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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



Energy Programs Office

Climate Action for Environmental Justice Communities

Climate Change Advisory Committee
February 21, 2023

Josh Shapiro, Governor

Richard Negrin, Acting Secretary

- EPO is the Pennsylvania State Energy Office.
- Mission: Protect the environment, improve public health, and ensure access to affordable energy options for all Pennsylvanians.
- Focus:
 - Energy conservation and efficiency
 - Advanced energy technologies
 - Energy security and resiliency
 - Education and outreach
 - Climate change

- EPO strives to incorporate environmental justice in all its work and will engage directly with environmental justice communities to provide support, assess challenges, and capture opportunities.
- The federal government is prioritizing funding environmental justice projects through initiatives including:
 - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
 - Inflation Reduction Act
 - Justice40 Initiative

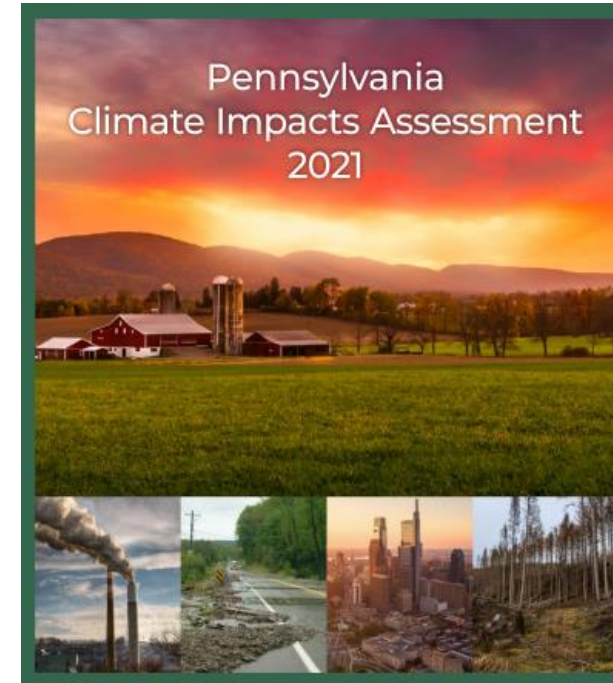
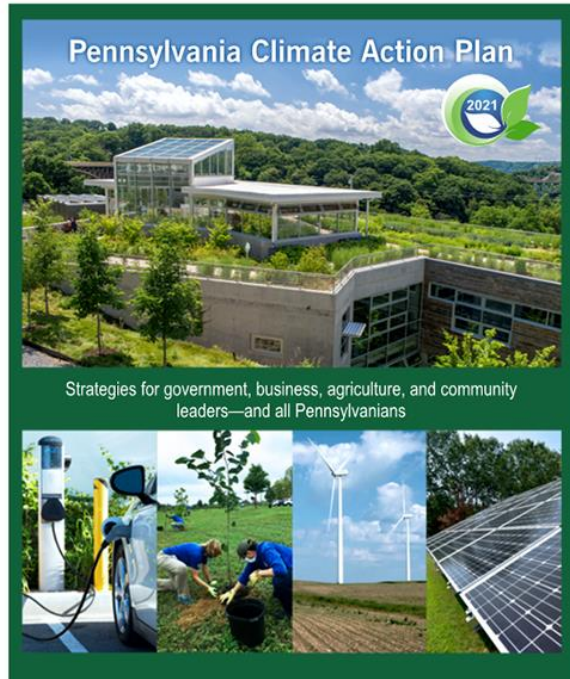
Climate Action for Environmental Justice Communities Program:

Understanding environmental justice communities' biggest
obstacles to climate resilience

Work Plan:

- Develop a plan for community engagement.
- Facilitate engagement.
- Solicit and coordinate input from Pennsylvania's environmental justice communities and experts on diversity, equity and inclusion.
- **Develop a guide for implementation of climate strategies to maximally benefit environmental justice communities and measure success.**

- DEP's [2021 Climate Action Plan](#) recommends strategies Pennsylvania can take to combat climate change and improve resilience.
- DEP's [2021 Pennsylvania Climate Impacts Assessment](#) describes the greatest anticipated climate change hazards and suggests adaptation pathways to improve community and statewide resilience.



Addressing climate change and reducing carbon emissions requires an “all hands on deck” approach, but climate change impacts do not affect all Pennsylvanians equally.

- Some Pennsylvanians are more vulnerable to climate change impacts due to their location, income, housing, or other hazard-specific factors.
- Disproportionate climate change impacts result from historical discriminatory practices, such as redlining and disinvestment.

- **This program aims to correct these inequities while advancing Pennsylvania's climate goals by:**
- Engaging with and listening to environmental justice communities to better address their needs by prioritizing these needs in future climate adaptation and planning.
- Ensuring greenhouse gas reduction strategies produce meaningful health, welfare, and community benefits.
- Prioritizing state and federal funding to ensure assistance is available where it is needed most.

Big Picture Question:

How can we use this project to address the most significant adaptation needs and impactful greenhouse gas reduction opportunities for environmental justice communities?

- We are partnering with [Preservation Design Partnership](#).
- Focused on the protection and preservation of historic resources in older communities throughout the United States.



- Conduct literature review.
- Develop plan for engagement.
- Develop preliminary Action List.
- Engage with public on preliminary actions. ← Next step
- Synthesize public recommendations into report and refine actions to maximize impact.
- Develop Guide for Climate Action for Environmental Justice Communities.

Includes the following components:

- Literature review
- Existing Climate Action Plan
- Strategies from Local Climate Action Plans
- DEP priorities
- Justice40 requirements
- Known best practices
- Strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while providing meaningful environmental and resiliency benefits
- Feedback to ensure climate strategies are implemented to benefit environmental justice communities and avoid/eliminate unintended negative impacts

The action guide will be a menu of climate resilience strategies that benefit environmental justice communities.

- For government and community leaders.
- Not a policy document or regulation.
- Will provide options and perspectives to assist in future decision making.

We are identifying proposed locations for in-person meetings with environmental justice communities.

Locations will be selected based on:

- DEP Environmental Justice Area status
- U.S. Department of Energy DAC Status
- Local Climate Action Plan participation
- Ability to act as a “model” for other communities in Pennsylvania
- Additional feedback from project contributors and advisory board members

- DEP/PDP will work with representative local “ambassador” organizations to site and promote meetings.
 - Municipal governments
 - Local non-profits
 - Community action groups
- DEP/PDP will conduct outreach to local organizations interested in climate change, sustainability, and community services.

- Meetings will introduce the project, provide a short primer on climate change, and outline the most serious climate impacts in Pennsylvania.
- PDP will facilitate discussion of community needs, risks, and opportunities to improve resiliency.
- DEP/PDP will review proposed strategies and solicit input.
- Online surveys will gather additional participant input and feedback from those unable to attend.

- DEP/PDP will use feedback to refine the preliminary action list and develop a final Guide to Climate Action for Environmental Justice Communities.
- **Anticipated publication: Summer 2023**

- EPO can better support environmental justice communities through existing programs including:
 - Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan 2024
 - Energy Assurance Outreach
 - Shared Energy Manager
- As DEP receives additional federal funding, these recommendations can guide new program development to target funding for environmental justice communities.



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Thank you!

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