

Conservation Committee Report

Volume 25 Issue 12

Jack Walters—Conservation Chairman

December 2023



The Conservation Pledge

I give my pledge as an

American to save and faithfully defend from waste, the natural resources of my country; the soil, the water, the air, the minerals, the plant life and the wildlife.

This is my Pledge!

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DEP Directs Civil Penalty for Cheswick Demolition Violation to Benefit Springdale

\$21,600 of the \$39,100 civil penalty will go to Springdale Borough park and recreation projects

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced that a civil penalty arising from the

former Cheswick Generating Station demolition project will benefit Springdale Borough, Allegheny County.

Cheswick Plant Environmental Redevelopment Group, LLC, Controlled Demolition, Inc., and Grant Mackay Company, Inc. violated Pennsyl-

vania's Solid Waste Management Act during a demolition of two chimneys (smokestacks) at the former Cheswick Generating Station in Springdale Borough on June 2, 2023.

[In this consent order and agreement](#)

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DEP Suspends Keystone Landfill's Settlement Accommodation Plan

DEP follows up on hundreds of community odor complaints, takes action to protect Pennsylvanians.

The Pennsylvania Depart-

ment of Environmental Protection (DEP) has suspended Keystone Sanitary Landfill's (KSL) plan to add waste to previously capped areas of the landfill due to numerous odor complaints received and the routine confirmation of landfill gas odors offsite by DEP staff.

Since October 1st, the DEP has received more than 200 odor complaints from the public, and during its response to those complaints, DEP staff have regularly observed landfill-related odors off KSL's property.

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DEP Directs Civil Penalty for Cheswick Demolition Violation to Benefit Springdale (continued)

(COA), DEP documented that when the smokestacks fell, debris from the site caused damage to several nearby buildings and a thick coating of dust covered numerous properties. This debris and dust are considered waste under Pennsylvania's environmental laws and regulations, and the deposition of this waste without DEP authorization constitutes a violation.

Of the \$39,100 civil penalty, \$21,600 will go to Springdale Borough for upgrades and/or maintenance of borough-owned parks and recreational areas. The remaining \$17,500 will go to the Commonwealth's Solid Waste Abatement Fund.

"As we pursued environmental enforcement, DEP prioritized directing the majority of the penalty money back to the community," said DEP Southwest Regional Director Jim Miller.

"Springdale Borough will be able to decide how best to use these funds for park and recreation projects."

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, please visit the [website](#) .

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

DEP Suspends Keystone Landfill's Settlement Accommodation Plan (continued)

“Over the last several weeks, DEP has frequently confirmed offsite odors related to KSL operations, and the impact the odors can have on residents is very concerning to the Department,” said **DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley**. “When a permit is issued, DEP expects compliance with the conditions to minimize impacts on residents. Every Pennsylvanian deserves access to clean air and clean water, and that’s why DEP is issuing this suspension and holding the company accountable for their actions.”

The suspension is in regard to the landfill’s Settlement Accommodation Plan (SAP) that DEP approved in February 2021 through a minor modification to the landfill’s existing operating permit. The existing cover was removed from the top of already settled waste, and additional waste was added to those areas. The landfill implemented the SAP to reclaim lost air space due to natural settlement. DEP has determined that KSL has been unable to maintain compliance with that plan, specifically for controlling landfill gas odors, during the course of that work.

DEP has based its suspension decision on the significant volume of odor complaints, the regular observation of landfill gas odors offsite, and the results of DEP’s November 16, 2023 inspection. During that inspection, DEP staff conducted surface methane emission scans of several areas of the landfill and determined that the SAP area had moderate to strong landfill gas odors as compared to other areas of the landfill that had been scanned. The landfill gas in this area had a much more pungent odor, similar to that of leachate.

DEP is requesting KSL submit a plan to mitigate the landfill gas odors in the areas noted in the inspection report by December 1, 2023. More information on the suspension can be found on DEP’s website.

KSL is in the process of re-capping the open areas referenced in DEP’s suspension letter while they develop a mitigation plan which addresses DEP’s concerns.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, please visit [DEP’s website](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$1 Million to Recruit and Train Pennsylvania Workers for Community Revitalization and Cleanup Projects as Part of Investing in America Agenda

Latest funding for EPA's Brownfield Job Training Grants is supported by the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and will boost workforce training in underserved and overburdened communities

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the selection of **North Side Industrial Development Company** and the **Housing and Redevelopment Authorities of Cumberland County** to receive a total of **\$1 Million** for environmental job training programs as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda. The grants through EPA's Brownfields Jobs Training Program will help recruit, train, and place workers for community revitalization and cleanup projects at brownfield sites across the **Commonwealth**.

