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



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

From Milliron & Goodman Government Relations, LLC.

200 North 3rd Street ♦ Suite 1500 ♦ Harrisburg, PA 17101 ♦ Phone: 717-232-5322 ♦ Cell: 717-574-3963 ♦
Erik A. Ross, Associate ♦ www.millirongoodman.com

Harrisburg, PA

Erik@millirongoodman.com

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

After Balanced Budget with Sustainable Revenues, Moody's Revises Commonwealth Outlook to Stable

On August 8, 2016, Governor Tom Wolf announced that Moody's Investor Service has revised Pennsylvania's outlook to stable from negative. This follows the final enactment of the commonwealth's 2016-17 budget that is balanced and includes sustainable, recurring revenue.

"The 2016-17 budget was an important step forward, and Moody's revision of Pennsylvania's outlook to stable from negative reflects that fact," said Governor Wolf. "Working with Republicans and Democrats in the legislature, we completed a budget that is balanced and includes sustainable, recurring revenue. When I came into office, following years of unbalanced budgets, the commonwealth faced a structural deficit of more than \$2 billion. Now, we have made significant progress in reducing the deficit, but we still have more to do and I look forward to continuing to work

with the legislature to fix the commonwealth's deficit."

Moody's said the following:

"Moody's Investors Service has revised the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's outlook to stable from negative... Still, the 2017 budget fight represents some improvement: the legislature and governor agreed on a budget, and a government that had been unable to pass new revenues in 2016 was able to do so in 2017."

For the entire report from Moody's, click [here](#).

Source: Governor Wolf's Press Office, 8/9/2016

Panel discussion on Pennsylvania water quality to be held at Ag Progress Days

Collaborative strategies to meet water-quality goals for Pennsylvania's rivers and streams while ensuring productive agriculture will be the topic of a panel discussion at this year's [Ag Progress Days](#) exposition.

The hour long event will begin at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 17, in the Special Events Building at the [Ag Progress Days site](#). Rick Roush, dean of Penn State's [College of Agricultural Sciences](#), and Russell Redding, state agriculture secretary, will host the discussion.

"Working Together to Meet Water Quality Goals in Pennsylvania" will focus on how a host of educational and governmental agencies can work together to identify and solve various environmental and economic problems related to the impact of agriculture on the state's waterways.

"Assisting Pennsylvania agriculture in addressing water-quality challenges is a priority area for the college," said Mary Wirth, College of Agricultural Sciences director of college relations and communications.

While meeting water-quality goals in agriculture is challenging, it can be achieved, according to Matthew Royer, director of the college's [Agriculture and Environment Center](#). "Farmers themselves are the solution to improving water quality," he said. "The culture of stewardship that is ingrained in Pennsylvania agriculture can form the basis of an exciting new consensus around meeting goals of viable farms and healthy streams."

In early March in Hershey, Royer coordinated a three-day conference, hosted by Penn State and other partners, to discuss Pennsylvania agriculture's role in and approach to Chesapeake Bay restoration. The event, titled "[Pennsylvania in the Balance](#)," included leaders in agriculture and the environment working together to identify new, innovative solutions that can help ensure that the state maintains a vibrant and productive agriculture industry, while meeting water-quality goals for the Commonwealth's rivers and streams and the Chesapeake Bay.

Following is the agenda for "Working Together to Meet Water Quality Goals in Pennsylvania":

- Welcome and Introductions, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding.
- U.S. Geological Survey Data Presentation, Michael Langland, USGS hydrologist.

- Update on the Best Management Practices Farm Survey and Next Steps, Jim Shortle, distinguished professor and director of the College of Agricultural Sciences' Environment and Natural Resources Institute, and Kelly Heffner, deputy secretary in the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.
- Themes from the Pennsylvania in the Balance Conference and Next Steps, Matt Royer, director of Penn State's Agriculture and Environment Center.
- Income-Producing Buffer Initiative, Pennsylvania Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources Cindy Dunn.
- Questions and Closing Remarks, Dean Rick Roush, Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences.

