

A.C.S.L. Conservation Report

By Jack Walters, Conservation Chair, A.C.S.L.

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God Bless America



DEP ORDERS HERCULES TO CLEAN CLAIRTON PROPERTY

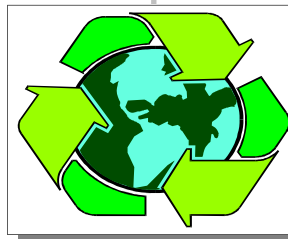
GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES \$1.2 MILLION INVESTMENT TO PROTECT PA.'S WILD RESOURCES

Governor Edward G. Rendell today announced the investment of more than \$1.2 million to study and conserve Pennsylvania's rich variety of native plants and animals.

"We are working with environmental groups, as well as our universities, to study and examine Pennsylvania's bountiful wildlife resources," Governor Rendell said. "Pennsylvania is blessed with a wealth of native plants and animals, and our efforts to identify and conserve them is part of our endowment for our children's quality of life." The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources administers the Wild Resource Conservation Program, which is providing the 31 grants through Growing Greener. WRCP works with the Pennsylvania Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission to operate the program.

"Some of the many projects these grants fund will help increase our knowledge of wild ginseng, egrets and herons along the Susquehanna River and urban park habitats in the Pittsburgh area," said DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis. "It will also continue our inventories

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Soil, Groundwater Contaminated

The Department of Environmental Protection has ordered Hercules Inc. to determine the full extent of contamination at the former Pennsylvania Industrial Chemical Co. (PICCO) site and clean up the property in Clairton, Allegheny County.

Soil and groundwater on the land, which Hercules purchased in the 1970s, are contaminated with chemicals such as benzene, toluene and xylene.

"The contamination on this site has the potential to leak hazardous materials into Peters Creek, a tributary of the Monongahela River and a major water supply source in southwestern Pennsylvania," Bowman said. "Hercules needs to clean up this site to protect public health and safety, and eliminate any hazards so this land can be returned to productive use."

The site was first used in 1912 for PICCO's manufacture of synthetic hydrocarbon resins and crude tar products. After purchasing the facility in the 1970s, Hercules operated it until 1982. Hercules demolished the facility's buildings between July 1991 and November 1992.

In the 1980s, Hercules did an assessment of contamination and attributed the problem to spills of organic compounds during years of operation.

However, no cleanup of the contamination was ever conducted.

Against DEP regulations, Hercules disposed contaminated soil from its Jefferson Plant on the Clairton property in 1995. Polluted with various

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**PROTECT PA.'S WILD RESOURCES
(continued)**

of the ecosystems that add value to the commonwealth's landscape.”

Launched in 1983, WRCP primarily finances research and protection efforts for native, non-game and wild plant species. Funds from the program have supported the reintroduction of otters, osprey, peregrine falcons and fishers to Pennsylvania; identified new plant and animal species; located rare plant species within the state; researched habitat for migrating birds; and provided educational materials to schools.

In addition to Growing Greener funds, the WRCP relies on state income tax refund donations, license plate proceeds and donations to support its work to protect and identify species of special concern.

For more information, visit DCNR's web site at www.dcnr.state.pa.us (choose DCNR at a Glance, Wild Resource Conservation Program).

Source: DCNR

**CLEAN CLAIRTON PROPERTY
(continued)**

petroleum chemicals, the soil is considered a residual waste and must be removed.

To comply with DEP's order to clean the site, Hercules must submit a notice of intent to remediate, as well as a remedial investigation report detailing the extent and location of contamination. DEP must approve the remedial investigation report.

Hercules also must complete a risk assessment and, ultimately, a plan that includes a schedule of implementation for the cleanup to begin 30 days after DEP's approval. During the cleanup, Hercules must submit quarterly progress reports. Hercules has appealed the order to the Environmental Hearing Board. However, the company still must comply with the DEP order unless it receives a supersedeas from the board, meaning the cleanup actions do not need to move forward until a court decision is rendered.