- **North Side Industrial Development Company (NSIDC)** has been selected to receive **\$500,000** to train approximately 155 students from within the City of Pittsburgh and place at least 116 in environmental jobs upon completion of the program. The training program includes 108 hours of instruction including 40-hour HAZWOPER, OSHA, green infrastructure, asbestos, and fieldwork training.
- **Housing and Redevelopment Authorities of Cumberland County** has been selected to receive **\$500,000** to train at least 57 students from the Carlisle area and provide them with 203 hours of instruction and training. The curriculum will span OSHA, asbestos, confined space entry, site assessments, and field work.

"President Biden's Investing in America agenda is having a powerful, real-world impact on the ground, creating good-paying jobs and revitalizing communities," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "The President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has supercharged our Brownfields program, enabling EPA to invest in the next generation of environmental workers to take on the much-needed work of cleaning up legacy pollution in communities across America."

"This grant funding is an investment in our future," **said EPA's Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Adam Ortiz**. "These are real dollars that will be used to benefit not only the job trainees themselves, but the environment as a whole."

"I applaud the Biden Administration's one-million-dollar investment in environmental job training programs in Pennsylvania," **said Senator John Fetterman**. "These grants will go towards good-paying jobs that will mitigate the effects of pollution and strengthen the environment and economies of Pittsburgh and Carlisle. Our workers, our commonwealth, and our planet are always worthwhile investments."

"I'm so proud to announce this \$500,000 grant for the North Side Industrial Development Company to boost job training in our area! We're talking about real skills here and a path to federal certifications, opening doors to better opportunities for the folks in our area."

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$1 Million to Recruit and Train Pennsylvania Workers for Community Revitalization and Cleanup Projects as Part of Investing in America Agenda (continued)

We're focusing on uplifting our own, especially those in lower-income, underserved areas like East Hills, Homewood, and the Hill District," **said U.S. Representative Summer Lee**. "This is about building a stronger, more resilient community, where education and job opportunities are not just dreams, but realities for everyone no matter where you live or how you grew up."

"This is great news! We are really looking forward to being a recipient of these EPA Workforce Training funds. These funds are so important to our partner organizations, the diverse businesses, and workers so that they can get the necessary training for the future job opportunities in the Pittsburgh region," **said Juan Garrett, Executive Director, North Side Industrial Development Company**.

"The Cumberland County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities are invested in helping our communities, clients and the whole of Cumberland County find ample employment in fields that offer competitive wages and growth opportunities. We are very grateful to be a partner with the Employment Skills Center in Carlisle, PA. They are a true asset and have driven this grant forward for our County. Thank you so much to the EPA and our federal representation for ensuring a bright future for careers within the environmental mitigation field!" – **Mary Kuna, Executive Director, Housing and Redevelopment Authorities of Cumberland County**

These grants will provide funding to organizations that are working to create a skilled workforce in communities where assessment, cleanup, and preparation of brownfield sites for reuse activities are taking place. Individuals completing a job training program funded by EPA often overcome a variety of barriers to employment and many are from historically underserved neighborhoods or reside in the areas that are affected by environmental justice issues.

Job training and workforce development are an important part of the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to advance economic opportunities and address environmental justice issues in underserved communities. All of the FY24 Brownfields Job Training Program applications selected have proposed to work in areas that include disadvantaged communities as defined by the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool, delivering on President Biden's [Justice40](#) Initiative which aims to deliver at least 40% of the benefits of certain government investments to underserved and overburdened communities.

Under the Brownfields Jobs Training Program, individuals typically graduate with a variety of certifications that improve their marketability and help ensure that employment opportunities are not just temporary contractual work, but long-term environmental careers. This includes certifications in:

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$1 Million to Recruit and Train Pennsylvania Workers for Community Revitalization and Cleanup Projects as Part of Investing in America Agenda (continued)

- Lead and asbestos abatement,
- Hazardous waste operations and emergency response,
- Mold remediation,
- Environmental sampling and analysis, and
- Other environmental health and safety training

For more information on the selected Brownfields Job Training Grant recipients, including past Grant recipients, please visit EPA's Grant Factsheet Tool.

