



**March 2026 Report to the Citizens Advisory Council**  
(New or updated information is highlighted)

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**Regulatory Update (Detailed summaries included in respective program sections)**

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- Please refer to the [DEP Rolling Regulatory Agenda](#) for the full Regulatory Update.
- Proposed Rulemaking – Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Fees (#7-578): The Environmental Quality Board (EQB) adopted the proposed regulation on September 9, 2025. The proposed rulemaking was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on November 1, 2025, for a 30-day public comment period that closed on December 1, 2025.
- Proposed Rulemaking – Safe Drinking Water Revised Consumer Confidence Report Rule (#7-589): The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on September 9, 2025. The proposed rulemaking was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on December 13, 2025, for a 30-day public comment period that closed on January 12, 2026.
- Draft Final Rulemaking – Legal Authority for Delegation of Federal Plans in 40 CFR Part 62 (#7-584): The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on April 8, 2025. The proposed regulation was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on June 21, 2025, for a 69-day public comment period that closed on August 29, 2025. Three public hearings were held on July 22, 24, and 29, 2025. The draft final regulation was discussed with the Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee on February 5, 2026, and the Small Business Compliance Advisory Committee on February 12, 2026.
- Draft Final Rulemaking – Water Quality Standards; Class A Stream Redesignations (#7-583): The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on September 10, 2024. The proposed regulation was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on February 1, 2025, for a 45-day public comment period that closed on March 18, 2025. A virtual public hearing was held on March 13, 2025. The draft final regulation was discussed with the AAB on August 28, 2025.
- Draft Final Rulemaking – Administration of the Land Recycling Program – Chromium (VI) (#7-588): The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on April 8, 2025. The proposed regulation was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on June 28, 2025, for a 30-day public comment period that closed on July 28, 2025. The draft final regulation was discussed with the CSSAB on October 22, 2025.
- Draft Final Rulemaking – Administration of the Land Recycling Program (#7-575): The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on March 12, 2024. The proposed regulation was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on July 13, 2024, for a 60-day public comment period that closed on September 11, 2024. Public hearings were held on August 19, August 27, and September 4, 2024. The draft final regulation was discussed with the CSSAB on April 23 and July 16, 2025.

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**Public Comment Periods**

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To see the latest DEP and EQB public comment periods, visit DEP's [eComment website](#).

**Proposals Open for Public Comment**

**Recently Closed Comment Periods**

- Federal Consistency under the Coastal Zone Management Act - Lake Erie Connector Transmission, LLC - Lake Erie Connector Project (Opened 1/17, closed 2/2)

- Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking: Water Quality Standards – Triennial Review (#11) (Opened 12/27/2025; closed 2/9/2026)
- Draft 2026 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (Opened 11/29/2025, closed 1/27/2026)

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## **Communications Monthly Press Releases**

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To see the latest DEP press releases, visit DEP's [news releases webpage](#).

### **Press Releases Issued**

January 21 - Shapiro Administration Invests More Than \$17 Million for Conservation Projects Across Pennsylvania

January 22 - DEP To Host Virtual Public Hearing on Permit Application for PGE Saluda Access Road and Staging Area Project in Lycoming County

January 27 - Getting Permitting Done: DEP Achieved Historic Success in Permitting in 2025, Eliminates Longstanding Backlog

January 30 - Shapiro Administration Fights Hunger in Pennsylvania, Invests \$4.1 Million in Food Recovery Infrastructure to Commonwealth Nonprofits

January 31 - DEP Declares Code Orange Air Quality Action Day for Fine Particulate Matter for Saturday, January 31, 2026, in the Liberty-Clairton Area of Allegheny County

February 2 - DEP Declares Code Orange Air Quality Action Day for Fine Particulate Matter for Monday February 2, 2026, in the Liberty-Clairton Area of Allegheny County

February 9 - DEP Declares Code Orange Air Quality Action Day for Fine Particulate Matter for Tuesday February 10, 2026, in the Liberty-Clairton Area of Allegheny County and the Susquehanna Valley

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## **Active and Abandoned Mine Operations**

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### **Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Funding**

The second grant round for 2025 AML/AMD Grant Program opened on September 2 and closed on October 24, 2025 at 11:59pm. A total of 24 applications were submitted in which 2 withdrew resulting in 22 applications that are currently under review. Guidance of the 2026 AML/AMD Grant Program is now available on the DEP website at <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/programs-and-services/mining/abandoned-mine-reclamation/aml> . There are 2 application rounds in 2026. Round 1 is from April 6 through May 29 of 2026 and Round 2 is from October 5 through November 30 of 2026.

### **Noncoal Civil Penalties Technical Guidance**

Bureau of Mining Programs has presented a draft revision of the Noncoal Civil Penalties Assessment Technical Guidance Document (562-4180-101) to the Aggregate Advisory Board. The Board's Regulatory, Legislative and Technical committee held a meeting on October 7, 2025. A second committee meeting was held December 9, 2025, to further discuss questions and comments from the RLT committee. A final draft was shared with the full Board at the February 18, 2026 meeting. The document is now on track to be published for public comment.

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## **Air Quality**

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### **Regulatory State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions**

Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT III)

The rulemaking was published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on November 12, 2022. The Federally mandated deadline for compliance by regulated facilities was January 1, 2023. A SIP revision was submitted to EPA on

January 13, 2023, for their review and action. However, 25 Pa. Code § 129.115(c) (relating to written notification, compliance demonstration and recordkeeping and reporting requirements), was not included in the SIP revision due to administrative and mathematical errors in the mass-equivalent basis factors. To correct these errors and a cross-reference error, the Department drafted revised language which it presented to the Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee (AQTAC), the CAC and the EQB on April 4, May 14 and November 12, 2024, respectively. The proposed rulemaking was published for public comment on January 25, 2025. Public hearings were held, and no comments were received from the public or IRRC. DEP presented the final-form rulemaking to AQTAC and CAC on May 8 and May 13, 2025, respectively. On September 9, 2025, DEP presented this rulemaking to the EQB who adopted it unanimously. IRRC approved the final regulation on October 16, 2025. The final rulemaking was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on December 6, 2025.

Air Quality regional staff have reviewed 65 of 71 RACT II equals RACT III determinations and 42 of 81 case-by-case RACT determinations received from major sources of NO<sub>x</sub> and VOC. A public comment period and hearing is being offered for each of these permitting actions. DEP submitted 57 RACT II equals RACT III determinations to EPA on October 30, 2024, and 18 RACT III case-by-case determinations to EPA on January 15, 2025. On October 28, 2025, DEP submitted an additional 20 case-by-case RACT determinations to EPA. On December 23, 2025, DEP sent a letter to EPA committing to complete all determinations within one year of EPA published approval of DEP's RACT III regulation.

### **State Plans and Delegation of Federal Plans**

The Department is proposing to amend 25 Pa. Code Chapter 122 to provide the express legal authority for the Department to request delegation of authority from the EPA to implement and enforce the requirements of an applicable Federal Plan established by the EPA in 40 CFR Part 62. The Department presented the draft proposed regulation to AQTAC, SBCAC and the CAC on April 4, April 17 and May 14, 2024, respectively. The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on April 8, 2025. The notice of the public comment period was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on June 21, 2025, and closed on August 29, 2025. Twenty-one commentators provided comment during the comment period. IRRC provided comments on September 29, 2025. The draft final-form regulation was presented to AQTAC and SBCAC on February 5 and 12, respectively and will be presented to the CAC and EQB in the coming months.

### **Chapter 121/127 Administrative Amendments**

This proposed rulemaking would update administrative provisions in the Department's air pollution control regulations. The regulations include definitions for terms that apply to the air resources management program (Chapter 121) and the permitting and operating plan requirements for air pollution sources in Pennsylvania (Chapter 127). The draft proposed regulation was presented to AQTAC and SBCAC on November 6 and 20, 2025, respectively. Most significantly, an amendment to 25 Pa. Code § 127.505 is needed to correct the deadline for submitting an initial application for a Title V operating permit application to be within 12 months of beginning operation, aligning to the CAA. Additionally, the proposed regulation will incorporate provisions of the Fiscal Code (Section 1805 of Article XVIII, Subarticle C) amended on November 12, 2025, specific to air quality general permits. DEP will be revising the draft proposed regulation to address the statutory provision on general permits and present the revised draft to the advisory committees in the second quarter of 2026.

### **Non-Regulatory SIP Revisions**

#### **2010 Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) Redesignation**

On February 22, 2023, the EPA Region III Administrator sent Governor Shapiro a "120-Day Letter" proposing to reclassify several townships in Westmoreland County and Cambria County from "attainment" to "nonattainment" for the 2010 sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) NAAQS. The Department reviewed the technical support document accompanying the "120-Day Letter" and responded with comments on June 22, 2023.

On February 7, 2024, EPA proposed creating a new 2010 SO<sub>2</sub> NAAQS non-attainment area, specifically Lower

Yoder Township (Cambria County); St Clair Township, Seward Borough (Westmoreland County), and New Florence Borough (Westmoreland County). EPA published a 45-day public comment period on February 12, 2024. On December 17, 2024, EPA published reclassification of the area from “attainment” to “nonattainment” effective January 16, 2025. Within 18 months of the effective date, DEP is required to submit a state implementation plan (SIP) to EPA demonstrating how the 2010 SO<sub>2</sub> NAAQS will be attained in these partial counties. On February 17, 2025, Seward Generation filed a Petition for Administrative Reconsideration with EPA. DEP is moving forward with revising the SIP and the companies are working with EPA to submit a modeled clean data determination.

### **2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards**

On July 30, 2024, EPA approved Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and New Jersey’s request to voluntarily reclassify the multistate Philadelphia Area from moderate to serious for the 2015 ozone standard. The reclassification avoids an EPA finding of failure to attain the 2015 ozone standard, disapproval of DEP’s September 2023 attainment demonstration and a sanction clock. The serious nonattainment area SIP revision was due to EPA by January 1, 2026, with a new attainment date of August 3, 2027. DEP anticipates submitting the SIP revision to EPA in the second quarter of 2026.

On January 2, 2026, EPA proposed to approve Maryland’s and Delaware’s request to revise the existing Philadelphia nonattainment area boundary into three distinct nonattainment areas that together cover the identical geographic area of the existing area - the Cecil County, MD nonattainment area, the New Castle County, DE nonattainment area, and the revised Philadelphia-Atlantic City, PA-NJ nonattainment area.

### **Warren SO<sub>2</sub> Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan**

On May 10, 2025, DEP opened the public comment period for the Warren Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan for the 2010 1-hour primary SO<sub>2</sub> NAAQS. The public comment period closed on June 20, 2025. A public hearing to receive comments was held on June 17, 2025, at the Warren Public Library. The SIP was submitted to EPA on September 19, 2025.

