

News from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection



Tom Wolf, Governor | Patrick McDonnell, Acting Secretary



DEP Calendar of Events

Jan. 24

Aggregate Regulatory, Legislative and Technical (RLT) Committee meeting, 10 a.m. 14th floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Daniel Snowden, dsnowden@pa.gov

Jan. 25

Small Business Compliance Advisory Committee Meeting, 10 a.m. 12th floor conference room, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St. Contact: Nancy Herb, nherb@pa.gov

Feb. 1

Aggregate Advisory Board meeting, 10 a.m. South-Central Regional Office, 909 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg. Contact: Daniel Snowden, dsnowden@pa.gov

Feb. 8

State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Operators Meeting, 10 a.m. 12th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Cheri Sansoni, csansoni@pa.gov



Upcoming Webinars



Speakers Bureau



Public Input

DEP Offers Funding for Stormwater Management Projects

DEP Offers Funding to Local Governments for Stormwater Projects

Eligible projects include:

- Raingardens
- Bio-swailes
- Urban nutrient management
- Tree planting
- Vegetated open channels/roofs
- Wet ponds and wetland preservation

Stormwater projects must be located in Blair, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Luzerne, Lycoming and York counties



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HARRISBURG -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is offering grants up to \$200,000 to local entities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed for stormwater management projects that implement best management practices (BMP) to reduce the amount of nutrients and sediment pollution in local waterways.

The program is available to counties, cities, boroughs, townships, incorporated towns and municipal authorities. Stormwater projects must be located in Blair, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Luzerne, Lycoming and York counties.

"The department continues to work toward one of the top goals of this administration: improving local water quality and ultimately cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay," said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "This grant program achieves that by offering financial assistance to local governments that share in that goal and they are encouraged to apply as we work together in this important environmental initiative."

[Read more.](#)

DEP Urges Pennsylvanians to Test Homes for Radon



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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.



HARRISBURG -- The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) urges Pennsylvanians to test their homes for radon in January as part of National Radon Action Month. Colorless, odorless, and radioactive, radon is a known human carcinogen and the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States.

The DEP website provides information and a video on how to test your home, the DEP Facebook and Twitter pages are sharing daily radon tips, and a DEP public service announcement is airing on TV and radio.

Radon occurs naturally from the breakdown of uranium in soil and rocks and enters homes through cracks in the foundation or other openings.

"Because of its geology, Pennsylvania is prone to high radon levels. Radon has been detected in all 67 counties, and about 40 percent of homes have levels above the Environmental Protection Agency action level," said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "It's just good sense to protect yourself and your loved ones."

[Read more.](#)

DEP Completes Lead Surveillance Program to Keep Banned Solder Products Off Shelves

HARRISBURG -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has completed routine surveillance of hardware stores and other retail facilities in 13 counties to verify that leaded solder is not being sold for plumbing purposes. This surveillance is conducted in accordance with the 1989 Lead Ban Act.

Throughout the Summer of 2016, DEP staff investigated 575 stores to make sure that lead solder is not being sold and that restricted solder types that are allowed to be sold commercially are not being displayed in plumbing supply sections of those stores.

"Keeping banned lead products off the shelves is a good way to prevent future water contamination," said Patrick McDonnell, Acting DEP Secretary. "I'm very pleased to see that many stores are following the regulations and keeping banned products off of their shelves."

[Read more.](#)

Proposed Revised Coal Mine Pillar Dimensions and Alternative Natural Gas Well Construction Methods in Mining Areas Rejected Due to Safety Concerns

HARRISBURG -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) reviewed a study proposing changes to existing requirements for coal mine pillars as well as alternative methods for constructing natural gas wells where coal is mined underground. DEP found that the study did not provide results supporting changes.

“Natural gas extraction is increasingly intersecting with longwall mining, particularly in Southwestern Pennsylvania,” said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell. “While new drilling methods may make extraction more efficient, coal miners’ safety remains our primary concern. For this reason, DEP stands by the established regulatory benchmarks that we believe better protect miner safety and maintain the integrity of gas wells.”

Coal mine pillars are columns of coal or rock left in place in the mine to support overlying rock and furnish protection for gas wells drilled in the permitted area of a mine. Currently, the size of pillars suitable for ensuring the integrity of gas wells and miners’ safety is specified by the Joint Coal and Gas Committee report, first published in 1957.

The new industry-agency study, titled the Gas Well Pillar Study Update, is the result of Act 2 of 2011, which called for a review of the 1957 study in light of modern longwall mining methods and their impact on natural gas well development.

[Read more.](#)

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS – 2017 Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium

HARRISBURG -- In celebration of National Drinking Water Week, Penn State Extension’s Master Well Owner Network and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection along with numerous other sponsors invite the submission of abstracts for the 2017 Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium. Under the theme, Groundwater and Drinking Water: Making the Connection, the Symposium will be held at the Ramada Inn Conference Center in State College, PA on Wednesday May 3, 2017 and will provide a forum 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, 2017.

Abstracts can be submitted at <http://agsci.psu.edu/pa-water-symposium>.

The day-long symposium will begin at 8:30 AM with several keynote presentations on emerging groundwater topics. The remainder of the day will feature numerous concurrent and poster sessions along with a buffet lunch. The conference registration site and agenda will be available in late February. Thanks to generous support from sponsors, a nominal registration fee of approximately \$40 is expected for the symposium.

Questions about the 2017 Pennsylvania Groundwater Symposium can be directed to Bryan Swistock (brs@psu.edu or 814-863-0194).

Acting Secretary McDonnell Takes Part in Celebrity Cow Milking Contest



HARRISBURG -- DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell stopped by the [Pennsylvania Farm Show](#) to participate in the Celebrity Cow Milking Contest. Check out a 360-degree view of the Equine Arena during the event and see more photos here:

<http://ow.ly/16Gn307Zoj5>.



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