Background

President Biden's leadership and bipartisan congressional action have delivered the single-largest investment ever made in U.S. brownfields infrastructure. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests more than \$1.5 billion through EPA's highly successful Brownfields Program, which is helping more communities than ever before begin to address the economic, social, and environmental challenges caused by the legacy pollution at brownfield sites. Today's funding for Brownfields Jobs Training grants comes from this historic investment, which is allowing more communities, states, and Tribes to access larger grants to build and enhance the environmental curriculum in job training programs to support job creation and community revitalization at brownfield sites. Ultimately, this investment will help trained individuals access jobs created through brownfields revitalization activities within their communities.

Since 1998, EPA has announced 414 grants totaling over \$100.5 million through Brownfield Job Training Programs. With these grants, more than 21,500 individuals have completed training and over 16,370 individuals have been placed in careers related to land remediation and environmental health and safety. The average starting wage for these individuals is over \$15 an hour.

For more information on this, and other types of Brownfields Grants, please visit [EPA's Brownfields webpage](#).

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

DCNR Announces 2,500 Acre Addition To Pinchot State Forest

The Conservation Fund recently conveyed the Miller Mountain property to DCNR, preserving the critical wildlife habitat in the Endless Mountains Heritage Region

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Cindy Adams Dunny announced that the agency has added the 2,500-acre [Miller Mountain](#) property in Wyoming County, and the property is now included in [Pinchot State Forest](#).

Miller Mountain's inclusion into Pinchot State Forest marks the first state forestland in Wyoming County. The 2022 addition of 669-acre [Vosburg Neck State Park](#) was the first state parkland in the county.

"We are excited to finally be able to add state forestland to the region, and once again announce a first for Wyoming County as we did with Vosburg Neck last year," **Dunn said**. "I cannot wait to view the area from the top of Miller Mountain and take in the beautiful sights provided from its vistas. Thank you to The Conservation Fund for the tireless work on this project and for conservation efforts across the nation."

Miller Mountain is located in [Endless Mountains Heritage Region](#) and within a half-mile of an Important Bird Area. The land provides critical habitat for migratory birds, black bears, white-tailed deer and bobcats.

The mountain is open to the public, however DCNR is establishing the state forest boundary lines and assessing the property for public access and recreational opportunities.

"We are proud to open up this land to the public," **said Kyle Shenk, Northeast Regional Director for The Conservation Fund**. "Thanks to the dedication and hard work of all those involved, Miller Mountain will remain a stunning backdrop for the town of Tunkhannock and become a destination for outdoor recreation."

The mountain supports headwater streams of the Susquehanna River watershed and protects the and rural character of the Susquehanna River Greenway and nearby town of Tunkhannock.

The 2,216-foot peak is believed to be the last remaining undeveloped peak of its size in Pennsylvania that had been privately owned. Its topographical imprint on the landscape is regionally unique and visible for a remarkable distance.

"This is another significant milestone for Wyoming County," **State Senator Lisa Baker said**. "Inside of two years, we have witnessed the establishment of our first state park and now the designation of our first tract of state forestland. Crucial parts of the landscape are protected against development, as is true for vital habitat of wildlife in the area."

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DCNR Announces 2,500 Acre Addition To Pinchot State Forest (continued)

Along with the recreational opportunities that will open up, these projects reinforce for residents and visitors what a livable and attractive area Wyoming County is."

Funding from DCNR's Bureau of Forestry via the Keystone Fund, along with funding from Williams Companies in connection with the construction and operation of the Atlantic Sunrise natural gas pipeline project, made the permanent protection of this forested landscape possible.

"Environmental stewardship is core to our values at Williams. This was an incredible opportunity to help the state secure this magnificent mountain forestland for public use, creating access opportunities that our employees, their families and neighbors will enjoy," **said Chad Teply, senior vice president of Williams' Transmission and Gulf of Mexico Operating Area.** "We're excited about all of the recreational opportunities Miller Mountain has to offer, while truly appreciating that critical wildlife habitat and watersheds are protected for generations to come."

DCNR manages 2.2 million acres of state forestland. Visit DCNR's website for more information about [Pennsylvania State Forests](#) and check out [DCNR's Calendar of Events](#) for events on public lands.