### **Harrisburg/York PM 2.5 Air Quality Maintenance Plan**

On September 28, 2024, DEP opened the public comment period for the Harrisburg/York Air Quality Maintenance Plan for the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. The Department provided the opportunity for a public hearing on October 30, 2024, at Rachel Carson State Office Building. The public comment period ended on November 1, 2024. After preparing a Comment and Response document, DEP submitted the SIP revision to EPA on February 7, 2025.

### **PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS**

On February 7, 2024, EPA lowered the annual National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS) from 12.0 to 9.0 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m<sup>3</sup>). EPA identified seven Pennsylvania counties in non-attainment based on 2020-2022 air quality monitoring data. On December 21, 2024, DEP published four proposed non-attainment areas: Allegheny County; Cumberland, Dauphin and York Counties; Lancaster County; and Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties. Public hearings were held on January 21 and 23 and the public comment period was extended to January 28, 2025. DEP submitted its PM<sub>2.5</sub> non-attainment recommendations to EPA on April 24, 2025.

### **2008 Ozone NAAQS VOC RACT**

On August 13, 2018, DEP submitted to EPA two SIP revisions to satisfy certain RACT requirements for sources of VOC emissions required for the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS. On December 14, 2020, EPA published full approval of the SIP submittals. The approval was challenged in the Third Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals and on September 3, 2021, the court granted EPA’s request for remand without vacatur of the Agency’s final full approval. After reconsideration, EPA proposed on May 17, 2024, to partially approve and

partially disapprove the August 13, 2018, SIP submittals. EPA proposed disapproval of the SIP submittals related to Control Technique Guidelines (CTGs) and control of VOC emissions from industrial cleaning solvents. DEP submitted comments on June 13, 2024. On August 16, 2024, EPA published its partial approval/disapproval with an effective date of September 16, 2024, starting an 18-month sanctions clock. The DEP published a proposed SIP Revision on September 27, 2025, for public comment. The public comment period closed on October 31, 2025. DEP submitted the RACT Certification SIP to EPA on January 21, 2026.

### **O&G Methane State Plan (OOOoc)**

BAQ presented the Department's proposal to incorporate the federal Emissions Guidelines for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions from Existing Crude Oil & Natural Gas Facilities (40 CFR Part 60 Subpart OOOoc) into a State Plan to AQTAC, SBCAC, MSC, CAC/EJAB and CDAC on October 10, October 23, October 29, November 12 and December 12, respectively. The Department presented its proposal a second time to AQTAC and SBCAC on February 6 and 26, 2025, respectively. The Department hosted a public webinar concerning the OOOoc State Plan on April 1, 2025. The proposed OOOoc State Plan was published for public comment in the May 31, 2025, issue of the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*. The Department held six in-person and two virtual hearings. The comment period closed on July 30, 2025. The Department must submit its State Plan to EPA no later than January 22, 2027.

### **Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee**

The next scheduled meeting is May 14, 2026.

### **Small Business Compliance Advisory Committee**

The next scheduled meeting is May 21, 2026.

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## **Energy Programs Office**

### **Transportation**

#### **Alternative Fuel Incentive Grant (AFIG)**

The AFIG Program offers grant funding for clean, alternative fuel projects in Pennsylvania and investment in Pennsylvania's energy sector. Approximately \$5 million in grants is available for school districts, municipal authorities, political subdivisions, nonprofit entities, corporations, limited liability companies or partnerships incorporated or registered in the commonwealth.

The 2026 AFIG program opened on Monday, February 2. The program is offering approximately \$5 million in funding for the 2026 program year. The first application acceptance period will close at noon on Wednesday, April 1, 2026, and the second will close at noon on Wednesday, October 7, 2026. The program expects to announce the 2025 AFIG program awards in early March, 2026.

The Alternative Fuel Vehicle Rebate program was renewed beginning July 1, 2025, with minor updates to program income eligibility limits. The program continues to award Pennsylvania residents, with 237 rebates issued between July 1 and February 9, 2026, totaling awards of \$772,500. One hundred of the 237 rebates were claimed by qualifying low-income residents. The program will continue until approximately another 100 rebates have been awarded.

### **Energy Security**

#### **Monthly Fuels Sector Calls**

EPO and DEP's Director of Emergency Response have coordinated monthly Fuels Sector Calls with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to provide situational awareness regarding supply concerns related to heating and transportation fuels. Various State Agencies, including PUC, PennDOT, Agriculture, Revenue, and State Police, attend the meeting as well as PA private Fuel Sector stakeholders such

as the state propane and petroleum associations, retailers and refineries. The group discussion is to identify any issues that could be problematic. The next meeting is scheduled for March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

### **Energy Efficiency and Security Training**

EPO will facilitate a course at the Pennsylvania Rural Water Association Conference on March 25, 2026. “Energy Planning for Your Plant” will communicate the importance of Energy Efficiency and demonstrate how to use energy saving tools. EPO will also assist operators on creating an energy management plan for wastewater and drinking water plants.

### **Energy Security Cohort**

EPO is participating in the Northeast Regional Operational Coordination Collaborative (NEROCC). The NEROCC Cohort brings state energy offices and other interested government entities together to discuss energy related issues. The group was activated during winter storm FERN and shared knowledge on energy infrastructure issues caused by the storm. EPO will continue to work within the group to gather regional knowledge on energy infrastructure.

### **Climate Change & Sustainability**

#### **Local Climate Action Program (last appeared in Jan 2026 report)**

State and local governments leading by example on climate action is a key component of mitigating climate change in Pennsylvania and one of the strategies recommended in the Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan (PCAP). The Local Climate Action Program (LCAP) provides free technical and personnel assistance to local governments that want to create their own greenhouse gas inventories and climate action plans with the goals of reducing emissions and combatting climate change. This includes engaging the community in the planning process, via in-person workshops, virtual meetings, and online surveys. The technical and personnel assistance is provided by EPO staff and university partners, specifically professors and students from Penn State University, Sustainability Institute.

The local government cohort for the 25-26 program year has completed their greenhouse gas inventories and begun work on the local climate action plans or other reports for the spring semester. Penn State held an information session and recruitment webinar to enroll local governments for the 2026-2027 year on February 4<sup>th</sup> as well.

### **Shared Energy Manager**

The Shared Energy Manager (SEM) program was designed to assist local governments in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with on-the-ground, practical support from a professional energy manager contracted by the DEP Energy Programs Office to conduct energy assessments, renewable energy studies, and other services to implement elements of their climate action plans. A contract has been awarded to Wilson Engineering Services (WES), which will serve as the Shared Energy Manager for the DEP Energy Programs Office’s local government participants. The programs will run from 2024-2027, with approximately 20 participants per cohort for a total of 80 participants over 4 years.

Wilson Engineering completed all but one of the the program kick-off calls for the 2026 cohort, and they have moved to energy analysis for the participating local governments. Site visits were completed on the Public Works building for the City of Meadville, and the combined heat and power facility at Wilson Park for the

Philadelphia Housing Authority in February as well.

### **Prepare PA (PA Climate Network)**

The PA Climate Change Mitigation and Resiliency Network was established through a multi-agency MOU. The network has been formed to continue to deliver climate training to professionals within state government as well as other sectors and industries (academia, private, non-profit). PA Climate Resilience and Mitigation Network training modules have been completed and they are currently available to view on the PA Department of General Services GreenGov website at: [Pennsylvania Climate Change Mitigation and Resilience Network \(pa.gov\)](https://www.pa.gov/prepare-pa). The network also seeks to create a safe platform to address the information sharing and efforts necessary to seriously address the impacts of climate change on our business units and in our communities.

Pennsylvania State University has announced their slate of initial Prepare PA networking events for the spring of 2026 leading up to the official kick-off of the network at the Climate Solutions Symposium in State College on May 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> 2026. The schedule is as follows:

March 18<sup>th</sup>: Prepare PA North Central Regional Network Meeting, University Park Campus, State College

March 25<sup>th</sup>: Prepare PA South Central Regional Network Meeting Penn State Harrisburg Campus

April 1<sup>st</sup>: Prepare PA Southwest Regional Network Meeting, Franco Harris Center, Pittsburgh

April 8<sup>th</sup>: Prepare PA Northeast Regional Network Meeting, Penn State Fullers Overlook, Scranton

Registration and additional information can be found here: [Prepare PA: Upcoming & Network Events](#)

### **Energy Efficiency**

**Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)-Home Energy Rebates:** EPO is developing two programs within the Inflation Reduction Act Home Energy Rebates, Section 50121 Home Efficiency Rebate Program (HER) and Section 50122 Home Electrification Rebates Program (HEAR). The HEAR Program will provide point-of-sale consumer discounts to enable households across America to electrify their homes. These point-of-sale rebates are immediate, off-the-top discount when making qualifying electrification purchases. HER will encourage performance-based residential energy efficiency retrofits for affordable multi-family housing. These programs offer rebates to households earning 150% AMI or less (with higher rebates for households earning less than 80% AMI) -- this will ensure that Pennsylvanians with the highest energy burdens can afford decarbonization upgrades. In late summer 2024, EPO began a DOE cohort to assist in the development of the HEAR and HER applications. Throughout October 2024, five public engagement sessions were held in Shamokin, Pottstown, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and online. In January 2025, EPO rebranded these programs as the Penn Energy Savers Program and launched [www.pennenergysavers.com](http://www.pennenergysavers.com) to provide Pennsylvania residents with information about the program (Frequently Asked Questions, Income Eligibility by household size and county, etc.).

In August 2024, EPO selected Resource Innovations (RI) for their HEAR designer and implementer. The Program Application was submitted to DOE in mid-October and the Blueprint Implementation Plan in mid-November. DOE fully awarded EPO funding for the HEAR program on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025. In April 2025, EPO focused on assessing how evolving federal guidance could impact the program and continued efforts to establish a Qualified Contractor Network. Currently, EPO is still waiting on permission to launch from U.S. Department of Energy. On January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026, EPO submitted the required Market Transformation Plans to DOE.

The HER Program Application was submitted to DOE in mid-October, 2024. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025, DOE “Partially and Conditionally” awarded EPO funding for the HER program. EPO developed and released an RFP to select a HER program implementer – the bidding window closed on August 20<sup>th</sup>. DEP completed the internal review and selection process and is working to finalize a contract with the selected firm. On December 9<sup>th</sup> 2025, DEP EPO selected EGIS Consulting for their HER designer and implementer. On January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026, EPO

received approval from the DOE for EGIS to be a subcontractor. EPO held a two-day kickoff meeting with EGIS and their subcontractor Resource Innovations on January 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> to meet with stakeholders (PHFA and DCED), discuss program goals, and create a work schedule. Throughout February, EPO worked to draft its Blueprint Implementation Plans to submit to the DOE.

