



TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, DEP SECRETARY

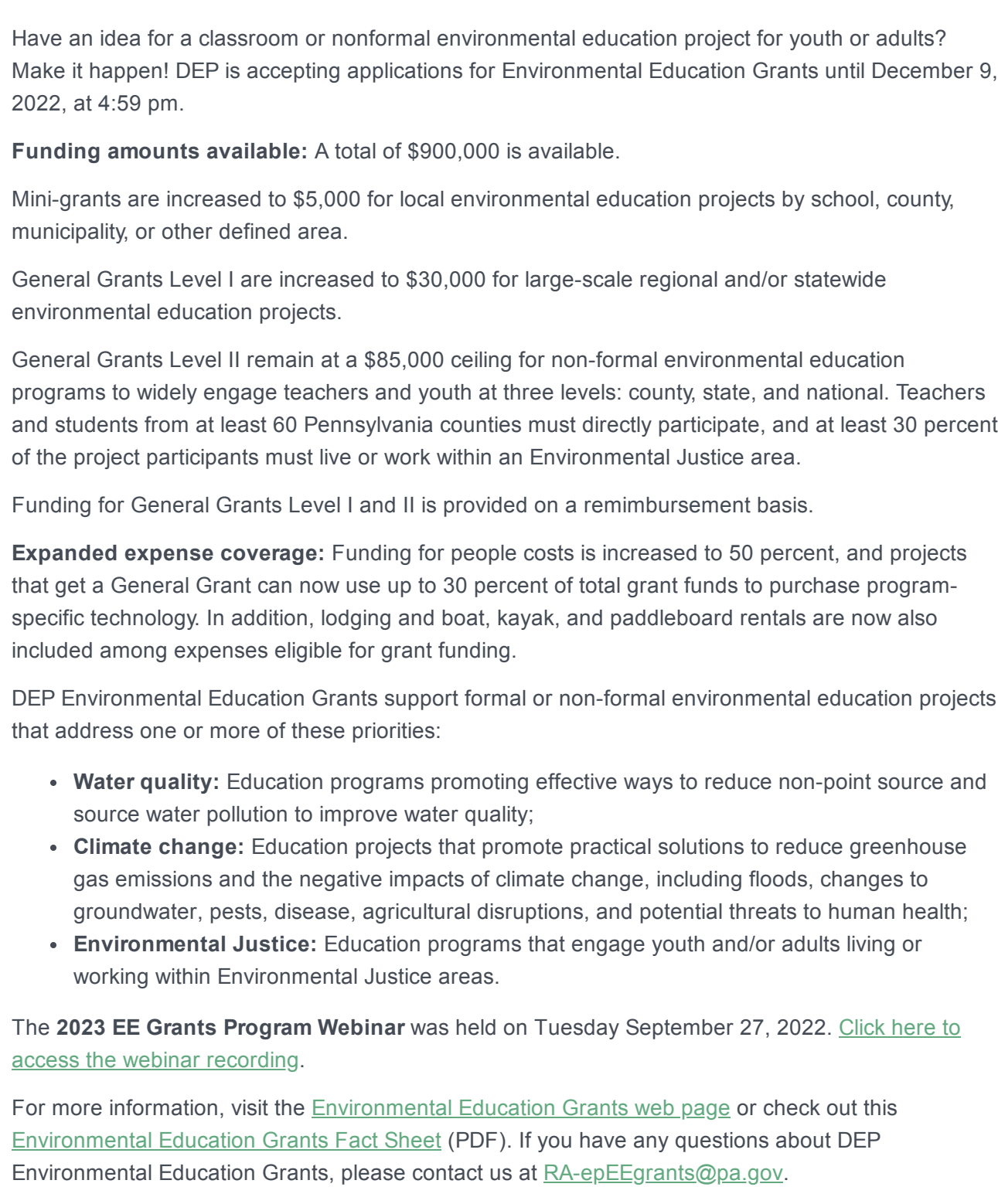
Welcome, Educators!

Settle in with a pumpkin spice coffee and cider donut, and read on to learn about a new DEP program to help schools make their commercial kitchens more energy efficient spaces. You'll find information as well on grants, state science education standards, invasive species, and other topics to inform your classroom and nonformal environmental education. Happy fall!