Three "Pennsylvania in the Balance" listening sessions, titled "Meeting Dual Goals of Vibrant Agriculture and Clean Water," also will be held. Those sessions will take place from 4 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 17, at the Special Events Building, and from 11 a.m. to noon at the College Exhibits Building theater and from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the United Farm Family Learning Center Building, both on Thursday, Aug. 18.

"The listening sessions are ways of inviting more producers, stakeholders and other interested members of the public to hear about conference outcomes and shape next steps and a path forward for meeting Pennsylvania's dual goals of viable, productive agriculture and clean water," Royer explained.

Sponsored by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, Ag Progress Days is held at the Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center at Rock Springs, 9 miles southwest of State College on Route 45. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 16; 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Aug. 17; and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aug. 18. Admission and parking are free.

For more information, visit the Ag Progress Days [website](#). Twitter users can find and share information about the event by using the hashtag #agprogressdays, and Facebook users can find the

event at
<https://www.facebook.com/AgProgressDays/> .

Source: Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, 8/4/2016

DRBC Releases Water Quality Assessment Report for the Lower Delaware River; Shows DRBC's SPW Program is Keeping the Clean Water Clean

The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) this week released its Lower Delaware River Special Protection Waters (SPW) Assessment of Measurable Changes to Existing Water Quality report.

The report compares baseline water quality data initially collected from 2000-2004 to the assessment period of 2009-2011. Extensive monitoring was conducted and water quality data were evaluated at 24 sites located on the Delaware River and tributaries in a 76-mile stretch of the river between Portland, Pa./Columbia, N.J. and Trenton, N.J.

“This assessment examines whether changes to existing water quality in this section of the river have occurred, and we are pleased to announce that, for most water quality parameters at most locations, there were no measurable changes to existing water quality,” said DRBC Executive Director Steve Tambini. “In fact, many tests revealed water quality improvements.”

DRBC noted that nutrients were one of the water quality parameters found to show improvement at most sites; this is good news, as these results appear to buck the national trend of nutrient degradation of waterbodies.

“The commission’s Special Protection Waters, or SPW, program is designed to prevent degradation where existing water quality is better than the established water quality standards through management and control of wastewater discharges

along with reporting requirements,” said Tambini. “This assessment demonstrates that DRBC’s SPW program is working and plays an important and positive role in protecting water quality in the Delaware River Basin.”

DRBC’s Special Protection Waters program covers the entire 197-mile non-tidal Delaware River from Hancock, N.Y. to Trenton, N.J. The SPW program aims to keep clean waters clean. In practice, the goal is to achieve no measurable change in existing water quality of SPW waters, except towards natural conditions. This is accomplished by taking a watershed approach, looking at the drainage area of the designated waters and considering impacts of various potential pollutant loadings, such as discharges from wastewater treatment plants. Monitoring is required to determine if measurable change is occurring at designated sites where existing water quality has been defined. The DRBC’s SPW regulations establish an anti-degradation policy on one of the longest stretches of any river in the nation.

Chloride was one of the few parameters where a measurable change did occur at several locations, but the monitored results remained well below levels that would impact the aquatic environment. This upward trend, which is not unique to the Delaware River, is likely caused by winter road salting in the watershed.

The complete [assessment report](#), [interactive map](#), and additional [SPW information](#) are available on the commission’s web site at www.drbc.net .

The DRBC is a federal/interstate government agency responsible for managing the water resources within the 13,539 square-mile Delaware River Basin without regard to political boundaries. The five commission members are the governors of the basin states (Delaware, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania) and the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ North Atlantic Division, who represents the federal government.

Source: DRBC Press Release, 8/8/2016

PUC Releases Annual Electric Service Reliability Report

On August 8, 2016, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) released its annual [Electric Service Reliability Report](#), detailing the performance of the state's electric distribution companies (EDCs) during 2015.

