
WUC

Water Utility Council of the
PA-Section, American Water
Works Association (PA-AWWA)



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

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May 4, 2015 -- Issue 940

*PA- Section, American Water Works Association
National Association of Water Companies
Water Works Operators' Association of Pennsylvania*

PUC Enhances PAPowerSwitch.com with New Consumer-Friendly Features

On April 27, 2015, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) announced a series of enhancements to www.PAPowerSwitch.com, the agency's consumer-education website with information on shopping for electric suppliers, consumer alerts and reminders, educational videos and more.

“It is our responsibility to educate consumers as much as possible to help them save on their bills, and to allow them to make informed decisions on where – and how – their electricity is generated,” said PUC Chairman Robert F. Powelson. “The Commission has continually upgraded our website to serve as a comprehensive consumer-education resource, offering information in plain sight about what it means to shop, how to save, the different types of rates and products and where to begin when shopping.”

New PAPowerSwitch upgrades include:

- Easier navigation on a streamlined homepage;
- A zip code search on the homepage, leading to a graphic snapshot about savings opportunities, rates and options in a specific area;
- Larger and brighter consumer alerts on the homepage, notifying viewers of upcoming default rate changes and other pertinent reminders;
- A prominent “Education” button, directing users to videos and information about switching power, understanding your bill, how to choose a supplier, fixed and variable rates and consumer rights and protections; and
- A “Ways to Save” button, guiding consumers to a factual page on opportunities to conserve energy and save money.

The upgrades also are reflected on the mobile version of PAPowerSwitch.

Since the website's launch in 2010, the Commission has continued to implement new consumer-protection measures, rulemakings and education tools related to electric generation suppliers (EGSs). In addition to PAPowerSwitch enhancements, the PUC has passed several

rulemakings, including accelerating the timeframe in which consumers can switch suppliers to allow faster switches between billing cycles; requiring EGSs to list terms and conditions more prominently on disclosures and contracts; and requiring additional, clearer EGS information on utility bills.

Consumers are urged to confirm who their electric supplier is, double-check the terms and conditions of their contract and use www.PAPowerSwitch.com to assess their options and find potential savings.

Consumers are advised not to sign a contract without knowing the length of the contract, the price, whether it is fixed or variable and if there are any early termination fees. Customers on a variable rate are subject to fluctuations in the price of their electric consumption. Information on fixed and variable electric rates is available [here](#).

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission balances the needs of consumers and utilities; ensures safe and reliable utility service at reasonable rates; protects the public interest; educates consumers to make independent and informed utility choices; furthers economic development; and fosters new technologies and competitive markets in an environmentally sound manner.

For recent news releases and video of select Commission proceedings or more information about the PUC, visit our website at www.puc.pa.gov. Follow the PUC on Twitter – @PA_PUC for all things utility. “Like” PAPowerSwitch on Facebook for easy access to information on electric shopping.

Source: PUC Press Release, 4/27/2015

Webcast on May 5: Getting More Green for your Stormwater Infrastructure

This webcast, to be held May 5 from 1 - 2:30 p.m. Eastern, will showcase different ways of measuring both cost savings and benefits related to green infrastructure practices. EPA staff and leading professionals will discuss new research

and case studies detailing successful approaches to valuing green infrastructure. This event is part of EPA's Green Infrastructure Program 2015 Webcast Series.

[Register for the webinar here.](#)

Source: Water Headlines from EPA, 4/28/2015

Governor Wolf Hires Rail Expert to Focus on Oil Train Safety

On April 28, 2015, Governor Tom Wolf announced the hiring of Dr. Allan M. Zarembski, an internationally recognized expert in the area of railway track and structures, vehicle-track dynamics, failure and failure analysis, safety, railway operations, and maintenance. A University of Delaware research professor and the director of the railroad engineering and safety program, Dr. Zarembski has extensive experience in rail operations including freight operations, transit, commuter and inter-urban rail.

“My administration is focused on the safety of Pennsylvanians and protecting people from the potential disaster resulting from Bakken crude oil train derailments,” said Governor Wolf. “I have expressed grave concern regarding the transportation of crude oil in the commonwealth and have taken several steps to prevent potential disasters. Dr. Zarembski is an internationally recognized rail expert and he has extensive experience with rail safety and risk analysis. Pennsylvania sees some of the largest volume of Bakken crude oil transportation by rail in the United States and the potential for disaster is too great to ignore. I will continue to take steps to ensure the safety of Pennsylvania's citizens.”

Every week, roughly sixty to seventy trains carrying crude oil from North Dakota's Bakken region travel through Pennsylvania destined for Philadelphia or another East Coast refinery. Dr. Zarembski will evaluate Pennsylvania's freight rail system and advise Governor Wolf on risk reduction and safety.

Dr. Zarembski will also work to identify areas of high risk and make recommendations for crude-by-rail safety measures as well as identify ways to implement those measures as efficiently and cost-effective as possible.

His contract will last for three months.

In February, Governor Wolf sent a [letter](#) to President Obama urging expedited federal regulatory action in several areas to better ensure safety. In his first full week in office, the governor conducted an emergency table-top planning exercise to model the state's response in the event of a crude oil train derailment in an urban area. Governor Wolf has personally met with executives from Norfolk Southern and CSX Corporation to discuss safety measures that could lower the risk of derailments. Governor Wolf has also directed the Pennsylvania Office of the Fire Commissioner to examine how an oil train fire could be extinguished to protect public safety, and the Wolf Administration has undertaken a review of the frequency and the procedures associated with rail infrastructure inspections by federal and state inspectors.

