

Conservation Committee Report

Volume 8 Issue 11

By Jack Walters, ACSL Conservation Chair

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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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Legislation Extending the Recycling Fee Through 2012

Goes to Governor's Desk

House Bill 1902 (Rubley-R-Chester) that would extend the \$2 per ton fee on municipal waste to support the state's recycling and waste planning programs through 2012 was given final action this week and sent to the Governor for his action.

The fee had been set to expire in 2009, which would have curtailed the amount of new recycling grants that could be issued starting in 2007.

The bill adds new provisions related to issuing Section 904 Recycling Performance Grants requiring municipalities receiving more than \$10,000 in 904 grants to—

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Independent Regulatory Review Commission

APPROVES CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAM

Program Reduces Smog-Forming Emissions, Toxic Pollution

Governor Edward G. Rendell today announced that proposed changes to Pennsylvania's Clean Vehicles Program, which would ensure cleaner, healthier air across the commonwealth --- all at no overall additional cost to consumers, has been approved by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission.

"We are cleaning up the environment and growing our economy at the same time," Governor Rendell said. "The Clean Vehicles Program helps Pennsylvania be competitive so it can create the jobs we critically need and guarantee consumers access to vehicles that operate more efficiently, conserve fuel and help break America's dependence on imported oil."

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Legislation Extending the Recycling Fee Through 2012**Goes to Governor's Desk****(continued)**

- Show they have fully complied with Act 101 through the adoption of an ordinance requiring all residents to have waste and recycling services;
- Have implemented a program that facilitates commercial recycling program or that they participate in a similar county or multi-municipal program;
- Has provisions for educating residents on recycling and an enforcement program;
- Participates in a program that facilitates the recycling of special materials; and
- Sponsors a program or supports a program to address illegal dumping and littering problems.

Independent Regulatory Review Commission

APPROVES CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAM (continued)

IRRC voted 4-1 to approve a plan that locks in model year 2008 as the compliance date for the next phase of the state program. The program sets new emission standards for new passenger cars and light-duty trucks in Pennsylvania; it also requires automakers to make their overall fleet cleaner than would be required by the federal government.

IRRC's approval follows a 16-2 endorsement in September by the state's Environmental Quality Board, also an independent regulatory review panel. EQB received 4,829 responses during a public comment period on the rulemaking. Nearly all commentators supported the state program, which at the time was a record number of responses for a rulemaking in Pennsylvania.

The rulemaking still requires review by the state attorney general before becoming final. However, an effort is under way in the House of Representatives to repeal the standards, originally adopted in 1998. The House Transportation Committee acted suddenly and surprisingly two weeks ago to send Senate Bill 1025 to the full chamber for consideration. The House may take up the measure later this month before adjourning the two-year session.

"Repealing the Clean Vehicles Program would roll back efforts to enhance energy security and improve air quality, and force Pennsylvania businesses and manufacturers to shoulder even more of the emission reduction burden so the commonwealth can meet its federal air quality requirements," Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty said. "That's no way to stay competitive and keep our economy growing."

Cars contribute about a third of the state's smog-producing emissions. They also emit toxic pollutants like benzene. People are driving more and more --- Pennsylvanians increase their vehicle miles driven by some 2 percent every year --- so improving vehicle technology through this program will preserve mobility while protecting public health and the environment.

Pennsylvania's Clean Vehicles Program will cut volatile organic compounds as much as 12 percent and nitrogen oxide emissions 9 percent more than the less stringent federal standards, and result in a 5-percent to 11-percent greater reduction of six toxic air pollutants, including benzene, a known carcinogen.

Two-thirds of Pennsylvanians live in the 37 counties that failed to meet the more protective eight-hour ozone standards and were designated as being in "nonattainment" by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2004. Heart problems and respiratory problems, including asthma, are exacerbated by unhealthy air, which also can cause damage to crops, forests and wildlife.

Failure to meet clean-air standards also hinders economic growth. New businesses face steeper environmental hurdles to operate in places designated as being in nonattainment. Fewer emission reductions from mobile sources mean more reductions would need to be mandated for factories, power plants and manufacturers.

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Independent Regulatory Review Commission

APPROVES CLEAN VEHICLES PROGRAM (continued)

The federal Clean Air Act gives individual states the choice of adopting federal emission standards or the tougher rules used in California. A growing number of states in the Northeast and the West Coast have been opting to follow California's lead. Pennsylvania adopted the California standards in 1998.

