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



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

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Senator Scarnati Appoints Senators Argall and Ward to Senate Republican Leadership Team

Senator David Argall (R-29) and Senator Kim Ward (R-39) have been appointed by Senate President Pro Tempore Joe Scarnati (R-25) to leadership positions within the Senate Republican Caucus.

Senator Argall has been re-appointed to serve as Chairman of the Senate Majority Policy Committee. Senator Kim Ward will serve as Caucus Administrator

"I am pleased to appoint Senator Argall and Senator Ward to serve as members of the 2019-20 Republican Leadership Team," Scarnati said. "I am confident that they will each bring great perspective and direction as we work together to strengthen our Commonwealth."

Source: Senate Republican Communications,
1/8/2019

Sen. Boscola Re-appointed Democratic Chair of Senate Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure

State Sen. Lisa Boscola (D-Northampton/Lehigh) has been re-appointed as Democratic chair of the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee.

"I am proud of my work on this important committee and will continue to fight for consumers," Boscola said. "I will also continue to encourage utility companies to provide more reliable service and minimize power outages."

The committee reviews legislation involving utility issues and the state boards that license and regulate numerous professions in Pennsylvania.

Over the years, the committee has held utility storm response hearings, urged utility companies to step up work on replacing its aging pipelines and pressed companies to limit rate hikes.

Senate Democratic Leader Jay Costa (D-Allegheny), who re-appointed Boscola to the post, praised her for her expertise, experience and work protecting consumers. The Northampton County lawmaker has served as Democratic chair of the committee since she was first elected to the Senate in 1998.

Last month, the Bethlehem lawmaker was also re-elected by her Democratic colleagues to chair the Senate Democratic Policy Committee. Under Boscola's leadership, the committee has held numerous hearings in Bethlehem and throughout the state on issues ranging from job creation to educational reform.

Source: Senator Boscola Press Release, 1/8/2019

Vitali named Democratic chairman of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

State Rep. Greg Vitali was recently named Democratic chairman of the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee for the 2019-20 session.

"We must address the serious threats facing our environment," said Vitali, D-Delaware/Montgomery. "My focus in the legislature has been on environmental policy, and I look forward to the challenge of chairing this committee."

The committee majority chairman is state Rep. Daryl Metcalfe, R-Butler.

Vitali said his priorities include increasing funding for the Department of Environmental Protection, reducing methane emissions from the oil and gas industry, and dealing with the climate change impacts of the threatened closing of the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant.

Vitali previously served as a member of the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

for 24 years, spending the last four of those years as chairman.

Source: Rep. Vitali Press Release, 1/8/2019

Yaw Reappointed Chairman of Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

State Sen. Gene Yaw (R-23) was reappointed to serve as Chairman of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee for the 2019-2020 Legislative Session. Yaw has served as chairman of the committee since 2013, and was reappointed to the post by Senate President Pro Tempore Joseph Scarnati (R-25).

The Committee has broad jurisdiction over the state's energy resources and development, including regulations and conservation efforts; public lands and their renewable resources; surface mining, coal, oil, and gas, and mineral leasing; air and water resources.

"I thank Sen. Scarnati for his trust to lead this important committee in the new Session," said Sen. Yaw. "I look forward to working with my fellow Senators to advance bipartisan solutions to strengthen our laws and regulations to further protect Pennsylvania's streams, rivers and forest land for future generations."

"I am pleased to appoint Senator Yaw to continue to serve as Chairman of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee for the 2019-2020 Legislative Session," Senator Scarnati said. "I am confident that in this role he will continue to provide the Committee with strong leadership and be a champion for advancing important environmental protection measures."

During the 2017-2018 Legislative Session, Senator Yaw prime-sponsored a package of bills allowing natural gas royalty interest owners the opportunity to inspect records of gas companies to verify proper payment, as well as prohibiting a

natural gas company from retaliating against a royalty interest owner by terminating the lease agreement or ceasing development because a landowner questions the accuracy of the royalty payments. Further, Sen. Yaw championed legislation, Senate Bill 144, through the Environmental Committee amending the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act to provide for the use of alternate on-lot sewage systems for a new land development. Governor Wolf signed the bill into law as Act 26.

In addition to Sen. Yaw's role as committee chairman, he also continues to serve as one of 21 members of the tri-state Chesapeake Bay Commission, and as Chairman of the Board for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, a bipartisan, bicameral legislative research agency of the General Assembly.