— Bert Myers, Director, Environmental Education and Information Center, DEP

Grants

DEP Environmental Education Grants



DEP ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (EE) GRANTS

We have a huge effort underway to implement Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEEs) in our region and it all began with this project, thanks to the EE Grants Program funding. It's truly one of the best Professional Development series I have ever offered in my time at IU13.

— Lauren Beal, Ed.D., Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13

Have an idea for a classroom or nonformal environmental education project for youth or adults? Make it happen! DEP is accepting applications for Environmental Education Grants until December 9, 2022, at 4:59 pm.

Funding amounts available: A total of \$900,000 is available.

Mini-grants are increased to \$5,000 for local environmental education projects by school, county, municipality, or other defined area.

General Grants Level I are increased to \$30,000 for large-scale regional and/or statewide environmental education projects.

General Grants Level II remain at a \$85,000 ceiling for non-formal environmental education programs to widely engage teachers and youth at three levels: county, state, and national. Teachers and students from at least 60 Pennsylvania counties must directly participate, and at least 30 percent of the project participants must live or work within an Environmental Justice area.

Funding for General Grants Level I and II is provided on a reimbursement basis.

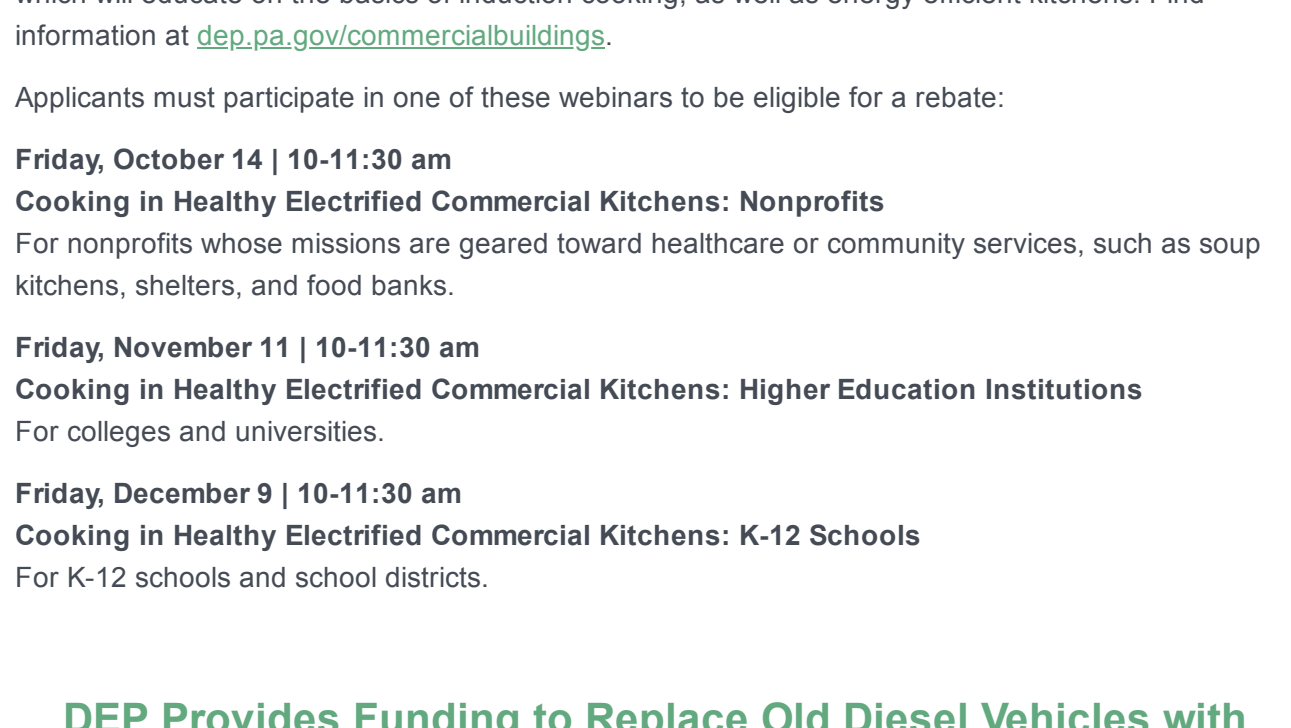
Expanded expense coverage: Funding for people costs is increased to 50 percent, and projects that get a General Grant can now use up to 30 percent of total grant funds to purchase program-specific technology. In addition, lodging and boat, kayak, and paddleboard rentals are now also included among expenses eligible for grant funding.

