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# 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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### PFBC to Host COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic on December 13 in Harrisburg

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) is partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Health to host a COVID-19 vaccine clinic on Monday, December 13 at the PFBC headquarters located at:  
1601 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

The clinic will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is open to the public. Free parking is available.

All three vaccines and boosters (Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson) will be available for free. Those wishing to attend should note:

- Children ages 5-11 can receive the Pfizer pediatric vaccine.
- Individuals 12-17 are eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine, while Individuals 18 and older can receive any of the three vaccines.
- Individuals 18 and older can receive a booster, provided it has been six months since their second dose of Pfizer or Moderna, or two months since their single dose of Johnson & Johnson.

- Individuals 16-17-years-old are eligible to receive the Pfizer booster.

For the latest information on COVID-19 vaccines and boosters, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html?s\\_cid=10466:should%20i%20vaccinate:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY21](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/vaccine-benefits.html?s_cid=10466:should%20i%20vaccinate:sem.ga:p:RG:GM:gen:PTN:FY21).

2022 Pennsylvania fishing licenses, permits, and gift vouchers will also be available for purchase during this event. The price of an annual resident fishing license in 2022 is still \$22.97. Multi-year options are also available in 3, 5, and 10-year increments. The most popular add-ons, a trout permit and a Lake Erie permit cost \$9.97 each, or \$15.97 for a combination permit which includes both privileges.

For more information, visit <http://www.fishandboat.com/>.

Source: PFBC, 12/10/2021

### Delaware River Basin Commissioners Celebrate the DRBC's 60 Years of Managing, Protecting &

# Improving the Basin's Water Resources

The Delaware River Basin Commission's (DRBC) 60th anniversary and its accomplishments over the years were recognized during its fourth-quarter public business meeting, held on December 8, 2021.

“At the November 2, 1961, ceremonial signing of the Delaware River Basin Compact, President John F. Kennedy referred to the formation of the DRBC as a ‘bold venture,’” said Steve Tambini DRBC Executive Director. “I am here today, sixty years later, to say that the venture is working. The Commission, through interstate planning, science, engineering and management, has successfully improved and protected water quality, ensured water availability and resiliency for diverse water users and stands ready to meet future water resource challenges in our Basin.”

Tambini also unveiled a new timeline celebrating the DRBC's 60 years of water resources management. The timeline can be viewed at <https://timelinedrbc.gov/>.

The DRBC's five Commissioners, the governors of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Delaware, and the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' North Atlantic Division, shared congratulatory letters for the milestone. At the business meeting, each Commissioner's representative said a few words commemorating the DRBC's 60th anniversary and shared excerpts from the Commissioners' letters and proclamations.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers North Atlantic Division Commander Brigadier General Thomas Tickner wrote:

The history of this Commission is storied and impressive. From its beginnings, the DRBC became a model in water quality control, soon reversing decades of pollution suffered throughout the lower Delaware River ... For the millions of Americans who rely on the Delaware River to provide clean drinking water, agricultural and commercial use, recreation, river faring and more, the DRBC is an essential partner in their everyday lives ... To our

partners on the Commission and staff members of all parties, past and present who have made this mission possible ... congratulations for all you do.

## **Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf wrote:**

Since its inception, the Delaware River Basin Commission has encouraged people to find the need for federal-interstate coordinating to lead the fight in conserving, developing and administering the Delaware River Basin's resource, and to preserve and enhance the value of its scenic and recreational location. I commend the Delaware River Basin Commission for their service to the Commonwealth by enhancing public welfare through the means of comprehensive planning, water supply allocation, management of the water resources, and more ... As Governor and on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania it is my pleasure to congratulate the DRBC on [its] 60th anniversary.

## **New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy wrote in a proclamation:**

As Governor, it is my pleasure to commend and recognize the Delaware River Basin Commission for its vision to provide trusted, effective and coordinated management of our shared water resources. The Delaware River Basin Commission is guided by its core values of service to the public, respect for the Basin's water resources, and professionalism defined by high ethical standards and accountability.

## **New York Governor Kathy Hochul wrote:**

Over the last six decades, the Delaware River Basin Commission has brought stability to the region's water management. From conservation initiatives, to water quality protection, to flood management, the Commission has played an integral role in safeguarding a water supply millions of New Yorkers rely on. The Commission's stewardship of the Basin during a turbulent time for our global climate is commendable.

