

News

from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection



Tom Wolf, Governor | Patrick McDonnell, Acting Secretary



DEP Calendar of Events

Dec. 13

Board of Coal Mine Safety Quarterly Meeting, 10 a.m., DEP Cambria Office, 286 Industrial Park Rd., Ebensburg. Contact: Allison Gaida, agaida@pa.gov

Dec. 14

Citizens Advisory Council / Environmental Justice Advisory Board meeting, 9 a.m., Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Glenda Davidson, gldavidson@pa.gov

Dec. 14

State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators meeting, 10 a.m., 10th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Cheri Sansoni, csansoni@pa.gov

Dec. 21

State Board for Certification of Sewage Enforcement Officers meeting, 10 a.m., Conference Room B, 11th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Kristen Szwajkowski, kszwajkows@pa.gov

Dec. 22

Agricultural Advisory Board Meeting, 9 a.m., DEP Southcentral Regional Office, Susquehanna Room B, 909 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg. Contact: Jay Braund, jbraund@pa.gov

Rice Energy Subsidiaries Assessed Over \$3.5 Million in Penalties for Well Pad and Pipeline Violations

PITTSBURGH -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) assessed civil penalties to Rice Energy subsidiaries for multiple violations of environmental laws at 10 well sites and 6 pipeline locations, with a total fine of over \$3.5 million.

DEP and Rice Energy signed seven separate enforcement documents addressing the violations that occurred at sites in Washington and Greene Counties. The violations span several years and include failing to obtain required permits, failing to maintain erosion and sedimentation controls, releasing wastewater to the ground and waters of the Commonwealth, and failing to have a pre-operational inspection of a well site by DEP prior to drilling, among others.

"Minimizing the impacts that drilling activity has on Pennsylvania waterways is a key part of responsible development," said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "While many of these violations have been corrected and remediated, they should have not happened in the first place. DEP will continue to hold responsible companies that act without permits and violate the rules and regulations of the Commonwealth."

[Read more.](#)

Statement on DEP Appeal to PA Supreme Court

HARRISBURG -- The following statement can be attributed to Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell:

"Today DEP has filed an appeal of the Commonwealth Court decision to enjoin sections of the Chapter 78A unconventional drilling regulations to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. By the decision issued on November 8, the Commonwealth Court temporarily stayed limited provisions contained in the new regulations. These regulations establish basic protections for areas that could be impacted by unconventional drilling – places like schools, playgrounds, and other public resources. That ruling resulted in a narrow temporary stay, which DEP is now appealing.

"These commonsense regulations were the result of five years of public participation, including dozens of meetings with natural gas



Upcoming Webinars



Speakers Bureau



Public Input

Dec. 26

Deadline to comment on Environmental Assessment Approval for PENNVEST Funding Consideration. Visit [eComment](#).



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DEP's Mission:

to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment.

industry leaders and trade groups, as well as nearly 25,000 Pennsylvanians who made their voices heard by providing public comments.”

[View on the website.](#)

UPDATE: State DEP to Further Investigate PFC Contamination on Easton Road, Bucks County

NORRISTOWN -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is continuing to investigate possible perfluorinated compound (PFC) contamination in public water supplies and private wells in parts of Doylestown, Plumstead, and Buckingham townships in Bucks County. The investigation will cover an area within one mile of the Cross Keys shopping area.

Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) are part of a larger group of chemicals referred to as perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs). PFCs are not found naturally in the environment. PFOA and PFOS have been the most extensively produced and studied of these chemicals. They have been used to make cookware, carpets, clothing, fabrics for furniture, paper packaging for food, and other materials that are resistant to water, grease, or stains. They are also used in firefighting foams and in a number of industrial processes.

After one public supply well near the Cross Keys area of Doylestown was found to contain combined concentrations of PFOA and PFOS that exceeded the Health Advisory level (HA) of 70 parts per trillion (ppt) for combined concentrations of PFOA and PFOS established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and another public supply well was found to contain combined concentrations slightly below the HA, DEP immediately took steps to begin a thorough investigation of the surrounding area.

[Read more.](#)

DEP Wins 2016 Pennsylvania Excellence in Technology Award for Network Innovations



Left to right: Network administrators Matt Clark, Greg Fiedler, Dave Hayes and State CIO John MacMillian.

HARRISBURG -- DEP has won a 2016 Pennsylvania Excellence in Technology Award for innovations leading to improved network operations and cost savings.

The annual Excellence in Technology awards, presented to multiple state agencies by the Pennsylvania Office of Administration and Government Technology magazine, recognize

outstanding accomplishment, dedication, innovation, and leadership in information technology to enhance government service.

The DEP award was presented to the Bureau of Information Technology Network Administration Section: Greg Fiedler, Matt Clark, and Dave Hayes.