Source: Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Drought Watch Remains for 13 Counties, Clinton County moved to Drought Warning

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced after a meeting of the Commonwealth Drought Task Force that drought watch will continue for 13 counties. Westmoreland County is also being added to the drought watch list. Clinton County has been moved to drought warning.

Adams, Bucks, Cameron, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Lancaster, Lebanon, Montgomery, Northampton, and Perry counties remain in drought watch. York County will remain in drought warning. The decision to move Westmoreland County to drought watch and Clinton County to drought warning will support the efforts of water suppliers and their customers to conserve water.

For a map of drought declarations updated daily, see the [DEP drought web page](#).

Residents on drought warning are asked to reduce their individual water use by 10 to 15%, or a reduction of six to nine gallons of water per day.

Varying localized conditions may lead water suppliers or municipalities to ask residents for more stringent conservation actions. See the [list of public water suppliers](#) that have requested or mandated water conservation in their communities.

Ways to Conserve Water at Home

- Run the dishwasher and washing machine less often, and only with full loads.
- Shorten the time you let the water run to warm up before showering and take shorter showers. The shower and toilet are the two biggest indoor water guzzlers.
- Check for and repair household leaks. For example, a leaking toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water daily.
- Install low-flow plumbing fixtures and aerators on faucets.
- Replace older appliances with high-efficiency, front-loading models that use about 30% less water and 40-50% less energy.

Find more tips at the [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#).

How DEP Determines Drought Conditions

To determine drought conditions, DEP assesses information from public water suppliers and data on four indicators: precipitation, surface water (stream and river) flow, groundwater level, and soil moisture.

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Drought Watch Remains for 13 Counties, Clinton County moved to Drought Warning (ontinued0

The DEP Drought Coordinator monitors the indicators in close partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), which maintains gauges in streams and wells in many locations across Pennsylvania.

There are normal ranges for all four indicators. DEP makes drought status recommendations after assessing departures from these ranges for all indicators for periods of 3-12 months. For a map that's updated daily to show the status of all four indicators for each county, see the [USGS Pennsylvania drought condition monitoring website](#).

DEP shares these data and its recommendations with the state and federal agencies and other organizations that make up the Commonwealth Drought Task Force. Declarations are determined by DEP, with the concurrence of the task force.

For more information on how DEP monitors conditions and makes drought status declarations, see the [drought management fact sheet](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Biden-Harris Administration Announces 14 Organizations to Receive Nearly \$7 Million to Recruit and Train Workers for Community Revitalization and Cleanup Projects as Part of Investing in America Agenda

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the selection of 14 organizations to receive approximately \$7 million in grants for environmental job training programs across the country, as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda. The grants through EPA's Brownfields Job Training Program will help recruit, train, and place workers for community revitalization and cleanup projects at brownfield sites across the country. This second wave of funding will build on the more than \$14 million in [Brownfields Job Training Grants the agency funded last year](#).

"President Biden's Investing in America agenda is having a powerful, real-world impact on the ground, creating good-paying jobs and revitalizing communities," said **EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. "The President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has supercharged our Brownfields program, enabling EPA to invest in the next generation of environmental workers to take on the much-needed work of cleaning up legacy pollution in communities across America."

These grants, of up to \$500,000 each, will provide funding to organizations that are working to create a skilled workforce in communities where assessment, cleanup, and preparation of brownfield sites for reuse activities are taking place. Awardees include collaborative partnerships of local workforce development boards, community colleges, labor unions, local governments, and more.

Individuals completing a job training program funded by EPA often overcome a variety of barriers to employment and many are from historically underserved neighborhoods or reside in the areas that are affected by environmental justice issues. Many awardees will offer supportive services to participants, like childcare support, to reduce barriers to participation and retention in the program.

High-quality job training and workforce development are an important part of the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to advance economic opportunities and address environmental justice issues in underserved communities. All of the FY24 Brownfields Job Training Program applications selected have proposed to work in areas that include disadvantaged communities as defined by the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool, delivering on President Biden's [Justice40](#) Initiative which aims to deliver at least 40% of the benefits of certain government investments to underserved and overburdened communities.