Source: Senator Yaw Press Release, 1/7/2019

Meet Aneca Atkinson Serving As Acting DEP Deputy For Water Programs

The Department of Environmental Protection named Aneca Atkinson as Acting Deputy Secretary for Water Program to replace Tim Schaeffer who moved to the Fish and Boat Commission as Executive Director.



Atkinson has been with DEP since June 2007 as an environmental engineer for several water permitting programs, including stormwater construction permitting.

Aneca began working at DEP more than 10 years ago in the Southeast Regional Office as a permit reviewer in the Waterways and Wetlands Program, and was chief of the Stormwater Construction Section in the Bureau of Clean Water before taking on Program Integration.

She most recently served as Director of the **Bureau of Program Integration** <https://www.dep.pa.gov/BUSINESS/PROGRAMINTEGRATION/Pages/default.aspx> which is responsible for evaluating statewide program implementation and maintenance for consistency, effectiveness and efficiency.

Prior to joining DEP, Aneca worked for Boucher & James, Inc., an engineering firm in Southeast Pennsylvania.

She has a Master's Degree in Water Resources and Environmental Engineering from Villanova University and a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering from Smith College.

Source: PA Environmental Digest Daily Blog, 1/10/2019

Governor Wolf Establishes First Statewide Goal to Reduce Carbon Pollution in Pennsylvania

New Executive Order Will Help Reduce Emissions by 26 Percent by 2025, 80 Percent by 2050

On January 8, 2019, Governor Tom Wolf announced that he has signed a new **executive order** <https://www.oa.pa.gov/Policies/eo/Documents/2019-01.pdf> establishing the first statewide goal to reduce carbon pollution in Pennsylvania, which is contributing to climate change. The executive order also establishes the GreenGov Council to boost green and sustainable practices in state government to help achieve the goals set in the executive order, while saving taxpayers money and creating jobs in the state's clean energy economy.

"In the absence of leadership from the federal government, states and cities are stepping up and doing their part to reduce emissions," said Governor Wolf. "Today I am proud to declare the commonwealth's intention to address climate change, the most critical environmental threat facing the world."

The commonwealth will work to achieve a 26 percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 and an 80 percent reduction by 2050, from 2005 levels. The GreenGov Council will work with all state agencies to reduce energy use in state government and improve the energy efficiency of state buildings and vehicles, saving taxpayers money in the process.

The GreenGov Council will serve as a central coordinating body to promote the implementation of the executive order and the achievement of the following state agency performance goals:

- Reduce overall energy consumption by 3 percent per year, and 21 percent by 2025, as compared to 2017 levels.
- Replace 25 percent of the state passenger car fleet with battery electric and plug-in electric hybrid cars by 2025.
- Procure renewable energy to offset at least 40 percent of the commonwealth's annual electricity use.

"Commonwealth agencies can continue to demonstrate their commitment to both environmental and fiscal stewardship by implementing best practices to reduce energy and resource consumption, improve energy efficiency, realize cost savings, and protect the environment," said Governor Wolf.

The GreenGov Council will encourage and coordinate the incorporation of environmentally sustainable practices into the commonwealth government's policy, planning, operations, procurement, and regulatory functions, and strive for continuous improvement in efficiency and performance.

Secretaries of the Departments of General Services, Environmental Protection, and Conservation and Natural Resources will co-chair the Council.

The governor announced the new executive order at an event celebrating the public-private collaboration happening in the city of Pittsburgh to help bolster the city's climate action plan. Today, Peoples Gas announced a commitment to cut methane emissions from Pittsburgh's distribution system by 50 percent using advanced leak detection methods developed in partnership with Environmental Defense Fund and Google Earth Outreach to map and measure leaks coming from underground pipes. The pledge is the first of its kind by a United States utility.

Source: Governor Wolf's Press Office, 1/8/2019

DEP to Build on Modernization and Efficiency Measures in 2019

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announces continued reductions in both the review time and backlog of pending permit applications, and debuts two modernization and efficiency measures that will continue to increase permitting efficiency.

This week, DEP formally opened the Regional Permit Coordination Office (RPCO), a centralized permitting office to assist with construction permitting and coordination related to erosion and sediment control (Chapter 102) and water obstruction and encroachment (Chapter 105). Specifically, the RPCO will assist with construction permitting for large-scale, multi-county or multi-regional infrastructure projects, such as pipelines and highways. DEP also announces that it will be rebalancing workload among its regional offices by transferring responsibility for all applicable regulatory programs in Armstrong and Indiana counties from its Southwest Regional Office to the Northwest Regional Office.

