
WUC

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



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

From Milliron & Goodman Government Relations, LLC.

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

EPA Awards \$3.7 Million to Pennsylvania for Chesapeake Bay Restoration

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced that it is providing \$3.7 million to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) to implement best management practices (BMPs) on agricultural lands in Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These practices will reduce the loads of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment pollution going to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

"The Chesapeake Bay Program is an excellent example of cooperative federalism at work," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. "This funding will help Pennsylvania accelerate its progress in improving local water quality and restoring the Chesapeake Bay."

"Clean water is a top priority for EPA," said EPA Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio. "This funding will help Pennsylvania continue putting the necessary pollution control measures in place to restore local waters and the Chesapeake Bay. In addition, it helps to demonstrate our commitment in working with the agricultural

community where we see first-hand the successes and challenges of growing food and having local streams, as well as ensuring available water supplies, to support our farming communities."

"The most practical way to balance farmers' economic viability and the health of local waters is to enlist farmers in using environmentally conscious and economically sustainable best management practices," said Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "We're grateful for funding support from EPA that enables DEP to partner with farmers to plan and implement these practices. Achieving clean local waters takes boots on the ground farm by farm, stream by stream. With over 33,000 farms in Pennsylvania's part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, we simply couldn't do it without EPA's support."

This funding, which is being provided through EPA's Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG) program will support activities to help achieve and maintain the water quality necessary to fully restore the aquatic resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, including:

- Developing multiyear management plans;
- Chesapeake Bay education;

- Implementing local BMPs to control stormwater runoff;
- Developing agricultural nutrient and manure management plans;
- Installing agricultural BMPs;
- Funding cost share programs to reduce the cost to farmers of implementing BMPs; and
- Providing funding opportunities to Pennsylvania conservation districts for implementing local stormwater BMPs.

For more information about EPA’s Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant (CBIG) program, visit: https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/funding_and_finance

Source: EPA Press Release, 12/14/2017

PA’s New Chesapeake Bay Nutrient Reduction Targets for 2025 May Be Lower Than Originally Thought

Preliminary information from the modeling done for the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program shows Pennsylvania’s 2025 targets for reducing nutrients may be 7 million pounds less for nitrogen and 270,000 pounds less for phosphorus than originally thought.

Nicki Kasi, Director of DEP’s Chesapeake Bay Office, Wednesday told the [Steering Committee for Phase 3 of PA’s Chesapeake Bay Watershed Plan](#) better science, much better land use data and an improved model that closely tracks real-world water quality sampling results produced the lower numbers.

[DEP said earlier in the year](#) Pennsylvania had to reduce nitrogen by 34 million pounds by 2025. The new modeling shows a reduction of 25 to 26 million pounds is what’s needed in the Commonwealth.

The target phosphorus reductions declined slightly from 970,000 pounds to between 700,000 and 800,000 pounds.

Kasi and other presenters said improvements in science also found many existing best management practices were more effective than originally thought, which increased the pounds of nutrients on-the-ground practices actually yield.

The Phase 6 Model, the shorthand for the new model, also added many new approved best management practices states can use to meet their reduction targets. There are now over 400 approved BMPs.

DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell cautioned the group saying this is just the beginning of the target setting process for 2025.

Negotiations with other Chesapeake Bay Watershed states, and the outcome of discussions on how to account for growth, the reduced effectiveness of the Conowingo Dam in stopping pollutants from getting into the Bay and how to incorporate climate change impacts could also change the target numbers.

Click [here](#) to review a copy of the presentation made to the Committee.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be January 22 and will be held in Room 105 of the Rachel Carson Building starting at 1:00 p.m.

For more information on activities and for copies of handouts, visit the [Phase 3 Steering Committee Actions](#) webpage. For a description of activities in Pennsylvania to meet Chesapeake Bay cleanup commitments, visit DEP’s [Pennsylvania’s Chesapeake Bay Plan](#) webpage.

Source: PA Environmental Digest, 12/18/2017

Underwater Insects Aid DEP in Water Quality Checks

What Benthic Macroinvertebrates tell DEP researchers about water pollution and stream health

They're creepy. They're crawly. They're also an excellent indicator of water quality—they're the aquatic insects and animals that live in Pennsylvania's rivers, lakes, and streams. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is for the first time [visualizing benthic macroinvertebrate sampling results from across the state](#). The data is now publicly available in a [GIS viewer with downloadable data sets](#) for the first time as well.

Benthic macroinvertebrates are the insects and animals that spend most, if not all, of their lives underwater. They can be mayflies or midges, crayfish or clams, or one of many other underwater species, and are one of the most important parts of the food chain that fish, birds, and other animals depend on.

“Because they spend almost their entire lives in the water, benthic macroinvertebrates are especially attuned to water quality,” said Dustin Shull, Water Program Specialist for DEP. “They are an excellent way to gauge how healthy a particular section of stream or river is, and help DEP meet our obligations for monitoring water quality. This kind of biological assessment helps DEP see and assess long-term, cumulative effects of stressing factors on an ecosystem.”

Not all streams and rivers are created equal, and DEP has developed unique macroinvertebrate collection methods for freestone streams, limestone streams, and low-gradient streams. DEP uses these differing methods to get a complete picture of how many, what type, and how healthy the invertebrates are in any given habitat.

“DEP and partners have collected thousands of samples, and collect hundreds more every year to continue to deepen our knowledge base on the health of Pennsylvania's waters,” said Shull.

See examples of the different streams types, the methods used to sample them, and results of the sampling by visiting [Looking Below the Surface](#), DEP's interactive story map on benthic macroinvertebrates.