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces 14 Organizations to Receive Nearly \$7 Million to a Train Workers (continued)

Under the Brownfields Job Training Program, individuals typically graduate with a variety of certifications that improve their marketability and help ensure that employment opportunities are not just temporary contractual work, but long-term and high-quality environmental careers. This includes certifications in:

Lead and asbestos abatement,
Hazardous waste operations and emergency response,
Mold remediation,
Environmental sampling and analysis, and
Other environmental health and safety training

Today's selected grant recipients are:

Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, NM

*Cornerstones of Care, Kansas City, MO

The Research Foundation of CUNY obo the City College of New York, Harlem, NY

Great Lakes Community Conservation Corps, Racine, WI

Kern County Builders Exchange, Kern, CA

Redevelopment Authority of the County of Cumberland, PA

The City of Pittsburg, CA

Workforce Development Board of Herkimer, Madison, and Oneida Counties, Utica, NY

The City of Texarkana, TX

*Groundwork Ohio River Valley, Cincinnati, OH

*Honeybee Strategies, East Baton Rouge, LA

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Biden-Harris Administration Announces 14 Organizations to Receive Nearly \$7 Million to a Train Workers (continued)

*Young Adult Development in Action, Inc., dba YouthBuild Louisville, Louisville, KY

*North Side Industrial Development Company, Pittsburgh, PA

*E3 Solutions, Inc., Selma, AL

*First-time Brownfields Job Training Program grant recipients.

For more information on the selected Brownfields Job Training Grant recipients, including past Grant recipients, please visit [EPA'S Grant Factsheet Tool](#).

Background

President Biden's leadership and bipartisan congressional action have delivered the single-largest investment ever made in U.S. brownfields infrastructure. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law invests more than \$1.5 billion through EPA's highly successful Brownfields Program, which is helping more communities than ever before begin to address the economic, social, and environmental challenges caused by the legacy pollution at brownfield sites. Today's funding for Brownfields Job Training grants comes from this historic investment, which is allowing more communities, states, and Tribes to access larger grants to build and enhance the environmental curriculum in job training programs to support job creation and community revitalization at brownfield sites. Ultimately, this investment will help trained individuals access jobs created through brownfields revitalization activities within their communities.

Since 1998, EPA has announced 414 grants totaling over \$100.5 million through Brownfields Job Training Programs. With these grants, more than 21,500 individuals have completed training and over 16,370 individuals have been placed in careers related to land remediation and environmental health and safety. The average starting wage for these individuals is over \$15 an hour.

For more information on this, and other types of Brownfields Grants, please visit [EPA's Brownfields webpage](#).

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Biden-Harris Administration Proposes to Strengthen the Lead and Copper Rule to Protect All Communities in America from Lead in Drinking Water

EPA proposal would accelerate progress toward achieving President Biden’s goal of removing 100% of lead pipes

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a proposal to strengthen its Lead and Copper Rule that would require water systems across the country to replace lead service lines within 10 years. EPA is also proposing additional improvements to protect public health, such as lowering the lead action level and improving sampling protocols utilized by water systems. Today’s proposed action significantly advances President Biden’s commitment to remove every lead service line in America to protect children and vulnerable populations from the negative impacts of lead in drinking water, particularly those living in disadvantaged communities.

The Biden-Harris Administration is using every tool available to help communities and water systems Get the Lead Out—including investing a historic \$15 billion through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to replace lead service lines, providing technical assistance to communities, and supporting the development of a national inventory of lead service lines. The Lead and Copper Rule Improvements are central to the whole of government approach detailed in the Administration’s [Lead Pipe and Paint Action Plan](#).

“Lead in drinking water is a generational public health issue, and EPA’s proposal will accelerate progress towards President Biden’s goal of replacing every lead pipe across America once and for all,” **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. “With collaboration and the focused actions proposed today, EPA is delivering on our charge to protect all Americans, especially communities of color, that are disproportionately harmed by lead in drinking water systems.”

“EPA’s proposed Lead and Copper rule is grounded in the best available science and successful practices utilized by drinking water systems to protect children and adults from lead in drinking water,” **said EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox**. “Cities like Newark, NJ, Benton Harbor, MI, and Green Bay, WI have all successfully gotten the lead out of their water systems. Our proposed rule applies the lessons learned to scale these successes to every corner of the country,”

The science is clear: there is no safe level of lead exposure. In children, it can severely harm mental and physical development—slowing down learning and damaging the brain. In adults, lead can cause increased blood pressure, heart disease, decreased kidney function, and cancer.