“These professionals have worked tirelessly to bring the DEP network up to speed by evaluating how the department currently manages its essential network communications and finding efficiencies, cost savings, and more practical approaches to managing customer service,” said CIO Sean Crager.

This year, the Network Administration team has: challenged the traditional way in which DEP received network services and evaluated, tested, and begun to deploy a new technology network that will save DEP approximately \$900,000 over 5 years; taken the initiative to clean up and rebuild all of the network closets in the Rachel Carson State Office Building, resulting in a 5-year savings of approximately \$190,000 by eliminating unused network equipment and its associated support costs; and rolled out a new wireless network throughout the entire building and consolidated its operations into an easy-to-manage interface.

The 2016 Excellence in Technology Awards were presented at the annual Pennsylvania Digital Government Summit, December 1, at the Harrisburg Hilton.

DEP Presents Mine Land Reclamation Award to Amerikohl

HARRISBURG -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has presented a National Association of State Land Reclamationists award for mine land reclamation to Amerikohl Aggregates for their work to remediate and reclaim land at their Vanport surface mine.

“Amerikohl has been a leader in conducting remediation efforts on lands while still continuing mining operations,” said DEP Executive Deputy Secretary John Stefanko, who presented the award. “Their efforts to reclaim and minimize the impacts of mining on the neighboring community are all top-notch.”

DEP nominated Amerikohl for the award, citing the company’s work to reclaim land mined for limestone contemporaneously with mining operations. This work has resulted in land that is back in agricultural production within a year of being mined. In addition, Amerikohl has installed an outbound truck wheel washer to address a recurring problem of trucks tracking fine limestone dust from the site onto local streets where it would be dispersed into the atmosphere and eventually settle out on houses and cars. Those wheel washing efforts have proven successful in minimizing off-site impacts.

[View on the website.](#)

Facility Operations Workshop, Registration Open

HARRISBURG -- A Facility Operations Workshop is being coordinated by PennTAP with the assistance of DEP. This workshop is scheduled for March 14, 2017 at the Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center in State College. The purpose of the workshop is to educate building operators, facility engineers,

energy managers, and service personnel (e.g. HVAC technicians) in commercial buildings about how to find and fix energy-wasting practices, while at the same time potentially extending the life of equipment and improving the comfort of building occupants. The workshop will include BRT and BOC tracks.

Building Re-tuning (BRT) is a systematic process to identify and correct building operational problems that lead to energy waste. It is implemented at no or low cost other than the labor required to perform the re-tuning process. The BRT track at the workshop will include a blend of classroom training, and building walk-throughs, looking at the building envelope, HVAC, and lighting at various Penn State University campus buildings.

The Building Operator Certificate (BOC) track of this workshop is designed to provide up-to-date information on the latest tools, trends, and best practices for building operators. BOC maintenance points will be earned at the session. The target audience for this workshop is medium-sized facilities from local government, colleges, and K-12 school facilities located throughout Pennsylvania. The workshop cost is offset with support from DEP's Pennsylvania State Energy Plan funding from the United States Department of Energy. [Registration](#) is open.

DEP Final Report of Tenmile Creek Shows No Radioactivity Danger

PITTSBURGH -- In a follow-up study to a report released in December 2015, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has confirmed that there is no radiation concern for Tenmile Creek in Greene County.

"The results from testing conducted throughout 2016 were similar to those taken in 2015, at which time DEP concluded there was no risk of radioactivity," said John Stefanko, DEP Executive Deputy Secretary for Programs. "The samples for this study were put through rigorous testing and reached the same conclusions."

All water samples were below the EPA drinking water limit of 5 picocuries per liter(pC/L) for radium-226 and radium-228. Any radiation that was detected was consistent with background levels for southwest Pennsylvania.

DEP's Bureau of Laboratories personnel conducted the radiological analyses using several analytical methods. Water samples were analyzed using radiochemistry extraction methods, consistent with EPA standards.

[Read more.](#)

Pennsylvania Environmental Stewards: Apply for 2017 Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence

The Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence

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- Economic opportunity
- Environmental Education

Have you or your organization worked hard to promote environmental stewardship in Pennsylvania? Apply today!

Learn more at www.dep.pa.gov/About/Awards/EnvironmentalExcellence

HARRISBURG -- From environmental justice advocates to business entrepreneurs, school students to senior citizens, many

Pennsylvanians work to protect the air, land, and waters of the Commonwealth. To honor their efforts, the Department of Environmental Protection seeks applications for the 2017 Governor's Awards for Environmental Excellence.

"These awards bring much-deserved recognition to environmental stewards who, project by project, improve Pennsylvania," said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "Whether they're boots on the ground or creators of innovative solutions that help lead us in new directions in environmental protection, their work greatly benefits all of us in the Commonwealth."

Individuals and organizations are invited to apply for the 2017 awards for projects completed between August 1, 2015, and July 31, 2016.

[Read more.](#)



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Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA
17105