DEP Environmental Education Grants support formal or non-formal environmental education projects that address one or more of these priorities:

- **Water quality:** Education programs promoting effective ways to reduce non-point source and source water pollution to improve water quality;
- **Climate change:** Education projects that promote practical solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the negative impacts of climate change, including floods, changes to groundwater, pests, disease, agricultural disruptions, and potential threats to human health;
- **Environmental Justice:** Education programs that engage youth and/or adults living or working within Environmental Justice areas.

The 2023 EE Grants Program Webinar was held on Tuesday September 27, 2022. [Click here to access the webinar recording.](#)

For more information, visit the [Environmental Education Grants web page](#) or check out this [Environmental Education Grants Fact Sheet](#) (PDF). If you have any questions about DEP Environmental Education Grants, please contact us at RA-epEEgrants@pa.gov.



DEP ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION (EE) GRANTS

The DEP EE Grant has been critical to funding our flagship environmental education program, Philly Nature Kids. It's so impactful for students to be able to study their science curriculum in school and then see it in action in the field, which would be impossible without its funding.

— Kelly Kemmerle, John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge

Education Standards

It's official: The new Pennsylvania Academic Science Standards have been approved!

[Final-form amendments to 22 Pa. Code Chapter 4 \(Academic Standards and Assessment\)](#) were published in the [Pennsylvania Bulletin](#) on July 16, 2022. The regulations provide a three-year window for implementation of the new standards and establish a July 1, 2025, effective date.

The new standards replace the existing academic standards for Science and Technology and Environment and Ecology, which will sunset on June 30, 2024.

These amendments establish three new sets of academic standards as follows:

- [Science Standards](#)
- [Annex A](#)
- [Appendix B-1](#)

Keep yourself updated on the new standards by joining one or more of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Standards Aligned System (SAS) learning communities. Here's how:

1. [Register on the Department of Education's SAS web page.](#)
2. Click on the My SAS Tools link in the upper right-hand corner of the landing page (it may have your name and SAS Tools).
3. Click on your SAS Tools button (upper right-hand corner of the screen; your name should be first) and select Communities.
4. This will open a listing of all the SAS communities. Scroll down the page (or search) and click on each of these professional learning communities:

- Environment, Ecology, and Agriculture
- Science
- Technology and Engineering

Energy

CHECK: "Cooking in Healthy Electrified Commercial Kitchens" Rebate Program Open to Schools and Nonprofits

Did you know food service is one of the highest energy users per square foot in the commercial sector?

To help commercial kitchens in Pennsylvania become healthier places to work via energy efficiency and electrification, DEP has launched the Cooking in Healthy Electrified Commercial Kitchens (CHECK) education and rebate program.

Rebates will fund a variety of energy efficient and combustion free cooking equipment, as well as associated electrical upgrades. In the meantime, please register for one of the upcoming webinars, which will educate on the basics of induction cooking, as well as energy efficient kitchens. Find information at dep.pa.gov/commercialbuildings.

Applicants must participate in one of these webinars to be eligible for a rebate:

Friday, October 14 | 10-11:30 am

Cooking in Healthy Electrified Commercial Kitchens: Nonprofits

For nonprofits whose missions are geared toward healthcare or community services, such as soup kitchens, shelters, and food banks.

Friday, November 11 | 10-11:30 am

Cooking in Healthy Electrified Commercial Kitchens: Higher Education Institutions

For colleges and universities.

Friday, December 9 | 10-11:30 am

Cooking in Healthy Electrified Commercial Kitchens: K-12 Schools

For K-12 schools and school districts.

DEP Provides Funding to Replace Old Diesel Vehicles with Clean-Energy Models

Two Pennsylvania school districts took advantage of a DEP funding opportunity replacing diesel school buses with green alternatives. This funding comes from Pennsylvania's share of the national settlement with Volkswagen Group of America for cheating on the U.S Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions tests.

The School District of Philadelphia received \$936,000 to replace six old diesel school buses with six electric school buses and charging equipment. Annually the project will remove one-third ton of NOx, 51 tons of CO₂, and other pollutants from the air. The North Penn School District, located in Montgomery County, received \$199,435 to replace seven old diesel school buses with seven new propane school buses at North Penn High School in Lansdale. Annually the project will remove 3.9 tons of NOx and other pollutants from the air.