The proposed Lead and Copper Rule Improvements are a major advancement in protecting children and adults from these significant, and irreversible, health effects from lead in drinking water. Key provisions in the proposal include:

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Biden-Harris Administration Proposes to Strengthen the Lead and Copper Rule to Protect All Communities in America from Lead in Drinking Water (continued)

- Achieving 100% Lead Pipe Replacement within 10 years.
- Locating legacy lead pipes.
- Improving tap sampling.
- Lowering the Lead Action Level.
- Strengthening protections to reduce exposure.

The proposal would also require water systems to communicate more frequently and proactively with consumers about lead service lines and the system's plans for replacing the lines.

"President Biden and Vice President Harris believe that everyone should be able to turn on the tap and know that the glass of water they pour is safe to drink," **said White House Council on Environmental Quality Chair Brenda Mallory.** "Today's announcement from EPA represents a major advancement in protecting children and families from lead and builds on our actions across the government to help achieve President Biden and Vice President Harris's vision of removing all lead pipes across the country."

"President Biden and Vice President Harris believe that no family, no child, no American should have to worry about lead exposure – from the water they drink or air they breathe," **said Assistant to the President and White House National Climate Advisor Ali Zaidi.** "That's why the President and Vice President have made replacing every lead pipe in America a centerpiece of their agenda, mobilizing tens of billions of dollars of investment and putting the full throw-weight of the federal government behind this push. EPA's latest action bolsters this historic effort and implements a key element of the Biden-Harris Lead Pipe and Paint Action Plan – more than 10 agencies stepping forward with dozens of bold actions to take on and tackle this public health crisis and this staggering source of environmental injustice."

"Here in Newark, New Jersey, our community persevered through a lead crisis and I'm proud of the work we did removing all 23,000 lead pipes in the city in under three years," **said Kareem Adeem, Director of the Newark Department of Water and Sewer Utilities.** "EPA's new proposed rule will prompt more communities across the country to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water. This action is commendable and represents a positive step forward toward safeguarding the health and well-being of current and future generations."

"A game changer for kids and communities, EPA's proposed new lead and copper rule would help ensure that we will never again see the preventable tragedy of a city, or a child, poisoned by their pipes,"

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Biden-Harris Administration Proposes to Strengthen the Lead and Copper Rule to Protect All Communities in America from Lead in Drinking Water (continued)

said Mona Hanna-Attisha, Flint, Michigan pediatrician and Associate Dean for Public Health at Michigan State University College of Human Medicine. I am thrilled that this rule centers our children and their potential - and listens to parents and pediatricians who have been advocating for this for decades.”

Once the proposed rule is published in the Federal Register, EPA will accept comments for 60 days. The agency will also hold a virtual public hearing on January 16, 2024, at which time the public will be invited to provide EPA with verbal comments. For more information about the proposed rule, including a pre-publication version of the proposal, fact sheets, and directions for submitting comment and registering for the public hearing, visit the [proposed rule webpage](#).

Background

EPA is taking a comprehensive approach to getting the lead out, including:

- **Regulatory Framework.** EPA’s proposed Lead and Copper Rule Improvements follow the science and EPA’s authority under the Safe Drinking Water Act to strengthen regulatory requirements to address lead in drinking water.
- **Funding.** The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides \$50 billion to support upgrades to the nation’s drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. This includes \$15 billion dedicated to lead service line replacement and \$11.7 billion of general Drinking Water State Revolving Funds that can also be used for lead service line replacement. To date, EPA has awarded over \$3.5 billion in funding for lead service line replacement across the country.
- **Technical Assistance.** EPA’s water technical assistance (WaterTA), including the recently launched Get the Lead Out Initiative which will partner with 200 underserved communities nationwide, helps communities identify lead services lines, develop replacement plans, and apply for funding to get the lead out.
- **Practical Implementation Tools.** Through training, tools, webinars, and case studies, EPA provides support to drinking water systems to reduce lead exposure.

For further information: U.S. EPA Press Office (press@epa.gov)

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Pennsylvania Reaches Solar Milestone – Can Now Power Residents in a City the Size of Pittsburgh with In-State Solar

State has Reached One Gigawatt of Installed Solar Generation and Rapid Growth of Solar Construction is Continuing

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) announced today that the Commonwealth's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards (AEPS) program has surpassed one gigawatt (GW) or 1,000 megawatts (MW) of solar energy. This is an important milestone to help cement Pennsylvania's position as an energy leader and accelerate innovation across a diverse set of energy technologies.

