



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE From Gmerek Government Relations, Inc.

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

Sturla unveils plan that would generate \$245 million annually for state budget and water-related programs

At a Capitol news conference on June 6, 2016, state Rep. Mike Sturla, D-Lancaster, announced he is introducing House Bill 2114, known as the Pennsylvania Water Resource Act.

The Pennsylvania Water Resource Act would enact a water resource fee on 4.4 billion gallons of daily water withdrawals in Pennsylvania that has the potential to generate \$245 million annually, based on current usage rates. The bill would exempt the 1.5 billion gallons of daily water withdrawals for agricultural and municipal water usages.

"The Pennsylvania Constitution makes it clear that Pennsylvania's public natural resources belong to the people of the commonwealth. This bill ensures that entities that are currently using our water for free would pay a nominal fee that will be used to fund water-related programs and projects while freeing up money for the General Assembly

to close structural deficits in the state budget," Sturla said.

Water withdrawn from commonwealth waterways in excess of 10,000 gallons a day is already required to be reported to the Department of Environmental Protection. House Bill 2114 would result in a charge of 1/100th of a cent per gallon if water is withdrawn for use and eventually returned to the source. Water withdrawn and not returned beyond 10,000 gallons a day would be charged 1/10th of a cent per gallon.

Revenue generated from H.B. 2144 would be used to fund water-related programs and general governmental operations in the Department of Environmental Protection (\$30 million), Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (\$25 million) and Fish and Boat Commission (\$5 million). The remaining dollars would be used to fund water-related projects within Pennsylvania's six major watersheds. There is an additional option to use remaining funds to pay debt service on a \$3 billion bond issue for environment projects, subject to ballot referendum.

"At a time when the state is searching for revenue to implement clean water projects as well as new revenue to close the budget deficit, I think this piece of legislation is a viable option," Sturla

said. "I am grateful to all those who've helped play a key role in developing this concept and for their support today."

Source: Rep. Sturla Press Release, 6/6/2016

EPA Proposes Protective Action Guide for Drinking Water Following a Radiological Incident

During a radiological emergency, such as an accident at a nuclear power plant, radioactive material can be released into the environment. This radioactive material could get into rivers, lakes and streams that are used by public water suppliers to deliver drinking water to local residents. EPA is proposing a non-regulatory Protective Action Guide (PAG) to help officials determine the best way to prevent the public from experiencing the harmful effects from radiation in drinking water during an emergency. EPA is seeking public comment on the proposed Protective Action Guide (PAG) for Radiological Incidents for up to 45 days following publication in the Federal Register.

Learn [More](#).

Source: Water Headlines from EPA, 6/8/2016

DRBC: Proposed Amendments to the Rules of Practice and Procedure Concerning Regulatory Program Fees and to the Basin Regulations – Water Supply Charges Concerning Rates; Public Hearing

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) will hold a public hearing to receive comments on proposed amendments to the

Rules of Practice and Procedure to adopt a new project review fee structure and to the Basin Regulations—Water Supply Charges to provide for automatic inflation adjustments. These changes also are proposed to be incorporated into the Commission's Comprehensive Plan. The public hearing will be held at 1:00 P.M. on Wednesday, July 27, 2016.

Written comments will be accepted and must be received by 5:00 P.M. on Friday, August 12, 2016. The public hearing will be held at the Commission's office building located at 25 State Police Drive, West Trenton.

Written comments may be submitted as follows: If by email, to paula.schmitt@drbc.nj.gov; if by fax, to Commission Secretary at 609-883-9522; if by US Mail, to Commission Secretary, DRBC, PO Box 7360, West Trenton, NJ 08628-0360; and if by overnight mail, to Commission Secretary, DRBC, 25 State Police Drive, West Trenton, NJ 08628-0360. Additionally, an FAQ document explaining this proposal in further detail is available on the Commission's website. For queries about the rulemaking process, please contact Pamela Bush at 609-477-7203.

Source: PA Bulletin, [6/11/2016](#)

Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee Cancellations

The Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee meetings scheduled for Tuesday, June 14, 2016, and Thursday, September 22, 2016, have been cancelled.

The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for December 7, 2016, and will be held in Room 206, Bureau of Laboratories Building, 2575 Interstate Drive. The agenda and meeting materials will be available through the Public Participation Center on the Department of Environmental Protection's website.

Questions concerning the meeting cancellations or future meetings can be directed to Aaren S. Alger at (717) 346-8212 or aalger@pa.gov.

Source: PA Bulletin, [6/11/2016](#)

Governor Wolf Announces Shell Cracker Plant Coming to Pennsylvania

Governor Wolf released the following statement after he was notified by Shell that they would build their ethane cracker plant in Pennsylvania:

“Over the past four years, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has worked with Royal Dutch Shell to finalize plans to construct an ethane cracker plant in Western Pennsylvania, and this morning I was notified that Shell has taken the final step to move ahead with this game-changing plant and create thousands of jobs in Pennsylvania.

