
WUC

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



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

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

DEP Awards Grant Funding for Cleaner, Safer Western Pennsylvania Streams

Several western Pennsylvania communities and the Flight 93 National Memorial will enjoy safer, cleaner streams for improved public health and recreation uses, thanks to \$1.6 million in grants from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for local projects to remove acid mine drainage (AMD).

"Pennsylvania continues to chip away at the immense challenge of restoring streams impaired before the creation of environmental regulations," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "These projects bring together the best resources in planning, design, construction, and maintenance to help bring streams back to life."

Seven projects will help restore more than 20 miles of streams in four counties and at the Flight 93 National Memorial site. The projects are as follows:

Clearfield County

- **Clearfield County Conservation District** received \$249,500 to improve recreational use

of Little Beaver Run in Decatur Township by designing and building an AMD treatment system, including a pond, wetland, and limestone bed, to reduce acidity.

Fayette County

- **Mountain Watershed Association** received \$426,279 for new work to maintain remediation and address new discharges in the Gallentine and Sagamore AMD passive treatment systems in Saltlick and Springfield townships. The two systems are integral to maintaining water quality in Indian Creek, which prior AMD remediation has restored to a trout-stocked fishery.

Indiana County

- **Indiana County Conservation District** received \$83,624 to develop a plan to restore 18 miles of AMD-impaired streams in the Yellow Creek Watershed. The conservation district office will assess the watershed on foot and via drone and discharge sampling along Yellow Creek. They'll then develop a restoration plan that will guide future cleanup strategies and enable existing and planned AMD treatment systems to qualify for funding.

- **Stream Restoration Incorporated** received \$57,559 to develop a plan to restore Aultman's Run Watershed, which has 69 miles of stream and covers parts of Indiana and Armstrong counties. Completion of the restoration plan will guide future cleanup strategies and enable five planned AMD and coal refuse cleanup projects to qualify for funding.

Somerset County

- **Paint Creek Regional Watershed Association** received \$48,193 for limestone treatment to restore AMD-impaired headwaters of Babcock Creek in Gallitzin State Forest. The project is anticipated to expand local habitat for Pennsylvania's state fish, the brook trout.
- **Somerset County Conservation District** received \$551,319 for construction of an AMD passive treatment system on Lamberts Run in Stonycreek Township, one mile from the Flight 93 National Memorial. In addition to removing the final source of AMD impairment in Lamberts Run Watershed, the system is expected to improve water quality in the upper Stonycreek River. This project complements existing DEP-led treatment at the headwaters of Lamberts Run on the Flight 93 property.
- **Shade Creek Watershed Association** received \$208,141 for AMD treatment on Coal Run in State Game Land 228, Shade Township. The project will restore more than 4 miles of stream and maintain previous mine drainage treatment in the headwaters of Shade Creek, which are supporting native brook trout populations.

The grants come from the state Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Act Fund and a state AML Set Aside fund supported by the federal Abandoned Mine Land Program.

Source: DEP Press Release, 11/28/2018

DEP Inspections Find Small Farms Are Making Good

Strides to Improve PA Water Quality

On November 29, 2018, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) reported on the commitment of Pennsylvania's farmers to reducing pollutants in local streams and rivers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Department inspections resulted in 96 percent of almost 3,000 small farms visited in the watershed meeting state requirements for water quality planning.

"DEP's expanded inspections program is a winning formula to improve stream health in our 43 counties in the Bay watershed," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "It documents the good work many farmers are doing voluntarily to develop plans to reduce pollution. Just as important, it creates productive working relationships that help farmers meet their plan obligations."

Farmers are required to have a Manure Management Plan to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous levels, an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan to reduce sediment levels, or both.

"Nurturing living things is what farmers do," Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding said. "Pennsylvania's farmers have demonstrated that they understand the connection between clean water downstream, and healthy soil and water for Pennsylvania. We certainly have more work to do, but these inspection results demonstrate that farmers are committed to doing their part to improve water quality."

DEP, Conservation District offices, and the State Conservation Commission teamed up on inspections. They visited 2,924 farms, covering more than 329,000 acres of farmland. Focusing on smaller farms, they inspected operations averaging 87 acres in size.

The results show that many farmers are willing to develop plans to reduce pollutants in local waters: Two-thirds of farmers visited already had their plan prepared at the time of inspection. Almost all the remaining one-third worked with conservation districts and agricultural consultants to

develop their plan by the end of the inspection year. The program covered July 2017-July 2018.

"Education is a large part of the program, as we use inspections as a catalyst to help farmers understand what's needed and get them on track to develop and ultimately act on their plans. Action to improve water quality is our ultimate goal," said Secretary McDonnell.

The results represent the second year of the inspections program, which DEP launched in 2016 to complement existing state farm inspection programs. While inspections currently focus on plan development, the goal is to begin focusing on plan implementation in 2019-2020.

Pennsylvania has 33,610 farms, spanning three million acres in agricultural land use, in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Source: DEP Press, 11/29/2018

State Senate Committee Holds Hearing in Pittsburgh on Climate Change

At the request of state Senate Democratic Leader Jay Costa, the Senate Democratic Policy Committee held a hearing in Pittsburgh on local and state efforts to address climate change.

"In the absence of federal leadership on climate change, it is imperative that Pennsylvania continue to participate in cooperative efforts to stave off the catastrophic consequences of global warming," Costa (D-Allegheny) said. "We need to maintain efforts to keep Pennsylvania on track to combat climate change."