"The department receives more than 30,000 permit applications a year, and each of these

permits is important to a project somewhere in the commonwealth," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "Over the past four years DEP has focused its efforts on increased responsiveness, improved customer service, and working smarter and more efficiently to improve operations."

In January 2018, Governor Tom Wolf and DEP **announced plans** <https://www.governor.pa.gov/governor-wolf-dep-taking-action-reduce-backlogs-improve-oversight-modernize-permit-process/> to modernize the permit process, reduce the backlog, improve oversight, and sought a \$2.5 million budget allocation to facilitate the strategy.

In the past year, DEP's Southwest Regional Office reduced backlog of permits in the region by more than 75 percent and shortened its review timeline for erosion and sediment control general permits by more than 220 days. The allocation of two counties to the northwest region will aid in anticipated continued commercial, energy, and infrastructure development in the southwest. Mining and radiation protection programs are not affected by this regional office change.

In addition to assisting with construction permitting for large-scale, multi-county or multi-regional infrastructure projects, such as pipelines and highways, the RPCO will work with existing DEP bureaus to provide statewide technical support to regions and add additional emphasis on project coordination and consistency. DEP will transfer some of its permitting functions from the regions to streamline project development and permit processing, reduce redundant operations, and provide effective service and project delivery.

In addition to these new measures, DEP has also aggressively focused on data-driven tools and resources, including the development of e-Permitting and e-Inspections:

- DEP now offers e-permitting for well drilling and erosion and sedimentation control at oil and gas sites (ESCGP), surface coal mining, air emissions from certain natural gas activities (GP-5 and GP-5A), Chapter 105 water obstruction and encroachment general permits, storage tank renewals, radiation protection x-ray

registration renewals, and other regulated activities.

- DEP now performs e-inspection for oil and gas sites, erosion and sedimentation, waterways encroachment, waste management, spill cleanup, and emergency response. In the Oil & Gas program specifically, e-inspections have increased inspector efficiency by 20 percent.
- DEP is embarking on an effort to digitize regional files while also requesting electronic submissions. Electronic files and databases housed on DEP's website and other operational changes are designed to improve the Right to Know Law and informal file review processes, reinforcing DEP's commitment to transparency.
- DEP has significantly improved permitting efficiency by meeting with and clearly communicating permitting and regulatory requirements to the regulated community and consultants.

"As we move to more data-driven tools and resources, we're also able to evaluate current and anticipated staffing needs," said McDonnell. "While we strive to increase efficiency, we're also making sure our professional staff have the resources and training necessary to carry out regulatory oversight"

With these changes, McDonnell would like to continue working with the regulated community to determine their needs, and address opportunities to improve consistency in applications.

Effective January 10, 2019, inquiries and correspondence regarding new permit applications, reporting, and compliance matters related to sites in Armstrong and Indiana Counties should be directed to DEP's **Northeast Regional Office** <https://www.dep.pa.gov/About/Regional/NorthwestRegion/Pages/default.aspx> . Questions on permit applications under review as of January 9, 2019, and pending enforcement matters for Armstrong and Indiana Counties should be directed to DEP's **Southwest Regional Office** <https://www.dep.pa.gov/About/Regional/SouthwestRegion/Pages/default.aspx> . Inquiries can also be directed to RA-epcontactus@pa.gov .

The RPCO can be reached by calling 717-772-5987 or kgoudy@pa.gov.

Source: DEP Press Release, 1/10/2019

Wolf Administration Announces Public-Private Initiative to Promote Innovative Farming Practices for Health, Environmental, and Economic Benefits in Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Department of Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Patrick McDonnell joined six public and private partners in launching the High Performance Farms Initiative to help increase environmental sustainability, economic benefits, public health, and soil and water quality by promoting innovative farming practices in Pennsylvania's part of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

"The health of our farms, soil, and water is inextricably linked to the health of our communities," said Secretary Redding at a ceremonial partnership signing event at the 103rd Farm Show. "This initiative recognizes that stewardship of our farms and natural resources is also linked to our dinner plates and farm gates."

Joining the Department of Agriculture and DEP in the High Performance Farms Initiative are the State Conservation Commission, Pennsylvania Certified Organic, the Rodale Institute, the Pennsylvania Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and Bell and Evans Farms.