"Clean, renewable solar energy is so important for Pennsylvania's air quality and reaching one gigawatt is proof that we are making progress towards Pennsylvania's Solar Future," said **DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley**. "From solar power to clean hydrogen and the wealth of emerging technologies in between, the Shapiro Administration will continue advancing an energy policy that ensures a diverse and reliable ecosystem of energy resources and that protects the environment, creates jobs, and protects consumers. At the rate of solar development currently in our Commonwealth, I'm looking forward to reaching our second gigawatt in a fraction of the time."

The current one gigawatt (1,000,000,000 watts) of installed solar generation in Pennsylvania is enough to power nearly 140,000 homes – equivalent to the number of households in a city the size of Pittsburgh. The additional solar now under construction across the Commonwealth will be enough to supply the combined residential populations of Altoona, Harrisburg, Scranton, and West Chester.

Pennsylvania led the nation two decades ago with the creation of the AEPS, and successfully achieved the ambitious goals laid out in that legislation in 2021, making this solar milestone possible. Governor Shapiro supports revising the AEPS to continue supporting an all-of-the-above diversity of generation sources, including ongoing investment in solar energy.

"Over the past five years the number of new solar projects being installed in Pennsylvania has grown by 160 percent, and the total capacity of the new systems coming online has doubled, despite a global pandemic and various supply chain issues," said **Commission Chairman Stephen M. DeFrank**. "This growth is being driven by small rooftop solar systems on homes and businesses, which account for about two-thirds of current solar capacity, along with increasing development of larger utility-scale solar systems that connect directly to the power transmission grid." \

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Pennsylvania Reaches Solar Milestone – Can Now Power Residents in a City the Size of Pittsburgh with In-State Solar (continued)

The opportunities to diversify our generation fleet will continue to grow as nationwide investment has pushed down the cost of emerging technologies substantially over the last two decades, making solar and other advanced generation solutions affordable, and in many cases, the cheapest energy resource to build.

In addition to the one gigawatt of solar power that's now installed and operating across the state, an additional 550 megawatts (or just over half a gigawatt of electric power) is currently under construction across the state and is expected to be online by this summer, according to solar generation data tracked by the PUC in conjunction with Pennsylvania's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act.

"The promise of solar is being realized across Pennsylvania," said **David Althoff, Director of DEP's Energy Programs Office**. "Energy from the sun is free and solar modules can be deployed almost anywhere. It's encouraging that this zero-emission energy source is becoming a major contributor to our energy mix and will only continue to grow in popularity."

AEPS is administered by the PUC, in collaboration with DEP. The AEPS program, which began in 2005, requires that 18 percent of electric power provided through retail sale in Pennsylvania comes from qualified alternative and renewable energy sources. This has contributed to the reduction of pollution via the deployment of renewable and alternative energy technologies that have lowered the emission of greenhouse gases.

The PUC has more consumer information and fact sheets about solar energy and other renewable energy resources in the [Renewable Energy](#) section of the PUC website. More information about Pennsylvania's AEPS can be found on the [AEPS section of the PUC website](#) and the [AEPS program website](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Shapiro Administration Awards \$19.3 Million in 2024 Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Grants

The grant initiative targets projects that improve the health of streams and rivers, benefiting local stakeholders and those living downstream

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has awarded \$19.3 million in 2024 Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Grants to county teams across Pennsylvania's share of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. These grants support their efforts in reducing nutrient and sediment pollution to restore the health of local streams, rivers, and lakes.

"These grants have proven to be effective in boosting projects restoring Pennsylvania streams, rivers and lakes," said **DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley**. "Since 2021, we've seen teams implement everything from streambank tree plantings to livestock crossing installations. I'm excited to see the ingenuity and progress made by this year's grant recipients. Their work benefits not only their communities, but our Commonwealth and beyond."

Nutrient pollution and eroded sediment can enter streams, rivers and lakes from wastewater treatment and other activities on land, such as using too much fertilizer, plowing and tilling farm fields, stripping away trees and vegetation, and expanding concrete and paved surfaces. Nutrient pollution like nitrogen and phosphorus can cause algal blooms that block sunlight from reaching the underwater grasses that provide critical food and habitat for aquatic life. In addition to also blocking sunlight by making the water cloudy, sediment pollution like soil runoff smothers creatures that live at the bottom of rivers, streams, and the Chesapeake Bay – like oysters, clams, mussels, worms, and insects.

