

TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, DEP SECRETARY

WELCOME!

Welcome to the latest e-newsletter of the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) at the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). We're sharing helpful information on OEJ work and policies, important DEP news, government resources, educational 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.

TOP STORIES

Addressing Racial Justice and Inclusion at DEP

Dear Environmental Justice Partners:

As Pennsylvania and the whole country have seen protests demanding an end to systemic racism, we have all been called to action. At DEP and within OEJ, we have been looking at the actions we have taken and considering how we can do more.



DEP is reaching out to our community stakeholders and partners to affirm that we stand against racism and work to ensure diversity, inclusion and equity in our office and throughout all our work. Our Office of Environmental Justice was founded on principles of equity, inclusion, and justice. Critical connections exist between race, access to information and decision making, poverty, environmental exposure and health outcomes that are exacerbated by environmental injustice and racism.

I have affirmed to DEP staff and contractors that the agency is anti-racist and racism will not be tolerated in the department. I have charged all staff with ensuring the work we do on every level considers an environmental justice lens.

I ask that you join us and partner with us as we do our EJ work. We understand experiences in your communities and your work inform and guide the actions that we take around environmental justice.

Sincerely, DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell

AROUND THE STATE

Climate Action Plan

The Climate Action Plan (CAP) is the state's climate plan developed by DEP and state agency partners every 3 years. The 2018 plan includes recommendations for government leaders, businesses, and citizens on how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

For 2020, DEP's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) and Energy Programs Office (EPO) partnered to educate communities in all regions of the Commonwealth on the 2018 CAP.

DEP's Climate Action Plan webpage includes an interactive story map, the full PA Climate Action Plan 2018, as well as the abbreviated version, called the PA Climate Action Plan 2018 Summary Booklet.



Climate change open house in Harrisburg on February 15, 2020.

Climate Impacts Assessment

If we don't reduce greenhouse gas emissions, what will Pennsylvania look like? The 2020 Pennsylvania Climate Impacts Assessment uses state and federal data to project future climate change-related impacts in three areas: livestock, infrastructure, and water quality.

Infographic titled 'CLIMATE IMPACTS A Changing Pennsylvania' showing projected increases in average and extreme rainfall, flooding risk, and energy system impacts.

Helping Communities Develop Local Climate Action Plans

Is your community one of twenty around the state that are participating in DEP's new Local Climate Action Assistance Program? Through this program, municipalities have learned about the Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan.

Joining Other Northeast States in Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Power Plants

The second biggest source of carbon dioxide (CO2) pollution in Pennsylvania is electricity generation from fossil fuel power plants. At Governor Tom Wolf's direction, DEP is drafting rules for Pennsylvania to join ten Northeast states in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative.

RGGI states require power plants to purchase allowances for their CO2 emissions. As PJM, the Northeast region electricity distributor, seeks the least expensive electricity sources, power plants must factor in the cost of their CO2 allowances in the price they offer.

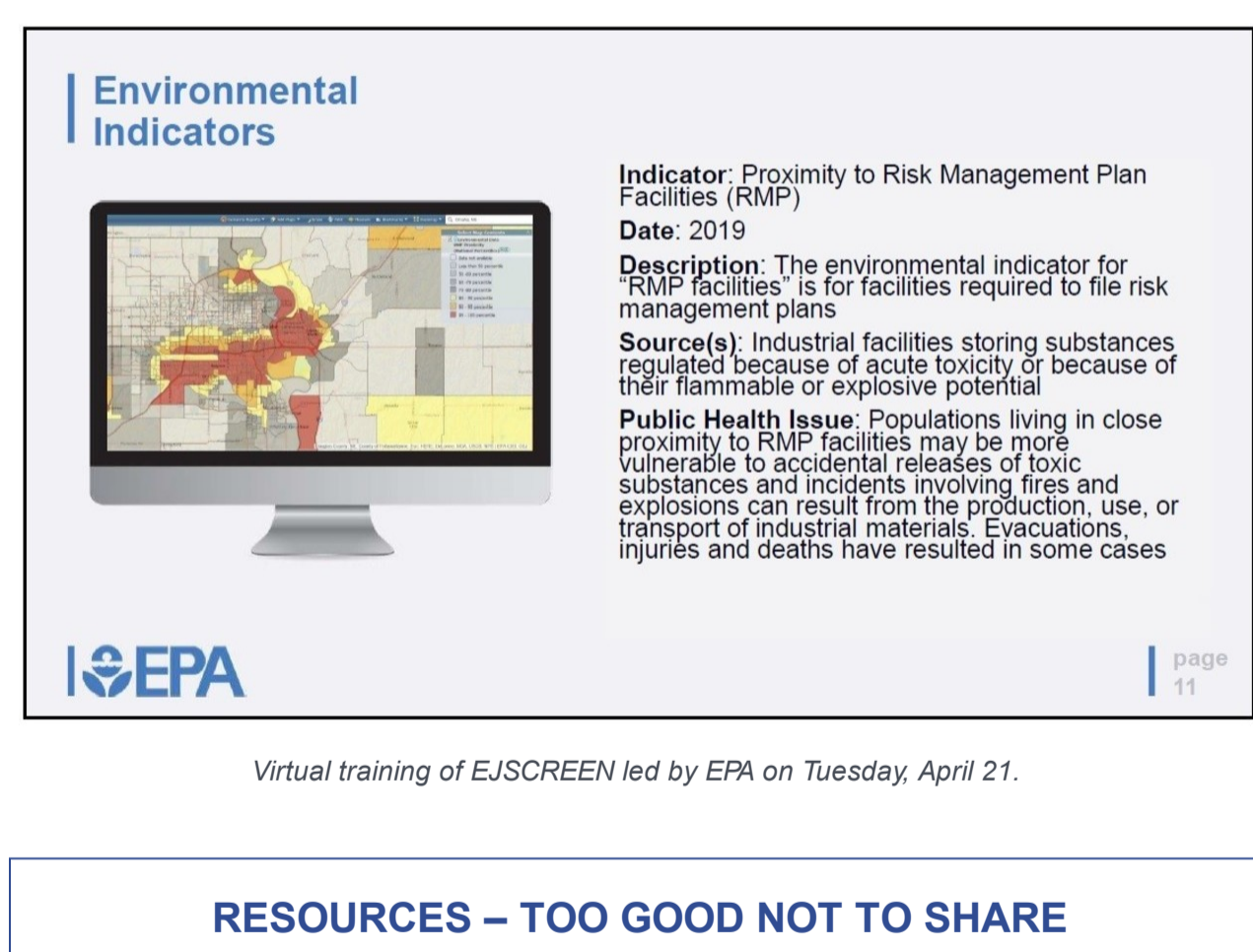
Infographic titled 'How RGGI Reduces Air Pollution' showing a 5-step process from CO2 limits to cleaner electricity for consumers.