“The commonwealth began its efforts on this project in 2012, and I would like to thank former Governor Tom Corbett and his Secretary of Community and Economic Development C. Alan Walker for all of their efforts to bring the plant to Western Pennsylvania.

“Since first taking office, I have worked in close collaboration with my Secretary of Community and Economic Development Dennis Davin, the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, local officials in Western Pennsylvania, and Royal Dutch Shell to make the proposed plant a reality. The commonwealth engaged the company with the goal of creating jobs, spurring economic development, and taking the next steps to connect the energy industry with long-term, sustainable economic growth.

“My administration is committed to creating jobs in the energy industry through responsible, well-regulated extraction and long-term, creative industrial growth. We have worked to develop strategies for safe and responsible pipeline development that brings resources to markets and facilities and we have prioritized the Shell plant to

show the world that Pennsylvania is a leader in energy manufacturing and downstream production.

“The success of this project is part of a much-needed, longer term plan to translate our abundant resources to make Pennsylvania a leader in downstream production. The commitment of the Shell cracker plant in Western Pennsylvania is an important step toward this goal.

“This critical effort spanned four years, and two administrations, and today I want to congratulate all of those involved, including both Republican and Democratic officials, and thank Royal Dutch Shell for providing this unique and exciting economic development opportunity to the people of Western Pennsylvania.”

Source: Governor’s Press Office, 6/6/2016

Op-ed: Cleaning the Chesapeake Bay Starts With Improving Local Water Quality: What We Can All Do

Pause for a moment and consider your nearest stream. Do you know where it goes? Chances are, if you live in one of the 41 counties covering central Pennsylvania, that water finds its way to the Susquehanna River and the Chesapeake Bay. This week, June 5-11, marks the first-ever Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week. It's a time to celebrate the Bay watershed's diverse waterways and landscapes, rich history, immense economic impact, and the aesthetic and recreational offerings it and all of its local waters provide to the 18 million people who live in its watershed.

The actions we take individually and collectively here in Pennsylvania have a profound influence on water quality in our backyards and in the Bay. There are a number of factors that impact water quality, from agricultural and urban stormwater runoff, to development, and the use of lawn fertilizers, among others. Because there are so many factors influencing water quality, we need everyone

to help address the impact of these activities and to meet the challenge of cleaning up our streams.

Pennsylvania has renewed its commitment to improving our streams and improving local water quality and the health of the Bay. To coordinate this approach and improve our local waterways, the Wolf administration has established a Chesapeake Bay Office within the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). With the Department of Agriculture and the State Conservation Commission, we have begun connecting with farmers to better understand the work they have already done to reduce runoff and improve local water quality, and to identify what we need to do to implement low-cost, high-value best management practices to continue this good work.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is leading an effort to work with numerous agencies, partners and landowners to expand forest buffers along waterways in the commonwealth as one of those best practices.

We are working with municipalities to better manage urban stormwater. Many of our Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems are getting ready to implement new permit requirements and will, for the first time, be obligated to achieve specific stormwater pollutant reductions in 2018. To help these communities understand these obligations, DEP is planning a series of workshops across the commonwealth this summer.

We need all the help we can get to celebrate the successes and focus on the challenges. There are some simple things you can do to support our streams and reduce the impact we all have on the Bay. For example, be judicious when applying fertilizer and pesticides on your lawns, gardens and farm fields.

Install a rain garden to manage water from your gutters instead of sending it into the street. Dispose of waste properly. Do not flush medications down the toilet. Compost your yard waste, or participate in a local clean-up.

Finally, make sure you take advantage of the vast opportunities that exist within Pennsylvania's rivers and streams. Go fishing. Rent a kayak. Hike

along a rail trail. Visit a state park. We promise you that as you connect with these resources, you'll come to the same conclusion we have: it is worth the effort to improve Pennsylvania's streams and rivers, and join the effort to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.

By Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding, Department of Environmental Protection Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell, and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams-Dunn

Source: DEP, 7/7/2016

Senate Approves Greenleaf Resolution Addressing Water Contamination

Today, the Pennsylvania Senate approved Senator Stewart J. Greenleaf's resolution urging the President and Congress of the United States to work with the Commonwealth to take all necessary action to ensure safe drinking water in Horsham, Warminster, and Warrington Townships in Montgomery County.

[Senate Resolution 384](#) further asks the EPA and the Department of Defense to discover the extent of the contamination, provide complete remediation, fully evaluate the health consequences, and provide assistance to residents and military personnel who have been impacted by the contamination.

Senator Greenleaf said, "Though we have been assured that the water is safe to drink, I believe all agencies and public officials should continue to work together to protect public health. This contamination has impacted many people and we are highly concerned about the long-term health consequences. I would like to see every possible action taken to assist residents and military and civilian personnel."

Source: Senator Greenleaf Press Release, 6/8/2016

House Bill 1436 Becomes Law

On June 12, 2016, the following bill became law:

Act 39 - House Bill 1436, sponsored by Rep. Godshall, amends Title 66 (Public Utilities), in rates and distribution systems, providing for computation of income tax expense for ratemaking purposes.

Source: Governor's Press Office, 6/12/2016

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