**Industrial Energy Assessment Program:** EPO is working with Cadmus to deliver a program which provides reduced cost energy audits for up to 200 small to mid-sized manufacturers, with 100 of those assessments being completed by June 30, 2026. The program officially launched February 11, 2025. Cadmus' partners include Energy Infrastructure Partners LLC, the Pennsylvania State University's College of Engineering, and InClima. The application may be accessed at [www.industrialenergyauditspa.com](http://www.industrialenergyauditspa.com). Eighty-five applications have been received, with a few facilities being deemed ineligible, for not meeting the definition of manufacturing/industrial. Cadmus and partners have completed fifty on-site audits. The cost share is being waived for facilities at this time, given feedback received from prospective facilities and their concerns about economic uncertainties.

**Training for Residential Energy Contractors (TREC) Formula Grant:** On November 21, 2024, PA was awarded \$4,960,910 for its TREC program. On December 11, 2024, DOE and EPO held a kickoff call for the formula TREC program, during which reporting requirements, invoice processing, award monitoring, as well as special terms and conditions, were explained. PA TREC will consist of a heat pump training program for HVAC contractors in PA in order to prepare them for successfully delivering Home Energy Rebates. On March 6, 2025, EPO issued an RFP for a contractor to lead and manage the PA TREC program. Bids were due back by April 4, 2025. On August 1, 2025, EPO awarded the contract to Home Performance Coalition to lead and manage the PA TREC program – a kickoff meeting occurred on August 21, 2025. On September 15, 2025, EPO conducted a first call with its newly assembled Workforce Advisory Group (made up of training providers, community-based organizations, contractors, and more) to introduce the project team and gather input on draft minimum training requirements. Workforce Advisory Group meetings continue as the implementation team works to establish minimum training requirements, training partnerships, and design meaningful wraparound services, so that new and existing workers are successfully educated on proper heat pump installation techniques. Throughout the winter of 2025-2026, EPO worked alongside HPC to develop a program guidance manual for workers, employers, and training providers.

**Building Codes for Efficiency and Resilience** In 2023 US DOE notified EPO that the application for “Maximizing Workforce for Energy Efficient Buildings and Building Construction in Pennsylvania” was selected for \$3 million in funding. The project is designed to provide professional development, lesson plans and curriculum and energy code compliance tools such as blower door tests to instructors at career and technical high schools across the state, sponsor certification tests for students in appropriate programs over the next three years. In addition, the project will fund program mapping for career and technical high schools and colleges to assist students in identifying clean energy career pathways that may lead to building code careers and the project will conduct a business case analysis for a building code official associate degree program.

Pilot school training for Building Science Principles (BPS) was conducted in late 2024. Two RFPs for the next phases were released in early 2025, but due to delays in response from DOE and the looming end of the school year the purchase orders were placed on hold. A no-cost extension request was submitted to DOE for the project (the first budget phase ended June 30, 2025); no response has been received. This project as a result remains at a standstill.

**Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid - ~\$40 M over 5 years from DOE**  
EPO has applied for and received funding for years 1-3 from the US DOE and is implementing the Pennsylvania Grid Resilience Grant (PA GRG). Round 1 awards of the PA GRG consisted of funding years 1 & 2 and were announced in 2024. 6 projects totaling 13M in grant awards are active with projects beginning

construction in spring of 2025. The awardee makeup consists of 5 Rural Electric Cooperatives, and 1 Municipally Owned Utility. Overall, 37,000 people are expected to see a benefit across 17 counties in Pennsylvania.

Round 2 of the grant, consisting of funding year 3, opened for solicitations in June of 2025 with ~\$10M in funds available for successful projects who apply. During the concept paper period, EPO received 16 concept papers from 5 municipally owned electric companies, 6 Electric Cooperatives, 2 Investor-owned Electric Companies, 1 University, and 2 industry stakeholders. The full application period ended on November 12, 2025. Grant awards are expected in early 2026 and EPO awaits guidance from DOE to apply for year 4 funding.

### **Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) - Planning**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Energy Programs Office (EPO) is finalizing a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) for delivery to EPA before the December 1, 2025, deadline. The CCAP builds on Pennsylvania's 2024 Climate Action Plan and includes additional co-benefits analysis, a workforce planning analysis, assessment of authorities to implement the CCAP, and intersections with funding opportunities. The CCAP also incorporates feedback received during public outreach workshops.

The CPRG team is gearing up for community outreach this Spring and Summer, with engagement planned at 20 locations across Pennsylvania. These efforts will build on the Commonwealth's community engagement plan and focus on sharing information about our comprehensive climate action plan and gathering input from the community. In addition, bids closed on 1/16/2026 on the RFQ to select a consultant for the CPRG Status Report, and consultant selection is forthcoming.

Inquiries about Pennsylvania's Climate Action Planning and outreach can be submitted to [ra-epclimate@pa.gov](mailto:ra-epclimate@pa.gov).

### **Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) - Implementation**

DEP has received 66 completed applications for medium- and large-scale decarbonization projects at industrial facilities covering all 6 DEP subregions; submitted applications are currently undergoing final executive selection committee review. DEP partner PennTAP has received 54 completed applications through Round 2 for small-scale decarbonization projects at industrial facilities; submitted applications are currently undergoing administrative and technical review. Round 3 opened January 15 and will close on April 15. More information can be found on DEP's [RISE PA webpage](#).

RISE PA is funded by a \$396M award from EPA under the CPRG Implementation Grants. The goal of RISE PA is to offer grants for small-, medium-, and large-scale decarbonization projects to reduce greenhouse gas and co-pollutant emissions at industrial facilities. Eligible project types include the following: energy efficiency; electrification; process emissions reduction technologies; fuel-switching; on-site renewable energy generation; carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS), and fugitive emissions reductions technologies.

Inquiries about RISE PA can be submitted to [RA-EP-CPRG@pa.gov](mailto:RA-EP-CPRG@pa.gov)

**Energy Auditor Training Grant (EAT):** PA has been awarded a \$1,786,391 grant under DOE's Energy Auditor Training (EAT) grant to provide residential energy auditor training. Training will be provided to 150 individuals. Trainees will be able to sit for the Building Performance Institute Home Energy Professional Energy Auditor (HEP EA) certification exam. EPO submitted required documentation to DOE in January and are waiting for DOE to commence contract negotiations. The original projected contract issuance timeframe was July 2025.

### **Energy Outreach and Community Engagement**

**Clean Energy Opportunity Spotlight Series:** The Clean Energy Opportunity Spotlight relaunched for the 2026 season on Wednesday, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>. The first session focused on C-PACE with guest presenters from the Sustainable Energy Fund and the Philadelphia Energy Authority. The March 25<sup>th</sup> session will cover Pennsylvania’s Climate Action Plan and opportunities for future engagement, with additional topics to be announced in the coming months.

**Community Assistance Hub:** DEP has executed a contract with Strategic Consulting Partners LLC (SCP) to design and implement a first-of-its-kind program that aims to provide technical assistance to community-based organizations and non-profits groups serving Pennsylvanians in the areas of energy affordability, efficiency, and resilience. Communities across Pennsylvania face significant challenges to their residents’ health and wellbeing. To address these needs, EPO and SCP will develop and pilot a new Community Assistance Hub that will serve communities across the commonwealth. This pilot program, developed through a collaborative input process with stakeholders will offer hands-on technical assistance to support communities in conceptualizing, funding and implementing energy affordability and community resilience projects on their own terms. This program will help Pennsylvania community institutions provide additional programs and services that are responsive to demonstrated needs, challenges, and interests of the community. The types of projects supported will vary. While community resilience projects may take different forms given a community’s need, this pilot will focus on two key challenges in many communities: first, energy affordability and reliability, and second, community preparedness and resilience. EPO anticipates soliciting interest forms from eligible organizations in the second quarter of 2026. At the conclusion of the pilot program in the second quarter of 2027, the Community Assistance Hub will be evaluated to consider a potential expansion.

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## **Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority**

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**Keystone Energy Efficiency Program (KEEP):** The Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority (PEDA)<sup>1</sup> launched the KEEP Home Energy Loan on April 8, 2024. The program is a \$10 million residential revolving loan fund for energy efficiency updates administered by the National Energy Improvement Fund LLC (NEIF). Loans can range from \$2,500 - \$25,000, depending on credit score and must be performed by NEIF-approved contractors. Qualifying improvements must be Energy Star certified. Since opening in Spring 2024, the program has funded approximately \$2.6 million to borrowers for 247 upgrades to heating, cooling, window improvement, and insulation. The approval rate of loans continues to be around 70% with an average loan of \$10,540. NEIF has 322 pre-approved contractors offering the program for Pennsylvania residents – 40% more than last year. Beginning July 1, 2025, applicants were offered a reduced interest rate for a limited period of time, which contributed to a 28% year over year increase in loan application submissions.

### **Municipal Opportunities for Retrofits and Energy Efficiency (MORE) Program:**

In 2025, the MORE Grant awarded \$1.9 million to 42 municipalities and authorities on a first-come, first-served grant opportunity to reduce the financial barriers for local governments to secure affordable financing and accomplish large energy efficiency upgrades. MORE Grant applicants applied for up to \$50,000 to be used toward the cost of level 2 commercial energy audits, Energy Conservation Measure (ECM) project design &

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<sup>1</sup> The Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority is an independent public financing authority that was created by the Act of December 14, 1982 (P.L. 1213, No. 280), as amended, *codified at* 71 P.S. § 720.1 *et seq.* DEP, through its Energy Programs Office, provides administrative and staff support to PEDA pursuant to 71 P.S. § 720.4(a), as implemented by Executive Order 2004-5 (Apr. 8, 2004). In addition, the Secretary of DEP chairs the board of directors that governs PEDA.

MORE Loan application development, and interest rate buydown on a MORE Loan. As of February 11, 2026, the grant has paid \$560,568.50 to recipients.

The MORE Loan allows local governments to pay for energy efficiency upgrades, retrofits, and renewable energy installations (when paired with energy efficiency). MORE Loans require a level 2 commercial energy audit and energy efficiency project design, which must address ECMs. With an interest rate buydown, borrowers could potentially have an interest rate as low as 0%. As of February 2026, there are five loan applications in process.

**Solar for All:** The Solar for All program was designed to provide federal grants to states, Tribal governments, municipalities, and non-profit organizations to expand the number of low-income and disadvantaged communities that are primed for residential solar investment (\$7 billion nationally). The Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority was among the 60 awardees announced by the EPA on April 22, 2024, receiving \$156,120,000 to develop a low-income residential solar program across Pennsylvania. PEDDA submitted its Solar for All application as the lead member of a coalition that also included the Philadelphia Green Capital Corp. (PGCC), the non-profit green bank affiliate of the Philadelphia Energy Authority. The program, when implemented, aims to take the experience and success of PGCC's Solarize Philly program and expand it across the state. The Pennsylvania Solar for All program was intended to enable solar installations for 12,000 homeowners over a five-year program period. The initial phase of the Pennsylvania Solar for All program would focus on single-family homes. To enable installations in these areas, PEDDA envisioned launching a subsidized solar lease product across the state so homeowners could have access to an affordable monthly payment without upfront installation costs. The program would also support community solar installations if enabling legislation is passed at the state level. Given changes to the solar market from the expiration of the residential investment tax credit (ITC), PEDDA would need to revisit the program design if future funds become available.