The PUC's annual reliability report measures performance based on various benchmarks and standards for the [state's 11 EDCs](#), including Citizens' Electric, Duquesne Light, Metropolitan Edison, PECO, Pennsylvania Electric, Pennsylvania Power, Pike County Light & Power, PPL Electric Utilities, UGI Utilities, Wellsboro Electric and West Penn Power.

Performance measurements documented in the report include the frequency and duration of outages; the frequency of momentary and sustained outages; and utility-specific information and analysis of outages causes; and major events that impacted power customers during 2015.

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" Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission on Facebook for easy access to information on utility issues.

Source: PUC Press Release, 8/8/2016

Water Resources Advisory Committee Rescheduled Meeting

The August 17, 2016, meeting of the Water Resources Advisory Committee (Committee) has been rescheduled for September 21, 2016, at 9:30 a.m. at the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Room 105, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

Questions concerning the next scheduled meeting of the Committee can be directed to Lee McDonnell at (717) 787-5017 or lmcdonnell@pa.gov. The agenda and meeting materials for the next meeting will be available on the Department of Environmental Protection's (Department) web site at <http://www.dep.pa.gov> (select "Public Participation," then "Advisory Committees," then "Water Advisory Committees," then "Water Resources Advisory Committee").

Persons in need of accommodations as provided for in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 should contact the Department at (717) 787-5017 or through the Pennsylvania AT&T Relay Service at (800) 654-5984 (TDD) to discuss how the Department may accommodate their needs.

Source: Pennsylvania Bulletin, [8/13/2016](#)

EPA and USDA Pledge Actions to Support America's Growing Water Quality Trading Markets

By Ann Mills, USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment and Ellen Gilinsky, EPA Office of Water Senior Policy Advisor

Over the last decade, states and others have discovered that they can meet their water quality improvement goals through lower costs and greater flexibility by using a voluntary water quality trading program.

Trading is based on the fact that sources in a watershed can face very different costs to control the same pollutant.

Trading programs allow facilities facing higher pollution control costs (like a wastewater treatment plant or a municipality with a stormwater permit) to meet their regulatory obligations by purchasing lower cost environmentally equivalent (or superior) pollution reductions (or credits) from another source, including farms that use conservation practices to efficiently reduce the movement of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment from their fields into local waterways. For example, Virginia’s nutrient trading program to offset stormwater phosphorous loads from new development has saved the Commonwealth more than \$1 million in meeting state water quality goals while providing economic incentives to local agricultural producers to reduce soil erosion and runoff. It’s a proven approach that creates new revenue streams for America’s farmers and ranchers while delivering significant environmental results.

Read [more](#).

Source: Water Headlines from EPA, 8/10/2016

White House Promotes EPA Innovation Challenges to Reduce Nutrients in Waterways

By Bruce Rodan, Assistant Director for Environmental Health for the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

Nutrients, particularly nitrogen and phosphorus, are essential for plant growth and for the production of food and livestock feed. Too much nitrogen and phosphorus in our waterways, however, can cause algal blooms, eutrophication, and hypoxia in lakes, estuaries, and oceans—damaging ecosystems and threatening human health far from the original site of application or deposition.

Open innovation to reduce nutrients in waterways is among the Administration’s top [100 leadership examples](#) in science, technology, and innovation. Federal agencies—OSTP, EPA, NOAA, USDA, USGS, and NIST—have come together to take action to improve nutrient management and reduce pollution, including by forming the Challenging Nutrients Coalition with engagement from academia and the private sector. One way the Administration has taken action in this area is by calling for challenges and prizes that seek potentially transformative ideas to tackle intractable problems.

Read [more](#).

Source: Water Headlines from EPA, 8/10/2016

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This newsletter provides general information, not legal advice as to any specific matter. It should not be used as a substitute for appropriate legal advice.