“This type of research is vital to decision-making that goes on at DEP,” said DEP Secretary Patrick

McDonnell. “We use the data collected and analyzed by program staff when we're looking at how to clean up watersheds and improve water quality in backyards and communities across Pennsylvania. And we want to make sure that Pennsylvania residents can see the data we're collecting, so they can know more about what is happening in their own area.”

To learn more about benthic macroinvertebrates, sampling, and water quality, please visit <http://www.depgis.state.pa.us/macroinvertebrate/index.html>

To retrieve sampling data, please visit <http://www.depgis.state.pa.us/macroviewer/index.html>

Source: DEP Press Release, 12/11/2017

DEP: Board and Committee Meeting Schedules for 2018

A list of 2018 meetings of advisory boards and committees associated with the Department of Environmental Protection can be found at www.pabulletin.com.

Meetings of interest can be found below:

Environmental Quality Board

The Environmental Quality Board will meet at 9 a.m. in Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA. Meetings will only be held when there are a sufficient number of agenda items for consideration.

The meeting dates are as follows:

- January 16, 2018
- February 20, 2018
- March 20, 2018
- April 17, 2018
- May 16, 2018 (moved to Wednesday due to primary election on May 15, 2018)
- June 19, 2018
- July 17, 2018

- August 21, 2018
- September 18, 2018
- October 16, 2018
- November 13, 2018
- December 18, 2018

Contact: Laura Edinger, Environmental Quality Board, P.O. Box 8477, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477 at ledinger@pa.gov or (717) 772-3277.

Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee

The Laboratory Accreditation Advisory Committee will meet at 9 a.m. in Room 206, Bureau of Laboratories Building, 2575 Interstate Drive, Harrisburg, PA.

The meeting dates are as follows:

- April 12, 2018
- October 16, 2018

Contact: Aaren Alger, Bureau of Laboratories, 2575 Interstate Drive, Harrisburg, PA at aaalger@pa.gov or (717) 346-7200.

Sewage Advisory Committee

The Sewage Advisory Committee will meet at 10:30 a.m. on the following dates:

- April 24, 2018—Susquehanna Conference Rooms A&B, Southcentral Regional Office, 909 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA
- September 12, 2018—Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA

Contact: Janice Vollero, Bureau of Clean Water, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA at jvollero@pa.gov or (717) 772-5157.

Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Board

The Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Board will meet quarterly in 2018. All meetings will begin at 9 a.m. in Room 105, Rachel

Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA (unless otherwise noted).

The meeting dates are as follows:

- March 29, 2018
- May 24, 2018
- August 16, 2018
- October 18, 2018—Susquehanna Conference Room, Southcentral Regional Office, 909 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA

Contact: Dawn Hissner, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA at dhissner@pa.gov or (717) 772-2189.

State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators

The State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators will meet at 10 a.m. in the 10th Floor Conference Room, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA.

The meeting dates are as follows:

- February 8, 2018
- April 11, 2018
- June 13, 2018
- August 15, 2018
- October 17, 2018
- December 12, 2018

Contact: Edgar Chescattie, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water, Operator Certification, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA at echescattie@pa.gov or (717) 772-2814.

Water Resources Advisory Committee

The Water Resources Advisory Committee will meet at 9:30 a.m. in Room 105, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA.

The meeting dates are as follows:

- January 25, 2018
- March 14, 2018
- May 9, 2018

- July 11, 2018
- September 19, 2018
- November 14, 2018

Contact: Diane Wilson, Bureau of Clean Water, 400 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA at diawilson@pa.gov or (717) 787-3730.

Source: Pennsylvania Bulletin, [12/15/2017](#)

Senators Yudichak, Baker to Introduce Bipartisan Bill on Testing Children for Lead Poisoning

Sen. John Yudichak (D-Luzerne), Minority Chair of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, and Sen. Lisa Baker (R-Luzerne) have [circulated a memo to colleagues](#) asking them to co-sponsor legislation providing for universal testing of children for lead exposure.

The Senators said, “[The] effects of lead poisoning are irreversible and severe, including neurological and developmental disabilities. No level of lead is safe for children, and symptoms may not present themselves until it is too late.

“Based on the Department of Health’s most recent [Childhood Lead Surveillance Annual Report](#), only 28 percent of Pennsylvania children under the age of two were screened for blood lead levels in 2015.

“However, testimony presented at a recent public hearing of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee informed us that ALL children may be at risk—based on exposure in their homes or relatives’ homes, in care and educational facilities, or in playgrounds, among other areas.

“Recent discussions and research demonstrate that universal lead testing is a practical and effective protective measure to reduce instances of lead poisoning. Accordingly, our legislation seeks to ensure that all children at ages one and two, as well as pregnant women, are tested.

“Similar legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives as House Bill 666 (Cruz-D-Philadelphia).

“Ten other states and Washington D.C. have already implemented similar laws, and it is important that we act to do the same. We hope you will join us in co-sponsoring this measure.”

Senate Lead Task Force

In June the Senate passed [Senate Resolution 33](#) (Yudichak-D-Luzerne) creating a [bipartisan task force](#) to investigate the scope of Pennsylvania’s lead exposure problem.

In October, the task force members were named and the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee held a hearing in Luzerne County on the issue.

[Gov. Wolf has also called for](#) the universal testing of blood-lead levels in children.

For more information on lead exposure, intervention and education, visit the [Department of Health’s Lead Poisoning webpage](#). For more information on lead in drinking water, visit [DEP’s Lead In Drinking Water webpage](#).

Source: PA Environmental Digest, 12/18/2017

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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.