DEP applauds these two school districts for demonstrating to their students the importance of addressing climate change. By replacing older polluting engines and equipment with new technologies, funded projects remove nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, and hydrocarbon pollution from the air. These pollutants contribute to ground-level ozone, or smog which the [EPA has shown has negative health impacts](#), including asthma attacks and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Zero- and low-emission vehicles also lower carbon dioxide emissions, helping to lessen climate change.

[Driving PA Forward](#) launched eight grant programs in 2018 with the goal of permanently reducing nitrogen oxides by replacing a large number of older diesel vehicles with equipment and promoting cleaner transportation technologies with funding from the commonwealth's \$118.5 million settlement with Volkswagen.



Environmental Justice



Follow DEP Environmental Justice News: "Your Environment, Your Voice"

Check out the latest from the DEP Office of Environmental Justice with the [September issue of their electronic newsletter](#). Know someone who'd benefit from this information? Please share and invite them to subscribe. Please help us spread the word. To sign up for the OEJ newsletter go to: ["EJ News: Your Environment, Your Voice."](#)

DEP Celebrates 60 Years of Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring"

On September 13, 2022, [DEP hosted a panel discussion celebrating the impact of Rachel Carson's landmark work, "Silent Spring."](#) This discussion was moderated by Jamar Thrasher, DEP Press Secretary. The panelists included:

- Ngani Ndimbile, Regional Coordinator, DEP Office of Environmental Justice
- Bert Myers, Director of Environmental Education, DEP Environmental Education and Information Center
- Dr. Joylette Portlock, Executive Director, Sustainable Pittsburgh
- Patricia M. DeMarco, Vice President of the Forest Hills Borough Council and Senior Scholar and Adjunct Faculty at Chatham University
- Dr. Mark Madison, historian for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Dr. Linda Lear, Rachel Carson historian and author of "Rachel Carson: Witness for Nature"

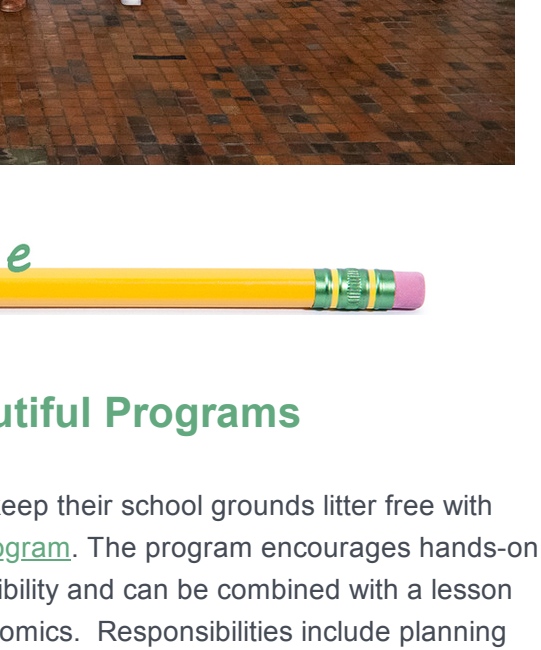


Harrisburg Falcons

A Landmark Year

The new normal on the 15th floor of the Rachel Carson State Office Building (RCSOB) is the presence of the new, dominant female band 09/BS. Based on [Falcon Cam](#) observations she appears quite at home in her new locale. The 2023 breeding season should be interesting as it will be the first between the current adults. Based on their youth it should be a productive pairing.

As for the former dominant female 48/AE, she continues to rehab at Red Creek Wildlife Center. There was a minor set-back in her recovery. Prior to rescue, during hot conditions, 48/AE was located atop the Harrisburg Transportation Center. When rescued it was clear that, aside from the wing injury, the feet were burned. Since rescue and due to spending significant time on her feet, they had to be retreated before she could be placed in the flight cage. Now that the feet have healed, she will be moved to the flight cage to begin strengthening her injured wing. At this time, 48/AE appears to be holding her wing in the correct position. Hopefully, this is a sign of her recovery. Complete recovery is necessary for flying at extreme speeds. As rehabilitation continues, it is important to understand this will be a long process.