Biography:

Dr. Zarembski is an internationally recognized authority in the fields of track and vehicle/track system analysis, railway component failure analysis, track strength, and maintenance planning. Dr. Zarembski's areas of research include failure and risk analysis of the track and its key components to include rails, ties, fastener, ballast, and turnouts; safety and derailment prevention; rail failure, fatigue and grinding; improved track inspection technology and applications; vehicle-track dynamic interaction; and track maintenance planning. Dr. Zarembski is currently research professor and director of the railroad engineering and safety program at the University of Delaware's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Prior to that, Dr. Zarembski was president of ZETA-TECH, Associates, Inc., a railway technical consulting and applied technology company that he established in 1984. Dr. Zarembski also served as director of R&D for Pandrol Inc., director of R&D for Speno Rail Services Co. and manager, track research for the Association of

American Railroads. Dr. Zarembski has a PhD and M.A. in Civil Engineering from Princeton University, an M.S. in Engineering Mechanics and a B.S. in Aeronautics and Astronautics from New York University. He is a registered professional engineer in five states. Dr. Zarembski is an honorary member of AREMA, fellow of ASME, and a life member of ASCE. He served as deputy director of the Track Train Dynamics Program and was the recipient of the American Society of Mechanical Engineer's Rail Transportation Award in 1992 and the U.S. Federal Railroad Administration's Special Act Award in 2001. Dr. Zarembski has authored or co-authored over 170 technical papers, over 120 technical articles, and two books "The Art and Science of Rail Grinding" and "Tracking R&D" both published by Simmons Boardman Books.

Source: Governor's Press Office, 4/28/2015

Governor Wolf Announces Pennsylvania Emergency Management Program Receives National Accreditation

On April 28, 2015, Governor Tom Wolf announced that the commonwealth has received national reaccreditation by the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) Commission for meeting certain standards and demonstrating compliance in 16 areas, including: planning; resource management; training; exercises, evaluations, and corrective actions; and communications and warning.

"Being prepared for the next emergency we may face is a top priority," said Governor Wolf. "This accreditation shows how hard my administration is working to be prepared to respond to any event."

EMAP is a voluntary accreditation process for state, territorial and local government programs that coordinate preparedness and response activities for all disasters. To achieve accreditation status, PEMA, as the lead agency, had to document compliance with all 63 national standards. PEMA

and multiple state agencies were required to demonstrate, through program assessment, documentation and onsite visits from an independent team, that its emergency management program meets national standards.

The Emergency Management Accreditation Program is part of a national effort to establish a baseline measurement of the nation's emergency management capabilities. It helps states improve their ability to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

Achieving reaccreditation means Pennsylvania's Emergency Management Program has met or exceeded nationally recognized standards, and demonstrates that Pennsylvania is prepared and capable of serving its citizens during times of emergency. Pennsylvania received its initial accreditation in 2005.

Accreditation is valid for five years from the date the EMAP Commission grants accreditation. Accredited programs must maintain compliance with EMAP standards and be reassessed in five years to maintain accredited status.

Governor Tom Wolf recently signed Executive Order 2015-06, which directs that the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) develop and manage the Pennsylvania State Emergency Operations Plan, which will allow PEMA to prepare for any potential danger to the commonwealth or its people.

More information about EMAP and the standards used in accreditation is available at <http://www.emaponline.org/>.

For more information please visit the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Web site at www.pema.pa.gov.

Citizens can prepare for emergencies before they happen by creating home and vehicle emergency kits with basic supplies. Downloadable checklists, as well as other valuable emergency preparedness information, are available online at www.ReadyPA.org.

Source: Governor's Press Office, 4/28/2015

Revenue Department Releases April 2015 Collections

Pennsylvania collected \$4 billion in General Fund revenue in April, which was \$201 million, or 5.3 percent, more than anticipated, Acting Secretary of Revenue Eileen McNulty reported on May 1, 2015. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total \$25.7 billion, which is \$569.1 million, or 2.3 percent, above estimate.

Sales tax receipts totaled \$827.7 million for April, \$10.9 million above estimate. Year-to-date sales tax collections total \$7.8 billion, which is \$53.6 million, or 0.7 percent, more than anticipated.

Personal income tax (PIT) revenue in April was \$2.1 billion, \$21.1 million above estimate. This brings year-to-date PIT collections to \$10.2 billion, which is \$57.8 million, or 0.6 percent, above estimate.

April corporation tax revenue of \$443 million was \$20.4 million below estimate. Year-to-date corporation tax collections total \$4.4 billion, which is \$165.9 million, or 3.9 percent, above estimate.

Inheritance tax revenue for the month was \$92.4 million, \$9.8 million above estimate, bringing the year-to-date total to \$831.8 million, which is \$72 million, or 9.5 percent, above estimate.

Realty transfer tax revenue was \$32.6 million for April, \$4.6 million below estimate, bringing the fiscal-year total to \$335 million, which is \$30.8 million, or 8.4 percent, less than anticipated.

Other General Fund tax revenue, including cigarette, malt beverage, liquor and table games taxes, totaled \$108.4 million for the month, \$5.4 million below estimate and bringing the year-to-date total to \$1.1 billion, which is \$26.9 million, or 2.4 percent, above estimate.

Non-tax revenue totaled \$445.8 million for the month, \$189.5 million above estimate, bringing the year-to-date total to \$1 billion, which is \$223.8 million, or 28.6 percent, above estimate.

In addition to the General Fund collections, the Motor License Fund received \$276.7 million for the month, \$33.2 million above estimate. Fiscal year-to-date collections for the fund – which include the commonly known gas and diesel taxes, as well as other license, fine and fee revenues – total \$2.2 billion, which is \$131.7 million, or 6.4 percent, above estimate.

Source: Department of Revenue Press Release, 5/1/2015

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