In June 2025, EPA formally approved PEDDA's workplan and quality assurance project plan, which were important milestones for moving the program towards implementation. PGCC also released requests for proposals for solar financiers and installers to bring the needed pieces together to launch the program in southeastern Pennsylvania. PEDDA was also working on a request for proposals for a program administrator before receiving EPA's letter discussed below.

PEDDA, along with all Solar for All awardees across the country, received a letter from EPA on August 7, 2025, that purportedly terminated the Solar for All program and all grants that had been awarded and obligated by the Biden administration. EPA also ordered all awardees to stop working on their individual programs. In response, PEDDA joined a multi-state coalition of awardees to challenge the purported termination in various administrative and judicial forums. Those challenges are still pending as of the date of this report. PEDDA has complied with EPA's stop-work order but continues to submit required reports to EPA under its grant agreement. PEDDA is prepared to restart implementation and achieve project goals consistent with the law and the approved workplan if the purported termination is reversed and funding becomes accessible.

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## **Environmental Justice**

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### Environmental Justice Executive Order

Former Governor Wolf signed an Environmental Justice Executive Order 2021-07 in October 2021 making permanent the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ), Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) and creating the Environmental Justice Interagency Council (EJIC). Under the terms of the Executive Order, DEP is required to develop an agency EJ Strategic Plan, revise the EJ Policy regularly, and create EJ mapping tools.

### Environmental Justice Policy

On January 3, 2026, the DEP published as final the EJ Policy and PennEnviroScreen Methodology Document, built from years of public engagement on this topic. DEP’s OEJ took comments and concerns about the current Environmental Justice Public Participation Policy, which DEP had in place since 2004. The updated policy incorporates comments of a previous revision effort from 2017, an extensive outreach on the draft policy received in 2022, and an Interim-Final EJ Policy published in 2023. OEJ hosted 12 public meetings between September and November of 2023 and received over 740 public comments over the course of the process. The PennEnviroScreen tool is a publicly available, state of the art mapping tool, built on proven national models, that will allow DEP to more accurately identify communities facing environmental justice issues. The DEP also updated PennEnviroScreen.

Environmental Justice Interagency Council (EJIC)

EJIC will convene in March.

Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB)

EJAB convened on Friday, February 6, 2026. Rashida Lovely was elected as Vice Chair, after the retirement of Dr. Horace Strand. Maurice Samson was appointed as member to fill Dr. Strand’s vacancy. The next EJAB meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, 2026 at 10:00am in the Rachel Carson State Office Building.

Proactive Community Engagement

- During the month of January 2026, under its proactive community engagement initiative, OEJ met with 10 community-based organizations and held 22 meetings with individual stakeholders and community leaders. OEJ attended 11 partner events, while also delivering 4 presentations.

Permitting Update 2026

- \*Permits in EJ Areas count will be included next month, once DEP's record management system eFACTS is updated with the new EJ Areas from PennEnviroScreen.

Regional Office	Permits in EJ Areas *	Enhanced Public Participation (EPP) Trigger Permits
Southcentral	TBD	0
Southeast	TBD	0
Northeast	TBD	1
Northcentral	TBD	0
Southwest	TBD	0
Northwest	TBD	0
<b>Total</b>	TBD	<b>1</b>

Regional Office	Opt-In Requests	Opted-In (EPP)
Southcentral	0	0
Southeast	0	0
Northeast	0	0
Northcentral	0	0
Southwest	0	0
Northwest	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Oil and Gas Rulemakings

#### Proposed Environmental Protection Performance Standards for Conventional Oil and Gas Operators Rulemaking

In 2016, the General Assembly passed Act 52, which abrogated the ongoing rulemaking process regarding conventional oil and gas wells and established the Pennsylvania Grade Crude Oil Development Advisory Council (CDAC). Act 52 directed DEP to work with CDAC to “examine and make recommendations regarding existing technical regulations promulgated under 58 Pa.C.S. (relating to oil and gas) ... that impact the conventional oil and gas industry of this Commonwealth and explore the development of a regulatory scheme that provides for environmental oversight and enforcement specifically applicable to the conventional oil and gas industry.” From 2016 to the present, the Office of Oil and Gas Management (OOGM) has worked with CDAC to develop potential legislation and proposed regulations relating to conventional oil and gas wells.

Because discussions did not result in viable legislation, DEP proceeded with the development of a draft proposed conventional oil and gas rulemaking and advanced the regulatory concepts via two rulemaking packages during 2020. The first rulemaking relates primarily to the proper management of waste generated at conventional oil and gas well sites; the second rulemaking addresses other critical environmental protection performance standards at such sites.

On August 6, 2020, the OOGM first presented these two draft proposed rulemakings to CDAC. On September 17, 2020, DEP also informed the Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board (TAB) of discussions with CDAC regarding the draft proposed rulemakings and shared copies of both draft proposed rulemakings. During a series of meetings from December 3, 2020, through September 9, 2021, OOGM staff, CDAC, and TAB continued to discuss and review the draft proposed rulemakings. At its regularly scheduled meeting on December 16, 2021, OOGM staff shared the final version of the Environmental Protection Performance Standards for Conventional Oil and Gas Operators draft proposed Annex with CDAC members. This provided CDAC with an opportunity to adopt written comments to the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) in accordance with section 5 of Act 52 of 2016 (58 P.S. § 1205). The CDAC Regulatory Subcommittee prepared formal comments in February 2022 and March 2022 and presented them to the full council on April 21, 2022. CDAC voted to accept the comments and will submit them to DEP to accompany the rulemaking when it is submitted to the EQB.

The Department discussed the Chapter 78 proposed Waste Management rulemaking with CDAC at the first meeting of 2023 on February 16 that was conducted at Pennsylvania Western University, Clarion. The Chapter 78 proposed Waste Management rulemaking was also discussed at the CDAC meeting on Thursday, May 25, 2023. This rulemaking package will continue to be advanced by the Department through the CDAC and the remaining steps of the regulatory development process.

### Well Plugging

#### **Total Wells Plugged Since 2023:**

DEP IJJA Wells Plugged:	242
DEP Emergency Wells Plugged:	
EPA funded Wells Plugged under LOU:	46
DCNR Funded Wells Plugged:	25
USFS Cost Share Agreement Wells Plugged:	

### Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act

## IIJA Formula Phase 1 and Phase 2 Grant and Matching Grant Guidance

On July 17, 2025, the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) published revised guidance for both grant programs to eliminate non-statutory requirements and reduce burdens on State grant recipients. This includes:

- Removing the requirement that States conduct pre- and post- plugging methane measurement.
- Recognizing the discretion States have in identifying and plugging orphaned wells.
- Eliminating the Department’s unnecessary post-award, environmental review and approval process.

DOI also requested DEP to revise the Phase 1 and Phase 2 Formula Grant applications. The revised Phase 2 Formula Grant application was submitted to DOI on July 25.

These changes have improved the effectiveness of DEPs abandoned and orphan well plugging efforts. The DOI informed the Office of Oil and Gas Management that DEP has been removed from “high risk” status. DEP is no longer required to submit the excessive upfront documentation requirements for each project and wait for DOI to review and provide authorization to proceed. DEP is now developing plugging projects and moving directly to the contract bid process.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), UIC Class VI Well Grant Program Section 40306 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) appropriated \$50 million to assist states, territories, and tribes in developing or revising their Underground Injection Control (UIC) programs for primacy over the next five years. Class VI wells are used for carbon capture and underground storage and enable the capture of carbon dioxide. Pennsylvania submitted a Letter of Intent to participate in the grant program on March 15, 2023. The Grant Implementation Document issued in November 2023 by the EPA indicated that Pennsylvania’s share is \$1,930,000; however, the amount might increase to \$2,097,826 if other states choose to opt out. The technical and regulatory services section of the Bureau of Oil and Gas Planning and Program Management (BOGPPM) prepared a work plan and budget to apply for the UIC Class VI Wells Grant Program. This work plan lays out activities to be undertaken in support of primacy over the next five years. The application was submitted to the EPA on September 9, 2024. Processing of applications was paused following the announcement of the federal executive orders; however, EPA has resumed its review of Pennsylvania’s application. DEP is still awaiting final action by the EPA. The EPA stated that a decision should be forthcoming in the first quarter of 2026.

## IIJA Phase 1 Formula Grant

On August 19, 2024, the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) issued a Notice of Award for the Phase 1 Formula Grant to DEP. The grant provides the Department \$76,406,474 to plug, locate, and remediate orphan and abandoned wells. The period of performance is September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2029.

On July 17, 2025, DOI published revised guidance that removed prohibition of using IIJA funds for use within the carbon credit market, removed the requirement for methane quantification, and removed the environmental review and tribal consultation process. DEP Submitted a revised Work Plan for its Phase 1 Formula Grant Application and a revised Phase 2 Formula Grant Application on August 12 that conforms to the DOI’s revised grant guidance. DEP published a bid solicitation on February 12 announcing the availability of a “Multiple Professional

Services” Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFP seeks services for Engineering Services – Surface Permitting and Control, Well Site Investigation and Remediation Services, Methane Emissions Monitoring and Quantification Services, Well Location Services, Historical and Archaeological Services, Ecological Services. The RFP solicitation closed on April 14, 2025, and the Department received 70 separate bids from 31 offerors. The Department reviewed and scored all bids and is preparing final contract documents.

DEP published the “Well Plugging Services” RFP on May 12, and it closed on June 26. The Well Plugging Services RFP covers well locating, well-site access preparation, well depth sounding, wire-line logging

services, well decommissioning and plugging, and well-site reclamation. Under this RFP, the program will issue multiple contracts to professional well plugging and abandonment service providers on an “as-needed” basis as projects are developed throughout the Commonwealth. The program expects this approach to greatly accelerate the plugging of abandoned wells in the Commonwealth. The Department reviewed and scored all bids and is preparing final contract documents.

### **Upcoming Calendar of Events**

None to Report

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## **Waste Management**

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### **Act 101, Section 901 Household Battery Education Grant**

The Bureau of Waste Management (BWM) began accepting grant applications on January 24, 2025, for educational campaigns on the proper management of household batteries authorized under the Act 101, Section 901 grant program. Due to the emerging fire risk posed by improperly managed end-of-life consumer lithium batteries, BWM is developing a scope of work within the Section 901 grant program to target this material. The grant will provide a maximum award amount of \$75,000 to cover county educational costs for battery safe handling, collection, and awareness campaigns aimed at increasing the proper collection of lithium battery waste and decreasing the occurrence of lithium battery related fires in Pennsylvania’s critical waste and recycling infrastructure.