Like the other jurisdictions in the watershed, Pennsylvania is mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to lower its nutrient and sediment pollution levels by 2025. Pennsylvania is required to reduce nitrogen by 34.13 million pounds and phosphorus by 750,000 pounds.

The 2024 CAP Implementation Grant round brought in applications for 226 projects that will be completed in the next 12 to 18 months, resulting in an estimated reduction of over 170,000 pounds/year of nitrogen, 122,000 pounds/year of phosphorus, and 36.3 million pounds/year of sediment.

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Shapiro Administration Awards \$19.3 Million in 2024 Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Grants (continued)

The following projects will be awarded under the 2024 CAP Implementation Grant Program:

- **Adams County Conservation District:** \$ 511,926
- **Bedford County Conservation District:** \$ 121,239
- **Berks County Conservation District:** \$ 184,855
- **Blair County Conservation District:** \$ 200,000
- **Bradford County Conservation District:** \$ 221,000
- **Cambria County Conservation District:** \$ 200,000
- **Centre County Government:** \$ 471,306
- **Chester County Conservation District:** \$ 1,447,858
- **Clearfield County Conservation District:** \$ 200,000
- **Clinton County Commissioners:** \$ 201,043
- **Cumberland County Commissioners:** \$ 769,841
- **Franklin County Conservation District:** \$ 1,810,865
- **Fulton County Conservation District:** \$ 212,415
- **Huntingdon County Conservation District:** \$ 298,720
- **Lackawanna County Conservation District:** \$ 214,349
- **Lancaster County Conservation District:** \$ 4,020,072
- **Lebanon County Conservation District:** \$ 146,099.75
- **Luzerne Conservation District:** \$ 200,000
- **Lycoming County Commissioners:** \$ 105,466.72
- **Montour County Conservation District:** \$ 687,157 for Montour, Columbia, and Sullivan counties
- **Northumberland County Conservation District:** \$ 477,280
- **Potter County Conservation District:** \$ 200,000

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Shapiro Administration Awards \$19.3 Million in 2024 Countywide Action Plan (CAP) Implementation Grants (continued)

- **Schuykill Conservation District:** \$ 277,657
- **Snyder County Conservation District:** \$ 745,180 for Snyder and Union counties
- **Susquehanna County:** \$ 187,500
- **Tioga County Conservation District:** \$ 302,624
- **Tri-County Regional Planning Commission:** \$ 1,397,663 for Dauphin, Perry, Juniata, and Mifflin counties
- **York County Planning Commission:** \$ 1,810,989

You can view exceptional projects funded by previous CAP grants in DEP's [Annual Reports](#) and monthly [Healthy Waters e-newsletter](#).

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, please visit the [website](#).

Source: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

EPA Region 3 Awards Nearly \$387M for Clean Water and Drinking Water Infrastructure Upgrades in Pennsylvania

Made possible by President Biden’s Investing in America Agenda, new funding will help ensure communities have access to clean waterways and safe drinking water

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has awarded Pennsylvania \$386,932,000 to support clean water efforts and to better deliver safe drinking water across the state. Most of this funding, \$340,612,000, came from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) which is the largest federal investment in water infrastructure in our nation’s history. This BIL funding will supplement the \$46,320,000 in FY 2023 funding appropriated to Pennsylvania’s Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs).

“These awards show that EPA is not just a regulator – but is a funder and partner,” **said EPA’s Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Adam Ortiz.** “The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law ensures communities most in need and those grappling with emerging contaminants such as PFAS have access to funding that will deliver cleaner and safer water for generations to come.”

EPA awards grants to states annually to capitalize the State Revolving Funds (SRFs) which provide low or no interest loans for water infrastructure projects. Pennsylvania will use this money to help communities across the state fund necessary water projects that some borrowers may not have been able to afford otherwise.

“Pennsylvania’s water will always be a top priority for the PA Department of Environmental Protection,” **said DEP Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley.** “This funding will support infrastructure projects that enhance clean water efforts across the state, further providing recreation opportunities and protecting drinking water.”

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law delivers more than \$50 billion to EPA to improve our nation’s drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure - the single largest investment in water that the federal government has ever made. [Learn more about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.](#)

For more information on intended projects for this funding in Pennsylvania, please visit: <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/CleanWater/InfrastructureFinance/Pages/State-Revolving-Fund.aspx>.

Source: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)