

News

from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection



Tom Wolf, Governor | Patrick McDonnell, Acting Secretary



DEP Calendar of Events

Jan. 10

Climate Change Advisory Committee Regular Meeting, 10 a.m. Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Mark Brojakowski, mbrojakows@pa.gov

Jan. 12

Coal and Clay Mine Subsidence Insurance (MSI) Fund Board meeting, 10 a.m. 12th floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Lawrence Ruane, lrwane@pa.gov

Jan. 17

Citizens Advisory Council meeting, 10 a.m. Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Glenda Davidson, gldavidson@pa.gov

Jan. 18

Coastal Zone Advisory Committee Meeting, 9:30 a.m. 10th floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St., Harrisburg. Contact: Stacey Box, sbox@pa.gov

Jan. 18

Technical Advisory Committee on Diesel-Powered Equipment, 10 a.m. New Stanton District Office, Westmoreland Room, 131 Broadview Road, New Stanton, PA 15672. Contact: Peggy Scheloske, mscheloske@pa.gov

Jan. 19

Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board meeting, 10 a.m. 14th floor

DEP Tips for the New Year; Suggestions for a Safe and Healthy 2017

HARRISBURG -- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell shared the following suggestions for Pennsylvania residents for a safe and healthy 2017.

"The Department of Environmental Protection will be working hard to protect the air, land, and waters of the Commonwealth, but there are several things that residents can do to protect themselves and their families," said McDonnell. "Many of these are relatively simple actions, and can alert residents to potentially dangerous situations in their own homes."

The suggestions include:

- Look into buying mine subsidence insurance: Over 1 million homes in Pennsylvania sit on top of abandoned mines. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage caused by mine subsidence or mine water breakouts. Find out if your home is in a mining area, and learn more about mine subsidence insurance.
- Winterize your home: A few simple steps can lower your energy bills and keep your home warm. Have your furnace checked by a heating professional, seal cracks around windows, doors, and chimneys, and don't heat unused spaces, such as guest bedrooms (except to prevent pipes from freezing).

[Read more.](#)

Help Protect Your Family from Lung Cancer: Test Your Home for Radon



HARRISBURG -- January is National Radon Action Month, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) encourages all Pennsylvanians to test their homes for this radioactive gas. Exposure to radon in indoor air is the second

Conference Room,
Rachel Carson State
Office Building, 400
Market St., Harrisburg.
Contact: Daniel Snowden,
dsnowden@pa.gov

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: Cheri
Sansoni,
csansoni@pa.gov

Feb. 1

Aggregate Advisory Board
meeting, 10 a.m.
Southcentral 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

Feb. 16

Oil and Gas Technical
Advisory Board (TAB)
Meeting, 10 a.m. Room
105, Rachel Carson State
Office Building, 400
Market St., Harrisburg.
Contact: Kurt Klapkowski,
kklapkowski@pa.gov



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leading cause of lung cancer. Odorless and colorless, radon can enter your home from the ground, and Pennsylvania's geology means we have some of the highest radon levels in the United States.

Easy-to-use DIY radon test kits are inexpensive and available at many home improvement and hardware stores. You can also hire a qualified radon professional. If your home has a radon level higher than 4 picocuries per liter of air, the U.S. Surgeon General and EPA recommend taking action. A professionally installed radon reduction system, using a vent pipe and exhaust fan, will help prevent the radon from entering your home and discharge it outside. Compared with the risk of lung cancer, these systems are very affordable, generally in the price range of many common home improvements.

Find resources and information at [DEP Radon in the Home](#), and see the [DEP Facebook page](#) and [Twitter page](#) for daily tips on radon in January.

Make 2017 a safer, healthier year: Test your home for radon. And share this information with neighbors and friends.

View the [Radon Awareness PSA here](#).

DEP Developing Enhanced Eligibility Standards for Expedited Review of Erosion and Sediment Control General Permits

HARRISBURG -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has begun revising eligibility standards for expedited review of Erosion and Sediment permit applications related to oil and gas drilling.

The Erosion and Sediment Control General Permits (ESCGP-2) are for earth disturbance of more than 5 acres for oil and gas projects. Under the general permit, projects that meet objective criteria are eligible for a 14-day permit review.

The revisions follow an internal review of two years of permit authorizations, conducted to analyze the consistency and effectiveness of the program from when it began in February 2014 through January 2016. The review revealed that the expedited process has limited application because of the technical deficiencies in almost 60 percent of the permit applications submitted.

As a result of the internal review, DEP staff are developing revisions for eligibility for the expedited review, including objective and clear standards for eligibility, return of applications, removal of applications from the expedited process, improved training for staff and industry applicants, and regular evaluation of the program.

"This review concluded that the expedited review process is very challenging for DEP to implement and has not resulted in higher quality applications nor consistency in environmental protections statewide," said Acting DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "Through this internal review, we've learned that this program only works when DEP receives technically sound and complete application materials at the outset, and we will revise our eligibility requirements accordingly."

[Read more.](#)

DEP Engineer Craig Burda Honored with National Award for Coal Refuse Reclamation



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.



Photo from left to right: Executive Deputy Secretary John Stefanko, Special Assistant to the Governor Yesenia Bane, Mining Engineer Craig Burda, DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell, and U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement Director Joe Pizarchik.

HARRISBURG -- Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) mining engineer Craig Burda was honored with a national award for his outstanding work in coal refuse reclamation by the U.S. Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) at an event hosted by DEP on Wednesday, January 4, 2017.

Burda, who has worked for the DEP California District Mining Office for 21 years, received the 2017 ECHO Award for leading industry coal refuse reclamation in Pennsylvania to the point where the majority of coal refuse sites in the state are now permitted as zero-discharge facilities. Refuse piles have the potential to produce some of the worst acid mine drainage of any type of coal facility.

The ECHO Award honors dedication to public service and protection of society; sustained, strategic engagement in difficult challenges; nonpartisanship; and major contributions to and improved implementation of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977.

"Throughout his career, Craig Burda has continually ensured higher environmental protection standards for communities," said DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "In each and every permitting decision, he's deployed outstanding technical expertise, great integrity and fortitude, and deep skill in partnering with industry to protect the health and environment of our coal communities. He has raised the bar on coal refuse reclamation in Pennsylvania."

[Read more.](#)

DEP Northeast Office Raised Money for Greater Wyoming Valley Area Toys for Tots



Pictured are Roy Baker and Sgt. Torres of the local Wyoming Valley Marine Corps base.

WILKES-BARRE -- The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Northeast Office staff raised money for Toys for Tots in the greater Wyoming Valley Area for Christmas 2017. Roy Baker, drafter/designer from the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation took the lead in fundraising across NERO.

A grand total of \$500.00 was raised by way of an Ugly Sweater contest, calendar sales, 50/50 drawing and cash donation. Nine boxes of toys were delivered to the local Marine Corps for distribution to children in the area.



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17105