Governor Wolf's order explicitly directs DEP to conduct a robust public outreach effort while developing this rulemaking. OEJ and DEP staff have been working to coordinate presentations of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) to educate and engage EJ partners on RGGI.

EJ IN PA

A Champion of Community Involvement

Bobby Hughes has devoted his time to help increase community pride and environmental quality in the coal region of Northeastern Pennsylvania. Bobby is the founding executive director of the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (EPCAMR).



EPCAMR Executive Director, Bobby Hughes, with a class of students from Heights M.L. Murray Elementary School. Photo provided by EPCAMR.

Environmental education is done through a variety of school programs focused on the 114 underserved school districts in the EPCAMR's region and based on the local school's needs and opportunities.



Newport Lake is affected by acid mine drainage and pollutes the Newport Creek in Newport Township and the City of Nanticoke in Luzerne County. Photo provided by EPCAMR.

EPCAMR has a focus on encouraging volunteerism, environmental education, and empowering communities to take back their towns from environmental degradation.

Is there an EJ champion in your community? Does your community have a success story you would like to share? Email us your story for publication in the next Your Environment, Your Voice newsletter.

SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION

Environmental Education Grants

On June 26, DEP announced \$434,168 in Environmental Education (EE) Grants have been awarded to support 55 projects. Environmental justice, climate change and water are the grant program's priorities.

EJ Education and Training

For 2020, OEJ has been developing a series of EJ trainings in collaboration with EPA. The series has been developed for DEP and Commonwealth employees, and community and environmental justice leaders seeking to advance environmental justice throughout the state.

The first series focused on capacity building, EJ history, and EJ mapping. The EJ history covered historical cases of injustice, formation of the EJ movement, and ways to develop capacity and advance EJ initiatives.

OEJ is collaborating again with EPA to roll out an internal training available to all DEP employees. The training session is approximately 1-hour long and will begin with DEP's Executive Staff in September.

Are you or someone you know interested in learning more about environmental justice? Reach out to OEJ staff to discuss training opportunities!

EPA infographic titled 'Environmental Indicators' showing a map of Pennsylvania and details for the 'Proximity to Risk Management Plan Facilities (RMP)' indicator.

Virtual training of EJSCREEN led by EPA on Tuesday, April 21.

RESOURCES – TOO GOOD NOT TO SHARE

DEP Grants, Loans, Rebates – If your environmental improvement project needs funding, DEP can help. We offer 31 grant and rebate programs to support a range of projects to improve or protect the water, land, and air in Pennsylvania.

- Small Business Advantage Grant
COVID-19 Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority Restart Grants
Alternative Fuel Vehicle Grants and Rebates
Driving PA Forward Grants and Rebates
Coastal Zone Management Grant
Recycling and Waste Grants for Local Governments

Other Commonwealth Grants, Loans, Rebates

- Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
Department of Labor and Industry (L&I)
Commonwealth Finance Authority (CFA)

Other Funding Resources

- EPA's Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT)
EPA's Reducing Public Exposure to Indoor Pollutants

Dickinson College's Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues

The Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues hosted by Dickinson College will include a forum on October 14, 2020 focused on critical issue environmental justice. There will be a panel discussion that includes two members of the Environmental Justice Advisory Board as well as other prominent environmental justice advocates.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DEP Events

- September 15 – Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting
October 15 – Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) Meeting
October 20 – Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting
October 27 – Climate Change Advisory Committee Meeting
November 17 – Joint Meeting of the Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) and Citizens Advisory Council (CAC)

Check out DEP's Calendar of Events for more events

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

OEJ welcomes your suggestions or inquiries about our work, programs and/or policies. Please contact us at RA.EPOEJ@pa.gov, or directly:

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