Sen. Lisa Boscola (D-Northampton/Lehigh), who chairs the committee, added, "Controlling carbon emissions and building a strong economy are not competing interests. There are numerous ways we can slow the devastating effects of climate change while strengthening and expanding our economy."

In withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord in 2017, President Donald Trump defended his decision by claiming he was "elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris." Costa and Sen. Wayne Fontana (D-Allegheny) immediately joined Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto in criticizing the president's decision.

In the accord, the United States had committed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 26-28 percent below the 2005 level in 2025, and to make "best efforts" to reduce emissions by 28 percent. That would include curbs on carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, perfluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride and nitrogen trifluoride, all of which contribute to global warming.

Determined to engage state and local resources in the absence of federal support, Costa introduced legislation ([Senate Bill 15](#)) aimed at keeping Pennsylvania in compliance with the carbon emissions reduction goals of the accord.

Several bills and proposals were introduced to supplement existing environmental protection efforts included in the decade-old Alternative Energy Portfolio Standard (AEPS) and Energy Efficiency and Conservation law (Act 129).

Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald discussed the county's efforts to embrace alternative and sustainable fuels and emerging strategies aimed at reducing carbon emissions. He mentioned goals aimed at reducing vehicular miles and transitioning to cleaner mass transit fuels as an example.

Grant Ervin, who serves as Pittsburgh's chief resilience officer, said it is the role of local governments to "provide for the health, safety and welfare of our residents. Addressing the issues of climate change falls directly within that purview; and makes cities, boroughs and townships some of the best points of delivery to both mitigate carbon emissions as well as provide for the adaptation of our changing climate."

Mandy Warner, senior manager for climate and air policy, Environmental Defense Fund, added, "The federal government's leadership on climate may have stalled, but Pennsylvania has a significant opportunity to lead by setting a declining limit on

carbon pollution, and creating the opportunity for flexible, market-based solutions to achieve the limit."

Spokespersons for the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce and coal industry pointed to the importance of fossil fuels toward economic development and business production goals. They claimed that current alternative energy options do not provide the reliability and necessary volume of energy aimed at maintaining the state's electricity and energy supply. While insisting that a zero-carbon emissions goal is currently unrealistic, they noted that technological advancement has enabled them to continually reduce carbon emissions.

Boscola and Costa also claim that addressing climate change could spark investment in renewable energy initiatives and create new economic development and expansion opportunities.

"Infrastructure investment, technology development from research to manufacturing to sales, workforce development, educational programs and community development can all be part of an economic boom if we build our energy portfolio with a healthy mix of alternative fuels," Costa said.

Joining Senators Costa and Boscola at the hearing were Senator Wayne Fontana (D-Allegheny) and Senator-elect Lindsey Williams.

Hearing participants included the following:

- George Hartenstein, Deputy Secretary, Department of Environmental Protection
- Grant Ervin, Chief Resiliency Officer, City of Pittsburgh
- Ashley Funk, Plaintiff, Our Children's Trust
- Dr. Deborah Gentile, Pediatric Allergy Physician
- Rachel Gleason, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Coal Alliance
- Kevin Sunday, Director of Government Affairs, PA Chamber of Commerce
- Mandy Warner, Senior Manager for Climate & Air Policy, Environmental Defense Fund
- Tom Schuster, Campaign Representative, Sierra Club
- Marcel Minutolo, Associate Professor of

Business Management, Robert Morris University

- Khari Mosely, President of Blue Green Alliance
- Joelle N. Salerno, Government Affairs Director, National Electrical Contractors Association

Source: Senate Democratic Communications, 11/28/2018

PUC #UtilityCareers Campaign Earns International Recognition for Communications & Public Education

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) has received international recognition for creative communications - showcasing the PUC's ongoing [#UtilityCareers campaign](#), which was launched to highlight the types of utility careers available in Pennsylvania and to encourage more talented individuals of all ages and backgrounds to consider careers in the utility sector.

The Commission has received a [2018 MarCom Gold Award](#), the second year in a row that the PUC's public outreach and education efforts have drawn international honors. The MarCom award is one of the oldest, largest and most prestigious creative competitions in the world - recognizing outstanding achievement by creative professionals involved in the concept, direction, design and production of communication materials and programs.

"We are honored that this year's MarCom award recognizes the PUC's #UtilityCareers campaign and our collaborative effort to highlight this important workforce development issue," said PUC Chairman Gladys M. Brown. "The PUC is committed to our public service mission, and we are grateful that our team of dedicated communications professionals has again been selected as among the best in the industry."

The PUC's #UtilityCareers campaign was honored alongside the work of numerous U.S. and

global businesses and organizations including the American Heart Association, Comcast, Hilton Worldwide, IBM, Microsoft, National Geographic, Nissan North America, PepsiCo and the PGA Tour. Other MarCom Gold Award winners from Pennsylvania include Temple University Health System, Fox Chase Cancer Center, Villanova School of Business, the American College of Physicians, the Pennsylvania State Employees Credit Union (PSECU), the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, FedEx and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

The [2018 MarCom](#) award winners were selected from more than 6,500 worldwide entries. Judges were tasked with looking for entities whose talent exceeds a high standard of excellence and whose work serves as a benchmark for the industry. MarCom is sponsored and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals (AMCP), an international organization for creative professionals.

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](#). 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, 11/30/2018

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