"In Pennsylvania, we want vital communities. We need healthy farms. We rely on economic development that sustains jobs and thriving businesses," said Secretary McDonnell. "The High Performance Farms Initiative represents a growing energy across sectors for expanding partnerships

that generate innovative approaches to ensure this quality of life for Pennsylvanians."

Partners in the High Performance Farms Initiative will develop a program demonstrating that:

- Healthy waters rely heavily on the agriculture sector. Reducing pollution from stormwater runoff requires a holistic, regional and watershed approach encompassing rural, urban, and suburban sectors.
- Practices that improve soil health also improve nutrient management and long-term sustainability of farms.
- Organic feed and food is a growth market with long-term environmental, health, and economic benefits. This requires the development of market drivers and financial incentives to increase farmers' transition from traditional practices.

Source: DEP Press Release, 1/11/2019

PA Chesapeake Bay Watershed Planning Steering Committee Meets Jan. 16

The PA Chesapeake Bay Watershed Planning Steering Committee is scheduled to meet on January 16 to hear updates from two of the counties involved in the **County Clean Water Planning Pilot Project** <http://www.paenvironmentdigest.com/newsletter/default.asp?NewsletterArticleID=45494&SubjectID=> and a presentation from the Penn State Agriculture and Environment Center on more Farm Survey results.

Allyson Gibson and the Lancaster Clean Water Partners will give a presentation on the status of Lancaster County's proposed action plan for meeting nutrient and sediment pollution reduction targets.

Felicia Dell, Pam Shellenberger and John Seitz from the York County Planning Commission will

provide a similar presentation for the York County action plan.

Penn State Agriculture and Environment Center Director Matt Royer will give a presentation on the results of their deeper dive into the 2016 Farm Survey the Center undertook to help identify additional conservation measures farmers adopted in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed that were not previously counted.

The results from over 7,000 farms were reviewed again by the Center to determine trends of adopting farm conservation measures based on size of farms, type of farms, funding assistance, location in the watershed and other factors.

The trends uncovered in the Center's additional analysis will be presented to help guide decisions about the best way to provide farmers with assistance to get more conservation practices on the ground.

The meeting will be in Room 105 of the Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg from 1:00 to 3:30.

Click [here](#)

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For more information, visit the **PA Chesapeake Bay Watershed Planning Steering Committee webpage** at <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/Pennsylvania%20Chesapeake%20Bay%20Program%20Office/WIP3/Pages/WIP-Steering-Committee-Actions.aspx>.

Source: PA Environmental Digest, 1/14/2019

Water Resources Advisory Committee Meets On Chapt. 102 ePermitting, Alternative To TMDLs, Small Project Permit, Floodplain Restoration Jan. 24

DEP's Water Resources Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet on January 24 to discuss a variety of issues, including:

- **Chapter 102 ePermitting:** An update on the status of e-permitting for erosion and sedimentation control permits. Click here for presentation <http://files.dep.state.pa.us/PublicParticipation/Advisory%20Committees/AdvCommPortalFiles/WRAC/2019/012419/ePermitting01.24.19.pdf>.
- **Alternative To TMDLs:** A presentation on how the Total Maximum Daily Load watershed plan process will be changing to include Alternative Restoration Plans designed to be more effective in dealing with small agricultural watersheds. Click here for presentation <http://files.dep.state.pa.us/PublicParticipation/Advisory%20Committees/AdvCommPortalFiles/WRAC/2019/012419/TMDLAlternative01.24.19.pdf>.
- **NPDES PAG-01 Small Project Permit:** A discussion of the NPDES permit for earth disturbance activities associated with small construction activities which DEP hopes will simplify the permit process for many development projects.
- **Legacy Sediment Restoration:** A presentation on legacy sediment restoration and the results of the Big Spring Run Project in Lancaster County <http://www.paenvironmentdigest.com/newsletter/default.asp?NewsletterArticleID=35357>.

The meeting will be held in Room 105 of the Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg starting at 9:30.

For more information and available handouts, visit the Water Resources Advisory Committee webpage at <https://www.dep.pa.gov/PublicParticipation/AdvisoryCommittees/WaterAdvisory/WRAC/Pages/Agendas-and-Handouts.aspx>.

Questions should be directed to Diane Wilson, 717-787-3720 or by sending email to: diawilson@pa.gov.

Source: PA Environmental Digest, 1/14/2019

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