### **Act 101, Section 903 County Recycling Coordinator Grant**

BWM will began accepting grant applications on January 3, 2026, for the Act 101, Section 903 County Recycling Coordinator Grant. This grant provides a 50% reimbursement for County Recycling Coordinators’ salary and expenses. This grant is only available to Pennsylvania county governments. The deadline to apply is April 30, 2026, by 11:59 p.m. All applications must be submitted through the Commonwealth’s Electronic Single Application for Assistance (ESA) system.

### **Act 101, Section 904 Recycling Performance Grant**

The Act 101, Section 904, Recycling Performance Grant is available to all Pennsylvania local governments with recycling programs in calendar year 2024. The grant awards are based on the total tons recycled and the applicant's recycling rate. The calendar year 2024 grant solicitation opened on June 28, 2025. The deadline to apply was December 31, 2025, by 11:59 p.m. All applications must be submitted through the Commonwealth’s ESA system.

### **Act 101, Section 1102/Act 108, Section 304 Host Municipality Inspector Reimbursement Grant**

BWM began accepting applications for the 2025 Host Municipality Inspector (HMI) reimbursement grant on September 22, 2025; the application period closed on November 20, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. All applications were submitted through the Commonwealth’s ESA system. BWM received 13 applications; all have been awarded, providing a total of \$185,670 in funding. A host municipality is any municipality, other than the county, where a municipal waste landfill, resource recovery facility or commercial hazardous waste treatment, storage or disposal facility is located. Host municipalities that employ up to 2 certified HMIs are eligible to apply for up to 50% reimbursement of the costs incurred for the inspector(s) in the previous calendar year.

### **Food Recovery Infrastructure Grant – Open Solicitation**

Applications for the third solicitation of the Food Recovery Infrastructure Grant (FRIG) were due February 28, 2025. One-hundred twenty-three non-profit organizations submitted applications by the deadline, requesting a total of approximately \$4.5 million. Applications received by the deadline will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility. This funding is available to registered section 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations operating programs in Pennsylvania that partner with food retailers, wholesalers, agriculture organizations, farms and

cooperatives, grocery stores, etc. to recover safe and wholesome foods before they unnecessarily become a waste. The foods are then made available to the public through the nonprofit organization. The intent of this program is to reduce, to the greatest extent practicable, the amount of fresh and processed foodstuffs currently entering Pennsylvania's waste stream. Equipment eligible for funding for reimbursement under this program assists these nonprofit organizations with the storage, transportation, or preparation of the recovered safe and wholesome foods, such as refrigerators, freezers, refrigerant and non-refrigerant vehicles, cargo vans, pallet jacks, dollies, hand trucks, forklifts, stoves, ovens, microwaves, and shipping and installation costs for the eligible equipment. The maximum grant award the nonprofit organization can request or receive per application cannot exceed \$50,000. Special consideration will be given to those applicants identified in Environmental Justice Areas.

### **Update to Coproduct Regulations, 25 Pa. Code Chapter 287**

BWM is developing proposed regulatory amendments to existing regulatory language in the definition of "coproduct," as the term is defined in 25 Pa. Code § 287.1 (relating to Definitions) and 25 Pa. Code § 287.8 (relating to Coproduct Determinations). Among general restructuring of the definition and coproduct determination language, the amendments aim to provide clarity on the coproduct determination avenue, address the effectiveness of the coproduct regulations in considering all aspects of the use of a waste material through this mechanism, and close off identified pathways of concern (i.e., utilizing the coproduct avenue for waste materials sought for use as fill, and discharges to surface waters). BWM intends to provide a general overview of the proposed amendments at the March 19 SWAC meeting, with the intention of taking the proposed rulemaking to the Environmental Quality Board in the third quarter of 2026.

### **Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC)**

The next regular SWAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 19. More information is available on the [SWAC website](#).

### **Recycling Fund Advisory Committee (RFAC)**

The 2026 annual RFAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7. Additional information is available on the [SWAC website](#).

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## **Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields**

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### **Environmental Cleanup and Brownfields Rulemakings**

#### **Draft Final Rulemaking: Administration of Land Recycling Program - Chapter 250 Update**

DEP has prepared a draft final rulemaking to address Statewide health standard medium-specific concentrations (MSCs) including the soil lead values and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs). At the June 30, 2022, and August 11, 2022, Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board (CSSAB) meetings, the lead and PAH workgroups presented their conclusions and recommendations to DEP on the issues of lead and PAH toxicity. The PAH workgroup recommended that DEP use the 1993 relative potency factors from EPA that were referenced in the development of the benzo[a]pyrene Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) toxicological values. The lead workgroup recommended that DEP adopt 5 µg/dL as the target blood lead level for the calculation of the soil direct contact values and also recommended that DEP allow for the use of averaging attainment data for the demonstration of attainment of the lead direct contact statewide health standard. DEP presented the draft final regulation to the CSSAB on October 20, 2022, January 23, 2023, and May 31, 2023. The Environmental Quality Board (EQB) voted to adopt the proposal in the March 12, 2024, meeting. The draft final rulemaking was published in the July 13, 2024, edition of the PA Bulletin for a 60-day public comment period, which ended on September 11, 2024. In-person public hearings were held on August 19, 2024, at DEP's Southwest Regional Office and on August 27, 2024, at DEP's Southeast Regional Office. A virtual hearing was held on September 4, 2024, via Microsoft Teams. DEP received no public comments on the rulemaking from either the August 27 or September 4 public hearing. Most of the draft final regulations as well as the comments

received from the public comment period were discussed with the CSSAB on April 23, 2025. The remainder were presented at the July 16, 2025, meeting. DEP is preparing the final rulemaking for Environmental Quality Board consideration in the second quarter of 2026.

### **Draft Final Rulemaking: Administration of Land Recycling Program – Chromium (VI)**

DEP has prepared a proposed rulemaking to update the Statewide health standard MSCs for Cr (VI) by updating the Cr (VI) toxicity value and by correcting an error in the calculation of the Cr (VI) MSCs in the previous rulemaking (2021). This proposed rulemaking will update the toxicity values for Cr (VI) in Appendix A, Table 5B and the associated direct contact soil numeric values in Table 4A. The updated numeric values in Table 4A will represent the correction of the calculation error in the previous rulemaking and the use of updated toxicological information for Cr (VI) identified in EPA's IRIS. The proposed rule was presented to and reviewed by the CSSAB at the October 30, 2024, meeting. The CSSAB voted to concur with the Department's recommendation to move the proposed regulation forward to the Board for consideration. The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on April 8, 2025. The proposed rulemaking was published in the June 28, 2025, edition of the PA Bulletin for a 30-day public comment period, which ended on July 28, 2025. The draft final regulation, as well as the comments received from the public comment period, was discussed with the CSSAB on October 22, 2025. DEP is preparing the final rulemaking for Environmental Quality Board consideration in the second quarter of 2026.

### **Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board (CSSAB)**

The CSSAB held a meeting on October 22, 2025, where the agenda focused primarily on updating the Board on the Chapter 250 Chromium (VI) Rulemaking that was published as proposed on June 28, 2025. The public comment period closed on July 28, 2025 with five comments from the public and no comments from the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC). Other discussion topics from the October 22, 2025, CSSAB meeting included approval of the minutes from the CSSAB meeting on July 16, 2025, the Board's ideas for topics to be handled by a PFAS workgroup, and various Board and Program updates. The next CSSAB meeting will be held on March 31, 2026.

### **Storage Tank Advisory Committee (STAC)**

The Storage Tank Advisory Committee (STAC) met on December 3, 2025. Randy Martin, Chief, Division of Storage Tanks, reviewed the STAC membership list and provided recent updates to the STAC membership list. Benjamin Lorah, Executive Director, Underground Storage Tank Indemnification Fund, Pennsylvania Insurance Department, provided updates regarding the Underground Storage Tank Indemnification Fund (USTIF) and explained USTIF revenues, expenses, and past and current USTIF claims. Mr. Martin provided an update on storage tank online registration fee payments, the current population of regulated aboveground and underground storage tanks, various storage tank compliance rates as compared to national compliance rates, and numbers of registration forms, inspection reports, and modification reports that were recently received and processed. Mr. Martin also discussed the program's recent initiatives to increase the use of ePermitting by the regulated community and a new procedure for emailing electronic invoices for initial storage tank registrations so that storage tank registration fees can be paid online and the tank owner/operator can immediately receive their storage tank registration certificate and operating permits. Kalynn Conner, Environmental Group Manager, Underground Storage Tank Compliance and Enforcement Section, provided a demonstration of the program's updated mobile inspection application with the new Notice of Violation feature. Jeff Dzierzanowski, New Business Development Manager, Source North America Corporation, provided a presentation titled, "Industry Update on Electric Vehicles (EV's) and Where Fuels are Heading. Our Current Infrastructure, Supply Chain and Labor Pool Challenges," which covered a wide array of industry-related topics. (select "Public Participation," then "Advisory Committees," then "Cleanup and Brownfields Advisory Committees," then "Storage Tank Advisory Committee"). The STAC meeting scheduled for March 4, 2026, has been cancelled. The next STAC meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2026.

## Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED)

In July 2024, as part of the 2024-2025 budget, the Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED) Program was enacted into law as Article 18 of Act 54 of 2024. In November 2025, as part of the 2025-2026 budget, the SPEED Program was expanded to include Storage Tank Site-Specific Installation Permits. The Storage Tank Program is currently in the process of drafting and posting invitation for bid (IFB) documents to engage Qualified Professionals to provide expedited reviews of Storage Tank Site-Specific Installation Permit applications.

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## **Radiation Protection**

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### **Radiation Protection Advisory Committee**

The Radiation Protection Advisory Committee (RPAC) met on Wednesday, February 4, to review the proposed fee package for Radiological Health and Radon Certification Fees. The additional RPAC meeting was held to discuss the proposal and gather committee feedback.

The Bureau Director of Radiation Protection, Dwight Shearer, presented the revenue package and responded to questions and comments from committee members. Two comments were provided regarding needed clarification in the draft Annex. Bureau Director Shearer stated that these concerns would be addressed prior to presenting the proposed fee package to the Environmental Quality Board.

During the second public comment period an RPAC member raised a concern regarding inconsistent interpretation of a regulation among field inspectors related to X-ray inspections. The Program agreed with the concern and indicated that additional training and clarification would be provided to ensure consistent inspection practices. The next meeting of the RPAC is scheduled for April 1.

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## **Water Programs**

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### **Water Programs Rulemakings**

#### **Safe Drinking Water Revised Consumer Confidence Report Rule (#7-589)**

The proposed rulemaking amends DEP's Safe Drinking Water regulations at 25 Pa. Code Chapter 109 to update requirements for Consumer Confidence Reports (CCRs) as required by the revised CCR National Primary Drinking Water Regulation (NPDWR). Other amendments in the proposed rulemaking are needed to: incorporate public notification (PN) and CCR provisions when the lead action level is exceeded (as specified in the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions NPDWR); clarify and ensure monitoring requirements are consistent for bulk water haulers and for entry points of systems that purchase water; and require Tier 3 PN for failure to report results of total coliform and *E. coli* monitoring to be consistent with the Revised Total Coliform Rule NPDWR.