Biodiversity

Governor's Council Identifies Invasive Insects, Animals, and Pathogens of Concern for Pennsylvania

Educators are increasingly aware of the growing challenge that invasive species present to Pennsylvania's natural resources, economies, and quality of life. Now, the Pennsylvania Governor's Invasive Species Council has announced the first comprehensive list of invasive insects, animals, and pathogens of concern for Pennsylvania.

This list of invasive insects, animals, and pathogens adds to the list of invasive plants of concern the council compiled in 2021. [Visit the council website for the complete invasive Species of Concern for Pennsylvania list.](#)

The new list includes invasive fish, aquatic invertebrates (e.g., crayfish and mussels), aquatic pathogens, reptiles, amphibians, terrestrial insects and other invertebrates (e.g., worms, slugs, and snails), plant pathogens, birds, and mammals.

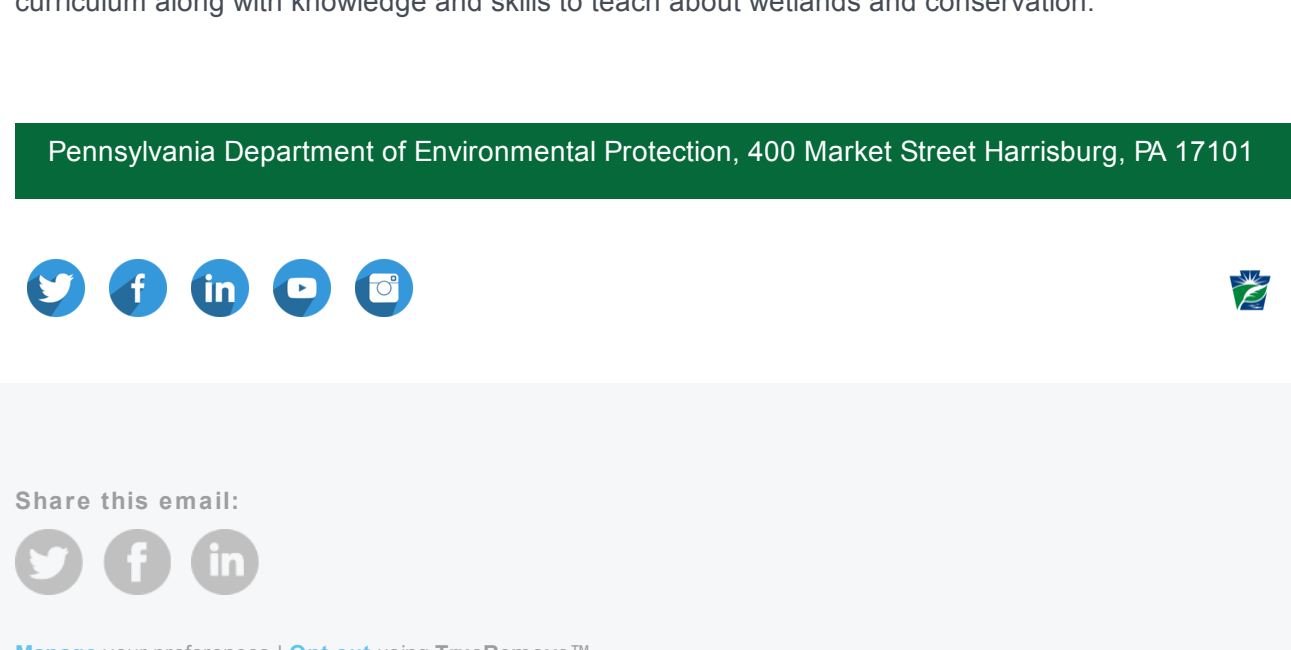
Each species is categorized by the degree of threat it presents: potential, emerging, or established.

The council has given impact scores to select species based on analysis of economic, ecological, and human health impacts. The council is working on developing impact scores for all species on the list. If a species is under federal or state regulation, this is also indicated.



Radon

Calling Student Artists



The DEP Radon Division is excited to announce the 2023 Student Radon Poster Contest. Students ages 9-14 years old as of November 30 are encouraged to combine science and art by creating an educational poster that shows the physical aspects of radon, the harmful effects of indoor radon gas, or the importance of testing for radon in the home.

The deadline to enter posters into the contest is November 1, 2022. For all the information needed, as well as the submission form, visit dep.pa.gov/radonschoolpostercontest.

DEP will submit Pennsylvania's first-place student poster to the 2023 National Radon Poster Contest, sponsored by the Conference of Radiation Protection Program Directors.

