphasize the environmental, public health and economic benefits of our daily work and provide tips for citizens, stories that entertain while explaining how our work affects the daily lives of PA residents, and motivational messages to help all of us aim toward a healthy environment and public health.

### TOO GOOD NOT TO SHARE

#### "Look Before you Leave" to Avoid Spreading the Spotted Lanternfly

Currently a quarantine is in place to stop the movement of this pest to new areas and to slow its spread within the quarantine. The quarantine affects a variety of plant, wood and stone products. Surveys are currently underway to determine the complete spread of this pest in southeastern Pennsylvania. Efforts are also underway to ensure the spotted lanternfly is not present in other parts of the commonwealth.

Not sure if you're in the quarantine? [Use the interactive map!](#)

**PA Agriculture**

The #SpottedLanternfly will hitch a ride any way possible! Always check your vehicle (and anything else you're transporting), before you leave a quarantine area. Quarantine: [bit.ly/2zr4Yje](#)



#### Chesapeake Bay Program Releases First-Ever Citizen Stewardship Index



(Photo by Will Parson/Chesapeake Bay Program)

The [Chesapeake Bay Program](#) released the first comprehensive survey of stewardship actions and attitudes across the watershed. The Index reveals what actions residents are taking to protect clean water and restore environmental health and shows how much of the region has volunteered or spoken out on behalf of the environment. It also forecasts future stewardship by measuring the willingness of residents to engage in certain actions and responses to perceptions that motivate environmentally responsible behaviors.

#### Elk Creek Restoration Project Highlights Future of Chesapeake Conservation

The [Chesapeake Conservancy](#) recently joined a range of partners to install vegetation and structures to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff and improve water quality on a property on Elk Creek, a tributary of Penns Creek, in Centre County, PA.

"Through this project, Chesapeake Conservancy and our partners are using precision conservation—projects at the right place, the right size, the right time, the right time, and making sure they are working—to pilot a new approach to conservation. Instead of sweeping acquisitions or all-encompassing legislation, we can use the latest high-resolution datasets to conduct advanced geospatial analysis to better target and implement best management practices," Chesapeake Conservancy President and CEO Joel Dunn said.



### QUESTION OF THE MONTH

**My windows feel a little drafty, and it's getting cold outside. I'd like to make my home more energy efficient. Where should I start?**

The first step to improving the efficiency of your home is to [assess how much energy your home uses](#) to help determine what measures you can take to improve energy efficiency. It is very important to do this step before you do any energy efficiency measures in your home so that you have a baseline measure of your energy usage. And don't forget to continuously monitor it once you installed energy improvement measures.

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