The information in CCRs is intended to raise awareness for customers of where their water comes from, understand the process by which safe drinking water is delivered to their homes, and educate them about the importance of preventative measures that ensure a safe drinking water supply. The proposed rulemaking will: improve the readability, clarity, and understandability of CCRs; improve the accuracy of the information presented; improve risk communication; incorporate electronic delivery options; provide supplemental information regarding lead levels and control efforts; and require systems who serve 10,000 or more persons to provide the report to customers twice per year. These revisions will make CCRs easier for consumers of drinking water provided by community water systems in Pennsylvania to access and understand, so that they are better equipped to make decisions about their health and any risks associated with their drinking water.

The revisions to Subchapter J for bottled, vended, retail and bulk hauling (BVRB) systems clarify that BVRB systems purchasing finished water are not required to conduct monitoring for chemical contaminants, provided the selling system conducts the monitoring and the results meet drinking water standards and clarify the definition of entry point for bulk hauling water systems to be the point at which water is dispensed into the carrier vehicle, which is representative of the treated source water filling each carrier vehicle.

The draft proposed regulation was presented to the Public Water System Technical Assistance Center Board on February 20, 2025. The EQB adopted the proposed regulation on September 9, 2025. The proposed rulemaking was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on December 13, 2025, for a 30-day public comment period that closed on January 12, 2026.

#### Administration of Sewage Facilities Program (Chapters 71, 72, and 73) Rulemaking (#7-570)

DEP's regulations at 25 Pa. Code Chapters 71-73 govern the implementation of DEP's Sewage Facilities Planning Program, which implements provisions of the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act (SFA), also known as Act 537 of 1965. For DEP's Sewage Facilities Planning Program, Chapter 71 covers the planning elements, Chapter 72 covers the permitting elements, and Chapter 73 covers standards for on-lot sewage treatment facilities. These chapters of DEP's regulations have not been substantively updated in more than 25 years – the last comprehensive update to these regulations was finalized in November 1997. New land development (creation of lots) on shallow soils is a key issue that the regulatory revisions for Chapters 71, 72, and 73 aim to address. This issue was the subject of the most recent amendments to the SFA, Act 26 of 2017 and Act 34 of 2022. This rulemaking also seeks to address several other issues with the program that have been raised over the years.

Additional goals of this rulemaking include promoting proactive municipal planning by requiring municipalities to evaluate their official plans at least every 10 years for adequacy, clarifying the implementation and requirements for sewage management programs for municipalities and local agencies, streamline the sewage planning process in an easier to understand manner, solidify on-lot sewage disposal as a long term method by requiring primary and replacement sewage disposal sites and inspection requirements, provide flexibility in on-lot sewage disposal permitting through permit variances, and updating technical standards for on-lot sewage disposal systems to allow the use of current and future technologies.

DEP first presented the draft proposed rulemaking to the Sewage Advisory Committee (SAC) on April 16, 2025. The SAC formed an ad hoc workgroup to review the draft proposed revisions to Chapters 71 and 72 that met on June 18, 2025, July 7, 2025, and July 15, 2025. Public SAC meetings were held to review the draft proposed rulemaking on July 11, 2025, July 17, 2025, July 23, 2025, August 7, 2025, August 21, 2025, September 15, 2025, September 16, 2025, October 17, 2025, November 3, 2025, November 14, 2025, and December 18, 2025. Four additional ad hoc committees were formed to review specific topics in the draft proposed revisions to Chapter 73: (1) shallow limiting zone systems, isolation distances, and fill/disturbed sites; (2) the definition of malfunction and on-lot inspections; (3) issues related to septic tanks; (4) electrical connections and timed dosing. Meetings for these four ad hoc committee meetings were held on October 7, 2025, October 9, 2025, October 28, 2025, October 30, 2025, November 6, 2025, and November 12, 2025. Public SAC meetings are being held on November 3, 2025, November 14, 2025, and December 18, 2025, to have in-depth discussions with the SAC on the findings of the four ad hoc committees and the impacts of draft proposed regulatory revisions to stakeholders. The next SAC meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2026.

In addition to consultations with SAC on the draft proposed rulemaking, DEP also convened a meeting with manufacturers of on-lot systems and components on September 23, 2025 to discuss the following topics related to the draft proposed revisions to Chapter 73: (1) on-lot sewage system treatment performance standards; (2) the technology verification process (TVP) for alternate sewage systems; (3) standards for septic tanks; (4) standards

for secondary treatment units; and (5) disposal of water softener regeneration brine. DEP also held a meeting with American Manufacturing Company, Inc. on December 17 to discuss draft proposed revisions to Chapter 73.

SAC provided their recommendations on draft revisions to Chapters 71-73 to DEP at the January 29, 2026, public SAC meeting. SAC listed 10 items identified as high-priority recommendations followed by a regulation-by-regulation summary. SAC also voted at the meeting to support DEP in moving forward with the proposed rulemaking package.

DEP's goal is to prepare the rulemaking package for the EQB to consider proposing during the third quarter of 2026.

#### Water Quality Standards; Class A Stream Redesignations (#7-583)

Section 303(c)(1) of the Federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1313(c)) requires states to periodically review and revise, as necessary, water quality standards. The water quality standards evaluated in this rulemaking are the designated uses of surface waters. The regulatory changes in this proposed rulemaking are the result of stream evaluations conducted by the Department and they recommend redesignation for 96 streams. Stream evaluations were conducted in response to a submittal of data from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) under § 93.4c (relating to implementation of antidegradation requirements). In this proposed rulemaking, the stream redesignations rely on § 93.4b(a)(2)(ii) to qualify streams for High Quality Waters (HQ) designation based upon their classifications as Class A wild trout streams. A surface water that has been classified as a Class A wild trout stream by the PFBC, based on species-specific biomass standards in 58 Pa. Code § 57.8a (relating to Class A wild trout streams), and following public notice and comment, qualifies for Department evaluation of the stream for HQ designation. The PFBC published notice and requested comments on the Class A classification of the streams listed in this proposed rulemaking. The PFBC Commissioners approved these waters after public notice and comment. The proposed rulemaking was adopted by the EQB on September 10, 2024, and was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on February 1, 2025, opening a 45-day public comment period that closed March 18, 2025. A final rulemaking is anticipated for early 2026.

#### Water Program Permitting

##### General Permits for Beneficial Use of Sewage Sludge (a.k.a. Biosolids) and Residential Septage

The Department issues general permits for the beneficial use of biosolids (a.k.a. sewage sludge) and residential septage. PAG-07 allows for the Beneficial Use of Exceptional Quality (EQ) Biosolids; PAG-08 allows for the Beneficial Use of Non-Exceptional Quality (Non-EQ) Biosolids; and PAG-09 allows for the Beneficial Use of Residential Septage. Beneficial use is the use or reuse of biosolids or residential septage for any purpose, where the use does not harm or threaten public health, safety, welfare, or the environment. These permits apply to a person who prepares biosolids that will be sold or given away in a bag or other container or biosolids that will be land applied, and to a person who applies biosolids or residential septage to the land. The Department issues these permits under the authority of Pennsylvania's Solid Waste Management Act and the Clean Streams Law.

The Department has administratively extended these general permits for several years, with the latest extensions published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on November 16, 2024. The Department presented pre-draft revised permits to the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) and the Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) in March 2021.

The Department also communicated with and provided information to the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) as the LBFC evaluated the costs and practicality of the proposed changes to the general permits, as directed by [House Resolution 149 from the 2021-2022 General Assembly session](#). LBFC's [final](#)

[report](#) on the proposed revisions to the general permits was published in June 2023. DEP’s response to LBFC’s draft report is included in LBFC’s final report as Appendix E.

On January 14, 2025, USEPA released its “[Draft Risk Assessment to Advance Scientific Understanding of PFOA and PFOS in Biosolids](#).” DEP has reviewed USEPA’s draft risk assessment and will consider it in drafting any revisions to DEP’s biosolids land application permits.

In March 2025, DEP formed a small Data Gathering Team – comprised of agency staff, academia, and consultants – to identify what information is available on PFAS in biosolids and residential septage, what other states across the U.S. and the Mid-Atlantic are doing on this topic, and what are the current unknowns. The purpose of this team was to identify the knowns and unknowns in current science on this topic.

Building upon the findings of the Data Gathering Team, DEP convened a broader stakeholder working group to gather input and recommendations on potential revisions to the general permits, including revisions related to PFAS in biosolids, nutrient management of biosolids, impacts of hauled-in residual waste into the biosolids treatment process, and field storage of biosolids on land application sites. The workgroup included biosolids generators, land applicators, farmers, consultants, and interested third parties (including the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network). Three workgroup meetings were held on October 22, 2025, November 17, 2025, and December 8, 2025. The goal of this workgroup was to provide input supporting revised draft general permits anticipated to be ready for publication for public comment in the first half of 2026.

Informational presentations were given to the Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) on December 11, 2025 and to the Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) on January 14, 2026. Proposed changes to the general permits presented at these meetings include: (1) managing biosolids with consideration of PFAS; (2) managing biosolids with consideration of phosphorus; (3) clarifying in-field storage requirements of biosolids; (4) clarifying requirements for processing and beneficial use of biosolids and residual waste (blending) at sewage treatment facilities. DEP’s goal is to publish draft general permits for public comment during the second quarter of 2026.

#### PAG-13 General Permit

On Saturday, May 18, 2024, DEP published notice in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* ([54 Pa.B. 2693](#)) of an extension to the PAG-13 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges to Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s). By this action the availability of the general permit has been extended until PAG-13 is reissued. DEP had previously extended PAG-13 for a 2-year period and solicited interest in participants for a workgroup. A series of eight meetings was held by the workgroup between November 2022 and March 2023 and DEP received a significant amount of feedback on the next version of PAG-13. DEP also received recommendations from USEPA Region 3 via a letter dated February 28, 2023. DEP has prepared preliminary draft PAG-13 documents which were presented to the Water Resources Advisory Committee on November 21, 2024. Notice of the availability of the draft PAG-13 was published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on January 18, 2025 ([55 Pa.B. 601](#)) for a 60-day public comment period with the [draft PAG-13 documents](#) published to DEP’s eLibrary. The public comment period ended on March 19, 2025. The Department received over 1,500 comments on the draft permit. The Department is considering the comments to inform finalization of the permit. With the volume of comments on the draft PAG-13 and on the Post-Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) Manual, DEP’s estimated timeline for reissuance of the PAG-13 is Summer/Fall 2027.