Tailpipe standards cost little or nothing in the short term and, overall, save consumers money, making this the most cost-effective approach. Vehicles meeting the California standards are sold on the market today at the same price as those meeting the less strict federal standard. Moreover, in the coming years, consumers will save money over the life of these vehicles because they operate more efficiently.

The savings to consumers are estimated at about \$3.50 to \$7 per month in 2016 when the full program is implemented. These estimates were done with gasoline prices averaged at \$1.74 per gallon.

California rules also include provisions to reduce the greenhouse gases that cause global warming, as vehicles are a significant source of these gases. These California greenhouse gas provisions will apply to new passenger cars and light-duty trucks beginning with the 2009 model year. This provision, which automaker are challenging in federal court, also would pertain to cars sold in the commonwealth.

For more information, visit DEP's Web site at www.depweb.state.pa.us, Keyword: "Air Quality."

GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES \$700,000 FOR HOUSEHOLD POLLUTION PREVENTION

Money Helps to Defray Costs of Collection Events

Governor Edward G. Rendell today awarded \$700,000 in grants to local governments and other registered sponsors to pay for collection events where residents can bring their household hazardous wastes and electronics for proper disposal or recycling.

Many of the collection events take place in the fall and spring. Governor Rendell urged Pennsylvanians to properly dispose of potentially hazardous materials when cleaning out their homes and garages as the seasons change.

“Know before you throw,” Governor Rendell said. “If you have even the slightest question about whether an item is safe to put in the regular trash, then please read the product label or contact your community’s waste program. The health of waste haulers and landfill workers could be endangered by hazardous wastes, and these wastes can pollute our air and water as well.”

Pesticide, pool chemicals, bleach, oven cleaner, rechargeable batteries and television screens are all examples of common household products that can create environmental and public health hazards if disposed of in the regular trash.

“Hazardous wastes can be an immediate danger to waste haulers and landfill workers, creating the potential for harmful vapors, chemical skin burns, fires and even explosions,” Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty said. “Released into the environment, these chemicals can create long-term pollution problems. Proper disposal is key to protecting the environment and public health.”

Many communities offer household hazardous waste collection events; some have special collections for the disposal of computers, televisions and other electronics. All hazardous materials collected through the household hazardous waste collection programs are taken to sites equipped to safely manage hazardous wastes. Components of many electronic discards can be recycled.

The DEP grants reimburse up to 50 percent of the eligible costs of conducting collection events.

McGinty urged residents to check product labels for safety warnings and to become more aware of common products that can be hazardous to the public health and environment if they are placed in the regular trash, poured down the drain or dumped outside.

“The best way to manage household hazardous waste is to avoid creating it,” McGinty said. “Select the least toxic product to do the job and buy only as much as you need. If you have a leftover, usable product that is potentially hazardous, try to find a friend, neighbor or community group that will use it. If the product isn’t usable, or if you can’t give it away, take it to your community’s household hazardous waste collection program.”

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**GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES \$700,000 FOR
HOUSEHOLD POLLUTION PREVENTION (continued)**

DEP offers technical assistance to pollution-prevention organizations and provides reimbursements to local governments, private organizations and trade associations that sponsor household hazardous waste collection events. DEP also provides information on how materials can be reused, recycled or properly disposed of at permitted hazardous waste facilities.

For more information on household hazardous waste collections, or for a directory of county recycling coordinators, visit DEP's Web site at www.depweb.state.pa.us, Keyword: "Recycling."

The Rendell Administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his weekly newsletter, visit his Web site at: www.governor.state.pa.us.

**GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES \$1.23 MILLION TO
PROTECT PENNSYLVANIA COASTAL ZONES**

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The Lake Erie Coastal Zone is located within Erie County and includes the shorelines of major tributaries. The zone extends to the middle of the lake to the boundary with Canada and inland 900 feet within the city of Erie. The lake, one of the state ports for international shipping, also contains Presque Isle State Park.

The Pennsylvania Coastal Zone Management Program provides grants and technical assistance to nonprofit groups, local governments and state agencies to improve public access, protect natural resources, expand strategies to improve local economies, promote proper planning and conserve coastal resources.

The grants finance projects such as rehabilitating stream banks and restoring riparian buffers to reduce pollution flowing into waterways; reforesting urban areas, managing storm water runoff; and developing new technologies to locate and address unseen sources of pollution.