The U.S. Surgeon General lists radon exposure as the second leading cause of lung cancer. Radon is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that enters homes through cracks in the foundation, becoming part of the air indoors. About 40 percent of homes in Pennsylvania have elevated levels of radon, and conducting a simple radon test is the only way to detect the amount of radon present.

Please help us spread awareness by educating the children in your care this year!

Sustainability

Pennsylvania's Green Ribbon Schools Announced

The Departments of Environmental Protection, Education, and Conservation and Natural Resources recently [hosted Pennsylvania's Green Ribbon School awardees at an event at the state Capitol](#).

Because this was the first opportunity to recognize these schools since 2019, all awardees from 2019 to 2022 were announced.

These winners of the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Awardees are to be commended for their work to develop sustainable and healthy school environments. The following educational institutions were recognized:

2019

- Eden Hall Elementary Upper School, Pine-Richland School District, Gibsonia
- State College Friends School, State College
- Millersville University, Millersville

2020

- Gwynedd-Mercy Academy Elementary, Spring House

2021

- Commonwealth Charter Academy, Harrisburg
- Hance Elementary School, Pine-Richland School District, Gibsonia
- Lehigh University, Bethlehem

2022

- Spring-Ford School District, Royersford
- Shippensburg University, Shippensburg

To read about the actions each institution took, visit [Highlights from past U.S. Green Ribbon Awardees cycles](#).

To learn more about sustainable school programs in Pennsylvania, visit [Pathways to Green Schools](#).

Waste

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Programs

Litter Free School Zone – Schools in Pennsylvania can keep their school grounds litter free with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's [Litter Free School Zone Program](#). The program encourages hands-on activities to teach environmental stewardship and responsibility and can be combined with a lesson on how litter affects animals, people, water quality or economics. Responsibilities include planning two projects per school year, and can include litter cleanups and beautification events, like creating and caring for pollinator and rain gardens. Supplies of gloves and bags are available. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. [Apply here!](#)

Fall Pick Up Pennsylvania – September 1 through November 30 – To prevent litter from ending up in our waterways, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful invites Pennsylvania residents to participate in Pick Up Pennsylvania, in support of the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup. This annual event is an opportunity for students, clubs, organized groups, families and friends to improve Pennsylvania's neighborhoods and waterways by coordinating or participating in a litter cleanup. For more information, visit keepabeautiful.org. Registration is now open. [Register here!](#)

Litter Hawk Youth Award Program – Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is announcing the [Litter Hawk Youth Award Program](#), a recognition program for students in Kindergarten through 6th Grade to share how they keep Pennsylvania beautiful through art, words or video. Gift cards will be awarded to two entries in each grade level. All participants will be recognized with certificates. Winners will be announced in April in time for Earth Day celebrations. Program opens in October.

Awards

The Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators (PAEE) invites nominations for the 2023 PAEE Awards—a great way for environmental educators to recognize one another and celebrate the great work that is happening throughout the state. Nominate someone (or yourself) by December 2. Find information at [PAEE Awards](#).

Categories: Keystone Award, Outstanding Contribution to Environmental Education, Outstanding Environmental Educator, Outstanding Environmental Education Program, Government Partner Award, MWEE Partner of Excellence, and MWEE School of Excellence.

Awards will be presented at the 2023 PAEE Conference on March 13-14 at Camp Hebron in Halifax (near Harrisburg).

Professional Development

WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands Educator Workshop

Date: Friday, October 14, 9:00 am–2:30 pm

Location: In person, outdoors at Codorus State Park, 2600 Smith Station Road, Hanover, PA 17331

Fee: \$15, payable in advance; make checks payable to: Commonwealth of PA

Act 48: 3 hours

Registration: Contact Renae Weidner at 717-637-3454 or RWeidner@pa.gov

Wetlands are diverse habitats that are great tools for teaching about Pennsylvania's aquatic spaces. This workshop will introduce environmental education activities that are hands-on, easy to use and fun. Participants will gain resources through the "WOW! The Wonders of Wetlands" curriculum, which is designed for formal and informal educators teaching grades K-12. WOW helps define wetlands, their functions, and how people are active in them. Participants will receive the WOW curriculum along with knowledge and skills to teach about wetlands and conservation.

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 400 Market Street Harrisburg, PA 17101

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