#### Chapter 102 Pilot Program

DEP announced the availability of a Chapter 102 Pilot Program for Individual NPDES Permits for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities on May 1, 2024. The purpose of the Chapter 102 Pilot Program is to evaluate the effect that certain modifications to existing procedures has on the quality of

applications received and the amount of time necessary to review applications and take final actions. Eleven delegated county conservation districts are participating in the Chapter 102 Pilot Program. Not every type of project is eligible to participate; eligibility guidelines are posted to DEP's [construction stormwater webpage](#). Thus far, DEP has received 17 applications, and 13 permits have been issued through the Chapter 102 Pilot Program. If the Chapter 102 Pilot Program is considered successful, DEP may make some or all of the modified procedures part of its standard operating procedures for Chapter 102 permit applications. DEP is also planning to include the PAG-02 General Permit in the Pilot Program.

### Chapter 105 Pilot Program

DEP announced the availability of a Chapter 105 Pilot Program for Individual Joint Permit Applications to improve the quality of applications and make decisions faster, starting September 1, 2024. To participate, applicants are required to attend two pre-application meetings, with the second meeting serving as a pre-submission conference. Priority will be given to Publicly Funded Energy Projects and Environmental Restoration Projects. The Chapter 105 Pilot Program is available statewide at all six DEP regional offices and DEP's Regional Permit Coordination Office. Since the Chapter 105 Pilot Program is for Joint Permit Applications, conservation districts will not play a direct role. Information on the Chapter 105 Pilot Program can be found on the DEP Bureau of Waterways Engineering and Wetlands' webpage for the [Stream and Wetland Regulatory Program](#). As of February, DEP has approved a handful of applications through the Chapter 105 Pilot Program, with a few others in various stages of review. The Chapter 105 Pilot Program is expected to run for as long as needed to gather data on its effectiveness. If the Chapter 105 Pilot Program is considered successful, DEP may make some or all the modified procedures part of its standard operating procedures for Chapter 105 permit applications. The Chapter 105 Pilot is a practical alternative to SPEED.

### Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED)

In July 2024, as part of the 2024-2025 budget, the Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED) Program was enacted into law as Article 18 of Act 54 of 2024.

- SPEED establishes a staff augmentation program where an applicant for certain types of permits can select to use a Qualified Professional (QP) for review of an application rather than DEP or a county conservation district.
- The types of authorizations covered by SPEED include all Chapter 102 permits, individual Chapter 105 permits, Dam Safety permits, and Air Quality plan approvals.
- The applicant must pay the QP's fee, which will be held until a final decision is made on the application. The applicant will pay for the QP's review; however, DEP and conservation districts will continue to make final decisions regarding applications.
- There are criteria for who can be a QP in the law.
- QP must hold all professional licenses as required by law and have a minimum of 5 years of relevant permitting experience.

DEP launched the SPEED Program on June 30, 2025, with Chapter 102 Individual NPDES Permits as the first permit offered. DEP's SPEED Office and Bureau of Clean Water worked with the approved firms through their Clean Water Academy accounts to access training, templates, and sample work products. On July 14, 2025, a Chapter 102 training session was offered for QPs, DEP regional office staff, and conservation district staff. Recordings have been posted to the Clean Water Academy for all trainings.

To date:

- DEP's SPEED Office has received 18 intake forms for projects expressing interest, although 5 of the applicants determined that they did not want to use the SPEED program after the consultation meeting.
- 13 pre-application meetings have been held, with 2 permits authorized. The 11 projects currently in the formal application submission process include one Air Quality permit with the remaining 10 for each

Water Program as follows:

- Chapter 102 program:
  - 7 Chapter 102 Individual Permits
  - 2 Chapter 102 General Permits (PAG-02)
- Chapter 105 program.
  - 1 Chapter 105 Individual Permit
- 

For the Chapter 105 program, there has been one application that has officially entered the SPEED Program to date (Project Atlas, Lehigh County). That project is in the early stages and recently went through its comprehensive review with a comment letter out on February 12 to the applicant. DEP's SPEED Office and Bureau of Waterways Engineering and Wetlands (BWEW) continue to remain in close contact with firms and their QPs so they can access training on Clean Water Academy. Several training sessions have also been held. On August 13, 2025, a Chapter 105 training session was held for DEP program staff. On December 10, 2025 and January 8, 2026, BWEW held Chapter 105 training sessions and Q&A sessions for QPs. Recordings have been posted to the Clean Water Academy.

## **Water Program Funding**

### **Federal Infrastructure Funding - Bipartisan Infrastructure Law**

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) – also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – provides funding to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) through increases to base program funding as well as new supplemental funding programs.

The BIL reauthorizes the base DWSRF program funding and establishes new supplemental DWSRF pots for general infrastructure projects, emerging contaminants projects, and lead service line replacement projects. Base and general supplemental DWSRF money is used for projects that will improve drinking water system infrastructure (such as replacing aging water lines, upgrading treatment plant components, finished water storage tanks). DWSRF BIL funding provides funding to eligible water systems via PENNVEST for these infrastructure projects. Additionally, the BIL provides money for technical assistance to drinking water systems, as well as money to cover the cost of administration of the DWSRF program for DEP's Bureau of Safe Drinking Water and Bureau of Clean Water.

BIL also reauthorizes the base CWSRF program funding and establishes new CWSRF supplemental funding for general infrastructure projects and emerging contaminants projects. In addition, it establishes a new CWSRF set-aside that will enable DEP to provide technical assistance to small, rural Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW). Similar to the DWSRF program, the CWSRF base program provides funding to infrastructure projects to improve non-point source pollution, stormwater infrastructure, and wastewater infrastructure. CWSRF funding will provide funding to eligible project applicants via PENNVEST for infrastructure projects. The BIL CWSRF funding also supports technical assistance to systems and includes a means to cover the cost of administration of the CWSRF program.

The BIL also mandates that 49% of funds provided through the DWSRF General Supplemental Funding and the DWSRF Lead Service Line Replacement Funding must be provided as grants and forgivable loans to disadvantaged communities. The BIL also requires that at least 25% of funds provided through the DWSRF Emerging Contaminants Funding be provided as grants and forgivable loans to disadvantaged communities or public water systems serving fewer than 25,000 people.

DEP staff manage applications to USEPA for both the DWSRF and CWSRF capitalization grants awarded to

PENNVEST. The State Revolving Fund Grants are noncompetitive grants, so USEPA provides the state allotments in advance of the application process to facilitate grant application development. DEP staff also oversee DEP's role in managing potential and funded projects from preapplication through project closeout. DEP staff coordinate to prepare the CWSRF and DWSRF Intended Use Plans, including budgets, on an annual basis, and review, rank and manage of PENNVEST project applications.

For federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024, PENNVEST has been awarded four DWSRF grants: Base, BIL – General Supplemental, BIL – Lead Service Line Replacement and BIL – Emerging Contaminants, totaling \$294,925,800 including required state match. Similarly, for FFY 2024 PENNVEST has been awarded three CWSRF grants: Base, BIL – General Supplemental and BIL – Emerging Contaminants, totaling \$155,403,000 including required state match. Similarly, BCW was awarded the FFY 2022 and FFY 2023 Sewer Overflow and Stormwater Reuse (OSG) grant application totaling approximately \$3.9M in federal funds.

For FFY 2025 DEP and PENNVEST have been awarded the following grants:

- CWSRF Base grant of \$62,844,000, requiring a 20% state match
- CWSRF BIL – General Supplemental grant of \$97,582,000, requiring a 20% state match.
- CWSRF BIL – Emerging Contaminants Grant of \$8,881,000, with no state match required.
- DWSRF Base grant of \$ 36,127,000, requiring a 20% state match.
- DWSRF BIL – General Supplemental grant of \$82,141,000, requiring a 20% state match.
- DWSRF BIL – Emerging Contaminants grant of \$25,974,000, with no state match required.

In addition to the CWSRF and DWSRF programs, the BIL also provides funding for the following programs:

- Assistance for Small and Disadvantaged Communities (BIL § 50104) – Approximately \$112M has been awarded to the Commonwealth through the Emerging Contaminants for Small or Disadvantaged Communities Grant to address emerging contaminants in public drinking water. This total represents the allocations provided by the EPA for FFYs 2022-2024.
- Lead Contamination in School Drinking Water (BIL § 50110) – Approximately \$5.5M has been awarded to DEP under the Federal Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act § 2107. These funds are being used to support drinking water lead sampling in schools and childcare facilities and also providing reimbursement grants to support remediation activities. More information about this grant program, including a link to apply, is available [here](#).

In November 2025 states were notified that their BIL – Lead Service Line Replacement allotments were available. DEP plans to apply for these FFY 2025 DWSRF grant funds in February 2026. Pennsylvania's total allotment, including FFY 2022, 2023 and 2024 reallotments is \$225,259,000. No state match is necessary for these funds.

#### Chesapeake Bay Restoration Funding and Initiatives

Pennsylvania's [Phase 3 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan](#) (Phase 3 WIP) details Pennsylvania's plan to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution in Pennsylvania waters that flow into the Chesapeake Bay. The Commonwealth uses several funding streams to support the work to develop and implement the Phase 3 WIP, including state funds from the Environmental Stewardship Fund and federal funds, including Chesapeake Bay Regulatory Accountability Program (CBRAP), Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grants (CBIG), Most Effective Basin (MEB), and Local Government Implementation funding. DEP works in close collaboration with USEPA, partner state agencies (including the State Conservation Commission, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Department of Agriculture), local partners (including conservation districts and other county partners), and other partners (like the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation) to coordinate administration of these funding streams so that Pennsylvania leverages each funding stream to get the most

clean water benefit for each dollar invested.

The foundation of Pennsylvania's Phase 3 WIP is clean water efforts at the county level, known as Countywide Action Plans (CAPs). To provide counties with streamlined funding to support CAP implementation, DEP developed the Chesapeake Bay CAP Implementation Block Grant, which allows funding from multiple state and federal sources to be efficiently channeled to one lead county agency for implementation of each CAP. The lead person for each CAP is known as a Community Clean Water Coordinator (CCWC). This approach empowers partners to implement local priorities through their CAP, with streamlined state and federal funding support.

The 2025 CCWC and CAP Implementation Block Grant round opened for counties to submit their project proposals on October 1, 2025, and closed on October 31, 2025. Funding awards for this year's block grant program comes from the Environmental Stewardship Fund and USEPA's Local Government Implementation, CBIG, and CBIG MEB grant funds. Awards were [announced](#) on December 12, 2025.

DEP's Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management (BWRNSM) received the FFY 2025 CBRAP IV grant award, dated September 22, 2025, in the amount of \$3,411,446. This is the fourth project year award of five years. BWRNSM received the FFY 2025 CBIG IV award, dated September 29, 2025, in the amount of \$8,183,680.00. For this award year, the MEB objective is funded at \$4,977,436 and the Local Government Implementation objective, which funds projects in the Octoraro Creek watershed, is funded at \$1,190,544.