The majority of Coastal Zone Management Grants are funded through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration from money made available by the U.S. Congress. Grant recipients include local governments, nonprofit organizations and state agencies. Since the program's federal approval in 1980, the Pennsylvania Coastal Zone Management Program has provided more than \$51 million in funding for coastal zone projects.

For more information on Pennsylvania's Coastal Zone Management Program, visit DEP's Web site at www.depweb.state.pa.us, Keyword: "Coastal Zone."

**DEP EFFORT BRINGS TOGETHER ORGANIZATIONS TO
HELP PENNSYLVANIANS STAY WARM THIS WINTER**

Workshops will help residents conserve energy and save on utility bills

The Department of Environmental Protection is working with people and non-profit organizations in Allegheny County to promote ways that homeowners can conserve energy and save money on utility bills this winter.

The programs are part of Governor Edward G. Rendell's "Stay Warm PA" initiative, which is designed as a clearinghouse to ensure Pennsylvania's most vulnerable populations have the information and support they need to stay warm and safe as cold weather approaches.

"Home heating remains a significant expense that puts a strain on family budgets," DEP Southwest Regional Director Kenneth Bowman said. "But there are things every resident can do to lower costs and stay warm, keeping themselves and their families safe from the elements."

Bowman said that DEP today hosted a workshop in Pittsburgh to make sure the staffs and volunteers of area nonprofits --- the people who work daily with the state's most vulnerable populations --- are familiar with assistance programs available to help warm the homes of Pennsylvania's low-income families. Equitable Gas and The Hill House sponsored the workshop.

DEP will also be holding workshops across Allegheny County to help residents cope with rising energy costs. They will provide contact information for those who need help with their utility bills, furnace repairs or weatherization of their home, and offer easy-to-follow tips to reduce energy consumption at home. The programs will also include information on how to contact agencies that can help residents this winter, including the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Area Agencies on Aging.

For more information about Governor Rendell's "Stay Warm PA" initiative, visit the Governor's Web site at www.governor.state.pa.us. To learn about assistance programs, weatherization resources and energy conservation ideas, visit www.staywarmpa.com.

GOVERNOR RENDELL ANNOUNCES \$1.23 MILLION TO PROTECT PENNSYLVANIA COASTAL ZONES

35 Grants Will Protect Environment, Boost Economy, Improve Quality of Life

Governor Edward G. Rendell today announced \$1.23 million in grants for 35 projects intended to protect and enhance Pennsylvania's coastal zones along the Lake Erie and the Delaware Estuary shorelines.

"Pennsylvania's coastal zones are tremendously valuable parts of our environment and outdoor landscape, and they also play a key role in our quality of life and economic growth," Governor Rendell said. "Right now, these areas face increasing pressure from development, shoreline erosion, biodiversity losses and non-point source pollution. Sound management of these resources is vital to both the environmental and economic health of Pennsylvania."

Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen A. McGinty announced the \$1.23 million while presenting a \$15,000 grant to Marcus Hook Borough officials in a ceremony along the Delaware River behind the Marcus Hook Community Center, just south of Market Square Memorial Park in Delaware County.

The borough will use its \$15,000 grant to conduct a feasibility study to determine the best and most sound way to develop a marina at the park. Market Square Memorial Park provides the only direct access for the community to the Delaware River in Marcus Hook Borough.

"What makes these coastal zones so dynamic is the direct connection between natural resources and community life, as is demonstrated so clearly here in Marcus Hook," McGinty said. "Tourism, recreation, port development, business and industrial development --- all of these vitally important activities depend on how we manage and protect our coastal resources."

Marcus Hook used a Coastal Zone Management Grant in 2004 to develop a walkway and pier in the area, and the proposed marina would further the environmental and recreational enhancement of the park for area residents, making the environment a centerpiece of community growth.

"Increasing the recreational potential of the Delaware River is the focus of the Marcus Hook Marina master plan," Borough Manager Bruce Dorbian said. "The project builds upon the phased growth of the borough's riverfront park and neighborhood development activities, as well as the area's rich history. The project provides a close-to-home recreational entry to the river for boaters and fishermen."

The coastal zone is the area where the land meets the sea and includes both coastal waters and adjacent shore lands. Pennsylvania has two coastal areas: 57 miles of coastline along the Delaware Estuary and 63 miles of coastline along Lake Erie.

The Delaware Estuary Coastal Zone lies within Bucks, Delaware and Philadelphia counties. The zone contains islands, marshes and the shore lands of tributaries that are affected by ocean tides. The combined facilities of the Delaware Estuary comprise the largest freshwater port in the world.

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