For more information on environment cleanup issues, visit DEP's Web site at www.depweb.state.pa.us, Keyword, "Environmental Cleanup Programs."

Source: DEP

Recycling in PA Tops 4.8 Million Tons, Saving Materials Valued at \$113 Million

The Department of Environmental Protection this week reported Pennsylvanians recycled over 4.8 million tons of municipal waste in 2004 avoiding over \$259 million in disposal costs in the process. In 2003, counties reported recycling 4.4 million tons.

The materials collected were valued at more than \$113 million.

Other calculated benefits include:

- **Energy Savings:** almost 66 trillion British thermal units (BTUs) of energy, enough to power 643,000 homes for one year in Pennsylvania or the equivalent of conserving 531 million gallons of gasoline;
- **Air Pollution/Climate Change Gas Reduction:** eliminated more than 2.5 million metric tons of air emissions, including greenhouse gas emission reductions of 1.9 million metric tons of carbon equivalent --- a savings of approximately 2.4 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. Part of the air emissions savings total was 7,731 metric tons of sulfur oxides, an important ingredient in acid rain formation. Nitrogen oxides, a precursor to smog, were reduced by 8,814 metric tons, an amount equal to 5.5 percent of these emissions from Pennsylvania electrical utilities;
- **Water Pollution Reduction:** nearly 9,000 metric tons;
- **Raw Materials:** by recycling more than 1 million tons of steel cans, appliances and similar materials, Pennsylvania industries saved almost 1.3 million tons of iron ore, 718,460 tons of coal and 61,582 tons of limestone; and
- **Paper:** Through recycling newspapers, office and mixed paper, the state saved the equivalent of 8.2 million trees. On average, a live tree re-

Recycling in PA Tops 4.8 Million (continued)

moves 60 pounds per year of air pollution from the environment.

For more information, visit Recycling in PA and the GreenTreks Recycling Resources webpage.

Source: PA Environment Digest

Wood Burners, A Healthy Indoor Environment

Breathing smoke is not healthy. Wood smoke contains a mixture of gases and fine particles that can cause burning eyes, runny nose, and bronchitis. Fine particles can aggravate heart or respiratory problems, such as asthma, in people of all ages. Even limited exposure to smoke can be harmful to human health particularly to the health of children, the elderly, and those with chronic conditions. To protect your health and that of everyone who shares your home:

- Use a properly installed, vented EPA certified wood stove
- Have the wood stove cleaned and inspected annually
- Use safe, efficient wood burning practices

Follow the additional precautions below:

Never burn household garbage or cardboard. Plastics and the colored ink on magazines, boxes, and wrappers produce harmful chemicals when burned.

Never burn coated, painted, or pressure-treated wood because it releases toxic chemicals when burned.

Never burn ocean driftwood, plywood, particle-board, or any wood with glue on or in it. They all release toxic chemicals when burned.

Never burn wet, rotted, diseased, or moldy wood.

Only bring into your home the amount of wood needed for a day to reduce the chance of allergy-causing mold spores circulating indoors.

Condolences to the Families, Rescuers Involved in West Virginia Mine Accident

Coal miners have a special bond, whether they're in Pennsylvania, Wyoming or China. That's why the deaths this week in the Sago Mine in West Virginia hit all of us with any connection to coal mining, and especially the Quecreek Mine Rescue, very hard.

The Sago Mine tragedy was further compounded by the "miscommunication" that occurred with the families of the miners and the media when an initial report said miners were alive when, in fact, all but one perished.

As difficult as it may be to realize now, good will come out of the Sago Mine tragedy that will help prevent another accident and improve our responses to the next one.

The investigations following the accident resulted in fundamental changes in the way DEP regulates underground coal mining operations, the collection of old mine maps that have provided a treasure trove of new information on the location of abandoned mines, new technologies to allow drilling ahead of mining in small seam coal mines and legislation introduced as [Senate Bill 949](#) (Kasunic-D-Somerset) and [House Bill 2229](#) (Bastian-R-Somerset) to modernize Pennsylvania's deep mine safety law.

Source: PA Environment Digest