The application for the next award of the IJIA Implementation grant for FFY 2026 has not been submitted. Due to the federal government shutdown, the USEPA's Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) is still working through identifying FFY 2026 allocations for each jurisdiction. USEPA is planning to contact jurisdictions regarding the FFY 2026 grant application sometime this month.

On September 30, 2025, the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division in DEP's BWRNSM completed their 2024 Annual Report, [Pennsylvania's Clean Water Progress](#). The publication was produced in partnership with Green Words Consulting and includes highlights from successful projects and programs that have invested in clean water work throughout Pennsylvania's portion of Chesapeake Bay watershed. The report provides an overview of the large monetary investment made throughout the watershed between 2020 and 2024 and shows how these investments translate to acres of conservation projects and thousands of trees planted. The report discusses Pennsylvania's rapid delisting strategy, DEP's Clean Water Progress Teams initiative, and what to expect moving beyond 2025 (a notable milestone year for the Phase 3 WIP). The report also features CAP-funded projects that improve water quality in various sectors – agricultural, natural, and urban. The 2024 Annual Report, and previous annual reports, can be accessed on the Phase 3 WIP's [Annual Report webpage](#).

Over the last year, the Chesapeake Bay Program has been working to implement the Chesapeake Executive Council's charge to revise the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement to update goals and outcomes within the Agreement and to identify and implement a streamlined and efficient structure in as much detail as possible by December 1, 2025. The Principal's Staff Committee finalized and adopted the refreshed Agreement at their [meeting](#) on October 28, 2025. Members of the Chesapeake Executive Council also approved the revised Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement at their [annual meeting](#) on December 2, 2025. The council adopted updates to the 2014 Agreement, establishing new goals through 2040 focused on: creating a thriving habitat, fisheries, and wildlife; ensuring access to clean water; protecting healthy landscapes; and strengthening community engagement. This revised agreement builds on what has already been achieved while using the latest science and elevating conservation as a key focus. Additionally, Governor Shapiro was unanimously elected to lead the Chesapeake Executive Council, marking the first time in 20 years that Pennsylvania will lead the Chesapeake Executive Council.

USEPA has appointed a new CBPO Director, Dan Coogan. You can read Dan's bio [here](#). Pennsylvania partners look forward to continuing to collaborate with USEPA and other partners as we continue implementation momentum with a revised Watershed Agreement and updated goals and outcomes.

#### Chesapeake Bay Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Guidance Revisions

In late September 2024, USEPA's CBPO announced its intent to revise its Grant and Cooperative Agreement Guidance for FFY 2026 with the goals of program improvement, accessibility, and ease of understanding. Areas to be addressed also include state implementation funding allocations, needs and priorities in support of the "Beyond 2025" efforts, streamlined guidance and agreements (such as combining the CBRAP and CBIG grants into one implementation grant), and barriers to implementation. USEPA's CBPO is working on a planning timeline to meet a goal of December 2025 for the revised guidance. The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Restoration Division in DEP's BWRNSM requested that USEPA CBPO include Pennsylvania and other Bay states in the revision of the program's grant guidance. USEPA's revision of the guidance for FFY 2025 focused only on timeline date updates and grammatical/spelling errors, with no significant updates.

#### Nonpoint Source Management Section 319 Grants

The Section 319 Nonpoint Source (NPS) Management grant funds are provided by USEPA and authorized through Section 319(h) of the federal Clean Water Act. The program's primary purpose is to implement Section 319 Program Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) to improve and protect waters from nonpoint source pollution. These grants are administered by the Watershed Support Section in the Nonpoint Source Management Division in DEP's BWRNSM.

Watershed Support Section staff are finalizing preparations for the announcement of the FFY 2027 grant round, tentatively targeted to open April 22 and close on June 22, with notice published in March.

The application round for FFY 2026 Section 319 NPS Management Grants was open from April 22, 2025 through June 20, 2025, as noticed in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on April 19, 2025 ([55 Pa.B. 2953](#)). DEP staff have reviewed and ranked applications for the FFY 2026 grant round. Preliminary funding recommendations have received DEP internal approvals and have been submitted to USEPA for review and comment. DEP received comments from USEPA on the workplans for DEP's FFY 2026 funding recommendations and sent responses to USEPA in February. To focus on implementation and updates of existing Section 319 WIPs, for the FFY 2026 grant round, applications to develop new Section 319 WIPs are no longer an eligible project category, and revisions or updates to existing WIPs that are at least eight years old were encouraged to apply.

In the FFY 2025 grant round, DEP received 12 applications totaling \$5,193,321. After reviewing the applications, DEP recommended nine applications totaling \$3,658,358 to USEPA for funding, including \$3,658,358 for grant awards, \$1,104,542 for DEP projects, and \$10,000 in-kind for USEPA, with the remaining \$153,632 allotted for implementation of best management practices within WIP watersheds for 319 NPS Management Program grantees, which allows DEP to fund budget over-runs for existing projects. DEP received notification from one of the recommended grantees that they are no longer interested in the FFY 2025 grant. As a result, DEP reassigned the funds initially allocated to that grant to implementation of best management practices within WIP watersheds. The FFY 2025 Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Grant awards were [announced](#) on November 18, 2025.

In order to meet the requirements of the federal Section 319 grant program, USEPA requires that the states develop and implement their five-year NPS Management Program Plan and submit annual reports regarding the status of implementation of those statewide plans. Pennsylvania's NPS Management Plan includes a set of goals with multiple objectives and strategies tied to each goal. DEP worked with other state and federal agencies and programs to draft the [FFY 2025-2029 NPS Management Plan](#), which was submitted to USEPA for their review

in October 2023, in accordance with the USEPA Action Plan required deadlines. In addition to the six goals carried over from the [FFY 2019-2024 NPS Management Plan](#), for the draft FFY 2025-2029 NPS Management Plan, DEP added a seventh goal focused on climate change and Environmental Justice. Also included in DEP's draft FFY 2025-2029 NPS Management Plan is the incorporation of recommendations from USEPA's 2020 Midpoint Assessment of DEP's NPS Management Program. DEP received USEPA's final comments on DEP's FFY2025-2029 NPS Management Plan and made USEPA's requested updates. DEP received final approval from USEPA on the 2025-2029 NPS Management Plan on January 12, 2026. Progress toward each goal and objective identified in the NPS Management Plan is reported in annual reports, the latest of which is DEP's [2024 NPS Management Program Annual Report](#).

DEP submitted the draft annual report to USEPA on February 1, 2026 for review and comment.

DEP has been working with USEPA on updating the reporting forms and procedures for Section 319 NPS Management Grants to streamline the program for applicants, grantees, and DEP staff.

### Growing Greener Plus Grants

Watershed Support Section staff are finalizing preparations for the 2026 Growing Greener Plus grant round, tentatively targeted to open April 22 and close June 22, with notice published in March.

As noticed in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on April 19, 2025 ([55 Pa.B. 2950](#)), the application round for 2025 Growing Greener Plus grants was open from April 22, 2025 through June 20, 2025. DEP received 162 grant requests this round. Three applications were automatically deemed ineligible, leaving 159 requests for projects totaling \$41,263,185, to be reviewed and scored. The 2025 Growing Greener Plus Awards were [announced](#) on January 21, 2026, totaling more than \$17 million to projects focused on restoring streams, including reducing nonpoint source pollution like abandoned mine drainage and stormwater runoff from agricultural and developed landscapes . New for the 2025 grant round:

- The required match for applicants was reduced from 15% to 5% for general grants and from 15% to 0% for projects in Environmental Justice Areas.
- Within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, agricultural construction projects will be considered; however [Chesapeake Bay Phase 3 Watershed Implementation Plan Countywide Action Plan](#) and statewide [Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program](#) funding should be the priority funding source for agricultural construction projects. A new form for the CAP Coordinators was provided with clearer guidance.
- Preference is given to implementation projects in [Environmental Justice Areas](#).
- The required withholding at the end of the grant for receipt and approval of the final report was reduced from 15% to 10%.

DEP has also been working to update all contracts, reporting forms, and procedures for Growing Greener Plus Grants to streamline the program for applicants, grantees, and DEP staff.

### Water Programs Planning

#### State Water Plan

Act 220 of 2002 requires that the State Water Plan be updated every five years. The last update was the [2022 State Water Plan Update Report](#), which focused on items such as water resources strategies outlined in the 2018 Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan and updated regional watershed priorities. The 2022 update also included a [Digital Water Atlas Story Map](#) as a planning tool for professionals and a research tool for academics.

In collaboration with the State Water Plan's statewide committee and six regional committees, DEP is in the

process of developing the 2027 update. To begin the 2027 update, the committees met in April 2024, October 2024, and October 2025. From these initial meetings, a workgroup was formed to draft a framework for Integrated Water Resources Management. The workgroup met several times and discussed changes for the Integrated Water Resources Management recommendations in the 2027 update of the State Water Plan, along with a plan for implementation of those recommendations. The six regional committees have also received presentations from various stakeholders on topics of interest within their respective regions, formed workgroups to help develop regional components of the 2027 update, and discussed content to add to a local decision-making toolkit which is being developed as part of the 2027 update. The statewide committee received presentations from DEP and PEMA on subjects of water management which concern the entire state and formed a workgroup to discuss policy and legislative recommendations to report back to the statewide and regional committees.

Several committees have struggled to achieve quorum during their meetings, leading to an emphasis on recruiting members to ensure that the business of the State Water Plan committees can be conducted. The Citizens Advisory Council can assist with these recruitment efforts by referring anyone who could fill a State Water Plan committee vacancy to James Horton ([jahorton@pa.gov](mailto:jahorton@pa.gov)). Up-to-date information on current membership and vacancies for the State Water Plan committees can be found [here](#).

**Attachment 1**  
**2026 Events Calendar**

Please consult the [DEP Calendar of Events](#) for a comprehensive listing of upcoming events and information on how to attend. The Calendar can be accessed in the Public Participation Tab on the DEP website; click on “Public Participation” then “Calendar of Events.” Unless otherwise indicated below or on the DEP Calendar of Events, there will be virtual and in-person attendance options for each event.

<b>March</b>	
4	Board of Coal Mine Safety
10	Citizens Advisory Council
10	Environmental Quality Board
11	Water Resources Advisory Committee
19	Solid Waste Advisory Committee
31	Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board
<b>April</b>	
1	Radiation Protection Advisory Committee
2	Agricultural Advisory Board
8	Technical Advisory Committee on Diesel-Powered Equipment
14	Citizens Advisory Council
14	Environmental Quality Board
14	State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators
21	Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee
22	Climate Change Advisory Committee
23	Mining and Reclamation Advisory Board
29	Sewage Advisory Committee
30	Oil and Gas Technical Advisory Board

This report was prepared by Casey Damicantonio, DEP Policy Office, Administrative Assistant. For questions or requests, please email [cdamicanto@pa.gov](mailto:cdamicanto@pa.gov).