## **Delaware Governor Carney wrote:**

On behalf of the nearly one million Delawareans who have benefitted from the DRBC's stewardship, I thank you for providing trusted leadership on the

many issues that affect the river basin region. It takes extraordinary dedication to manage the 13,539 square miles of this watershed, but your efforts help support the 600,000 jobs and \$22 billion in economic activity that the river basin generates. Our river and bay now support year-round fish and wildlife populations, extensive recreation opportunities, parks and greenways for residents to enjoy.

“The success of the Commission is based upon the principle that together the four Basin states and the federal government can achieve for the Basin’s water resources what each cannot achieve individually,” Tambini continued. “Through collaboration, science and a watershed-based approach, we are committed to building upon the great history of the DRBC and will continue to provide significant and measurable solutions to ensure water security for the Delaware River Basin.”

Jesse Smith, research curator at Philadelphia’s Science History Institute, also shared remarks at the business meeting. Smith noted the Institute’s current Downstream exhibition examines 200 years of water science and protection in the United States, including the improvements seen in the Delaware River Basin. “The DRBC’s formation was a critical inflection point, recognizing the need for basin-scale water protection,” Smith said. The DRBC donated a large 3-D model of the basin from 1964 and other historical materials to the Institute.

The DRBC is a federal/interstate government agency created in 1961 by concurrent compact legislation, marking the first time that the federal government and a group of states joined together as equal partners in a river basin planning, development and regulatory agency. To learn more about the Commission, please visit [www.drbc.gov](http://www.drbc.gov).

**Source:** DRBC Press Release, 12/8/2021

## **EPA Invites Philadelphia to apply for \$260 million to help modernize city’s water infrastructure**

On December 9, 2021, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced that Philadelphia is among 39 municipal organizations invited to apply for Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loans for a \$260 million water infrastructure improvement project.

Overall, EPA anticipates that, as funds become available, \$6.7 billion in WIFIA loans will help finance more than \$15 billion in water infrastructure projects to protect public health and water quality across 24 states.

“Far too many communities still face significant water challenges, making these transformative investments in water infrastructure so crucial,” said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan “The WIFIA invited projects will deliver major benefits like the creation of good-paying jobs and the safeguarding of public health, especially in underserved and under-resourced communities. This program is a shining example of the public health and economic opportunities that will be achieved under President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.”

EPA’s WIFIA program will provide selected borrowers with innovative financing tools to address pressing public health and environmental challenges in their communities. Consistent with its announced priorities, the WIFIA program is making \$1.2 billion in loans available to support infrastructure needs in historically underserved communities. Additionally, 14 projects will help protect infrastructure from the impacts of extreme weather events and the climate crisis. New and innovative approaches, including cybersecurity, green infrastructure, and water reuse, are included in 24 projects.

By diversifying its geographic reach and the types of selected borrowers, the WIFIA program will also expand the types of projects it supports. For the first time, entities in Connecticut, Delaware, and Hawaii are invited to apply. Three small communities, with populations of 25,000 or less, are selected for WIFIA loans totaling nearly \$62 million. In addition, seven projects submitted by private borrowers and public-private partnerships totaling over \$1.5 billion in WIFIA financing are included.

EPA is also inviting state agencies in Indiana and New Jersey to apply for a total of \$472 million in WIFIA loans through EPA's state infrastructure financing authority WIFIA (SWIFIA) program. EPA's SWIFIA loans are available exclusively to state infrastructure financing authority borrowers, commonly known as State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs, and will allow these programs to finance more infrastructure projects in their states. These programs will combine state resources, annual capitalization grants, and the low-cost, flexible SWIFIA loans to accelerate investment in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure to modernize aging systems and tackle new contaminants.

### Background on WIFIA

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the WIFIA program is a federal loan and guarantee program administered by EPA. WIFIA's goal is to accelerate investment in the nation's water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental credit assistance for regionally and nationally significant projects.

Since the first WIFIA loan closed in 2018, EPA has announced 63 WIFIA loans that are providing over \$12 billion in credit assistance to help finance approximately \$26 billion for water infrastructure while creating more than 73,000 jobs and saving ratepayers over \$4.5 billion. EPA received 50 letters of interest from public and private entities as well as State Infrastructure Financing Authorities in response to the **2021 WIFIA Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)**

<https://www.epa.gov/wifia/wifia-funding-currently-available> and the **2021 State Infrastructure Financing Authorities WIFIA NOFA** <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/04/29/2021-08865/notification-of-funding-for-credit-assistance-under-the-state-infrastructure-finance-authority-water>.

For more information about the WIFIA program, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/wifia>.

For more information about the SWIFIA program, visit <https://www.epa.gov/wifia/what-swifia>.

**Source:** EPA Press Release, 12/9/2021

## **PUC Encourages Consumers to #KeepUtilitiesOn with Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program**

**A**s part of its #CallUtilitiesNow campaign, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) reminded Pennsylvania consumers that assistance will soon be available for income-eligible families to help keep their water and wastewater service turned on through the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).

"Direct conversations between customers and utilities about eligible programs are the best 'first step' for any Pennsylvania households or businesses struggling to #KeepUtilitiesOn," said PUC Chairman Gladys Brown Dutrieuille. "LIHWAP will assist Pennsylvania families who are behind on their drinking water and wastewater bills to ensure their service remains active."

### How to Qualify

The PUC encourages consumers to learn more about LIHWAP which opens Jan. 4, 2022. LIHWAP offers grants to eligible households that currently have a water or wastewater arrearage greater than \$25 (a termination notice will not be required). The program budget allots \$34.4 million for grants to pay water or wastewater utility accounts. LIHWAP payments will be sent directly to participating water and wastewater utilities, not the household or landlord.

LIHWAP is available for any water or wastewater utility (municipal, borough, authority or private) that agrees to participate in the program. To participate, the utility must sign a vendor agreement form to agree to the terms of the program (including keeping customers on for a minimum of 90 days after receipt of a grant and restoring service within specified timeframes).

To qualify, a household must have a:

- Gross income at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines. Households receiving benefits from Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP, in 2021-22 or 2022-23 seasons) will be considered categorically income eligible. Water or wastewater account in a household member or landlord's name.
- Water or wastewater account that is off or has an arrearage. A termination notice is not required to qualify for a LIHWAP grant, but the arrearage amount must be verified by the utility.

#### Program Benefits

- The LIHWAP benefit amount will be based on the amount of the household's account arrearage with the minimum benefit amount of \$25 and the maximum benefit amount of \$2,500. If the account arrearage exceeds the maximum amount, the maximum amount will be paid if the utility agrees to maintain service.
- Households can qualify for only one LIHWAP grant benefit per account. If households have separate drinking water and wastewater accounts in arrears, they could receive a benefit for each account (up to \$2,500 for each).
- Households can apply online using COMPASS <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/COMPASS.aspx>, in person at local County Assistance Offices or via fax. Paper applications will be available on the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) website <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHWAP.aspx> once the program opens.
- Households will be notified of eligibility decisions within 30 days and have appeal rights.

The PUC 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.

Visit the PUC's website at <http://www.puc.pa.gov/> for recent news releases and video of select proceedings. You can also follow us on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube. Search for the "Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission" or "PA PUC" on your favorite social media channel for updates on utility issues and other helpful consumer information.

**Source:** PUC Press Release, 12/9/2021

## **Agenda Available for DRBC's Regulated Flow Advisory Committee December 15 Meeting**

**D**RBC's Regulated Flow Advisory Committee will meet this coming Wednesday, December 15, 2021, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. A **draft agenda** is now available at <https://www.nj.gov/drbc/meetings/advisory/index.html>.

The meeting is open to the public and will take place virtually via Zoom. Details on how to join the meeting can be found at the above link or below.

Please contact Amy Shallcross [amy.shallcross@drbcgov](mailto:amy.shallcross@drbcgov), with any questions.

**Source:** DRBC, 12/10/2021

## **SRBC to Hold Business Meeting from Harrisburg, PA.**

*Voting on applications for 14 water projects*

**T**he Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) is conducting its quarterly business meeting on Friday, December 17, 2021, 9 a.m., from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The

Commissioners will consider action on several agenda items, including:

- 14 water projects including one Commission-initiated project modification and one out-of-basin diversion;
- adoption of a policy, Fee Incentives for the Withdrawal and Consumptive Use of AMD Impacted Waters & Treated Wastewater;
- adoption of the 2022 Regulatory Program Fee Schedule;
- approval of two grant amendments and one grant agreement;
- approval to enter into a Letter of Understanding regarding program coordination between SRBC and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

Opportunities for public comment on project applications were previously provided and additional comments will not be accepted at the meeting. However, the Commissioners may accept general public comments at the conclusion of the meeting.

The public is invited to attend the Commission's business meeting in person or virtually. The meeting will be held at Commission headquarters, 4423 N. Front Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110. Masks are required for physical attendance.

Click **here** <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-11-12/pdf/2021-24702.pdf> to view the agenda for the Business Meeting. Click **here** <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-11-10/pdf/2021-24587.pdf> to view the list of project applications. For the full set of meeting guidelines, visit **SRBC's website** at <https://www.srbc.net/index.html>.

**Source:** SRBC, 12/9/2021

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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.*