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Senate Republicans Pass Stopgap Budget They Know Will Be Vetoed By Wolf

Posted: 18 Sep 2015 08:48 AM PDT

Senate Republicans Friday passed its stopgap budget package by a party line 30 to 19 vote, moving it to the House which is expected to approve it next week and put it on the Governor's desk. Unfortunately, the package faces a certain veto by Gov. Wolf who said Republicans should be focused on passing a real budget.

Senate action follows [14 failed attempts by House Republicans](#) two weeks ago to override Gov. Wolf's veto of portions of the budget Republicans passed in June.

The stopgap budget bills include [Senate Bill 1000](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) General Fund Stopgap Budget Bill ([summary and Senate Fiscal Note](#)); [Senate Bill 1001](#) (Browne-R-Lehigh) Fiscal Code Stopgap Bill ([summary and Senate Fiscal Note](#)); and amended [House Bill 224](#) (Christiana-R -Beaver) with the Education Code Stopgap Bill ([summary and Senate Fiscal Note](#)).

The stopgap budget is about \$11.2 billion of the \$30.2 billion General Fund budget passed by Republicans in June and includes the so-called "agreed-to" budget provisions included in the vetoed [House Bill 1192](#) General Fund budget bill in June.

It also includes funding for the Senate and House and the Judiciary as well as the pass-through of federal funding to state agencies and organizations reliant on that money.

[Click Here](#) for a Senate Republican spreadsheet on the General Fund stopgap budget.

The new Fiscal Code bill has project funding and other special provisions legislators put in the

original Fiscal Code bill-- [Senate Bill 655](#)-- vetoed by Gov. Wolf in June.

It does not have the provisions included in the June bill to kill DEP regulations covering conventional oil and gas drilling or language further hobbling Pennsylvania's efforts to comply with EPA's Clean Power Climate Plan.

It does have language directing DCNR to use \$750,000 in existing funds to finance the operation of Washington Crossing State Park and for several water and sewer projects in DEP's budget.

"I sympathize with the human service agencies at the county level and the nonprofits," said Wolf. "What they (Republicans) are doing is a very cynical, hypocritical attempt to make people believe that they are actually trying to make human services agencies' lives easier. They're not. This stopgap is not that. This stopgap is a poke in the eye and I am treating it as such, and I am going to veto it."

Gov. Wolf also floated two new proposals on pension reform and liquor privatization to Senate and House Republicans on Wednesday saying they were "historic proposals."

"My (pension) plan is about 80 percent, I think, of what they (Republicans) had in Senate Bill 1," said Wolf. "This plan, unlike my March 3rd plan, has a 401k provision in it, it has a stacked hybrid. This plan is very different. This is not something the Democrats would do normally. We did it because we understand that we have a divided government and in good faith we put up on the table real pension reform, we put on the table real changes in the liquor system."

"(On liquor reform) I offered a contract that could be for any period from ten to 25 years," said Wolf. "There would have happened to be protections for workers, protections for consumers, we would have protection for the citizens of Pennsylvania so we are not just giving this away...and that we are actually getting something in return, and that we are actually going to get services like wine and beer in the supermarket."

What was the Republican reaction said Wolf?

"I got nothing. I got nothing on severance tax, nothing. I got nothing on education, nothing. I got nothing on property taxes relief. I got nothing on how we are actually going to balance this budget," said Wolf.

"What we need is a budget," said Wolf. "We actually need to have the pension and the liquor, and all the things combined into one package and it's called a budget."

Senate Republicans said they are negotiating in good faith, but they have core principles they are defending. The vote on the stopgap budget, is a vote to keep state government open, said Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman (R-Centre), unlike in Congress where they are talking about shutting down the federal government.

Senate Democrats said Republicans should be at the negotiating table not the microphone and start talking about enacting a real budget.

The Senate has canceled voting session for September 21, 22 and 23 and the House is scheduled to be in voting session September 21, 24 and 25.

This posting includes an audio/video/photo media file: [Download Now](#)

[DEP: Keystone Cement Fined \\$197,203 For Air Quality Violations In](#)

Northampton

Posted: 18 Sep 2015 08:25 AM PDT

The Department of Environmental Protection Friday announced it has reached an agreement with **Keystone Cement Company** of East Allen Township, Northampton County for the payment of a civil penalty in the amount of \$197,203.00 for numerous air quality violations during a four-year period.

Quarterly emissions reports submitted to the Department by Keystone showed that the company exceeded permitted emission limits for certain pollutants and that it failed to satisfy data availability requirements for their continuous emissions monitoring system (CEMs).

In addition, from September 2013 through June 2014, Department inspectors identified pressure drop violations related to the operation of air pollution control equipment at the facility.

In 2009, the company replaced two of its cement kilns, which are large oven-like units used to heat a raw mixture of materials to produce clinker during the cement manufacturing process. The clinker is then cooled in a clinker cooler.

Keystone's two kilns were replaced with one larger and more efficient kiln. The company also upgraded and replaced other parts of its system, including its clinker coolers and a baghouse designed to control emissions from its operations.

Keystone's cement kiln is equipped with a CEM to monitor emissions of sulfur oxides ("SOx"), nitrogen oxides ("NOx") and carbon monoxide ("CO"). The clinker cooler is equipped with a CEM to monitor the opacity of the emissions. Opacity is a way to measure particulate from the clinker cooler. Keystone has limits in its air quality permits for SOx, NOx, CO and opacity.

Data from the CEM system is submitted to the Department on a quarterly basis for review to determine whether the company is operating in compliance with applicable emission limits.

"The self-reporting of emissions is an important part of demonstrating compliance with permitted emissions limits. The Department takes emissions monitoring and the proper operation of control equipment very seriously," said Mike Bedrin, Director of DEP's Northeast Regional Office. "Our actions here serve to reinforce how important it is for companies to accurately keep track of and report their emissions to make sure they are operating in compliance with their permits and air quality regulations."

Money from the civil penalty will go directly to the Clean Air Fund, which is administered by DEP for use in programs designed to reduce air pollution.

PA Clean Power Climate Plan Comments: Waste-To-Energy Recovery Council

Posted: 18 Sep 2015 07:29 AM PDT

DEP held its [first listening session](#) on EPA's Clean Power Climate Plan requirements Tuesday in Harrisburg and heard from a variety of groups, [including these comments](#) from the [Energy Recovery Council](#) representing the waste-to-energy industry, including six facilities in Pennsylvania--

Good evening. My name is Ida Shiang, and I am speaking on behalf of the Energy Recovery Council (ERC), the national trade association representing companies and local governments engaged in

the waste-to-energy sector.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide input on Pennsylvania's process related to designing a state plan that will implement the Clean Power Plan (CPP) under section 111(d) of the Clean Air Act.

ERC urges the Commonwealth to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the CPP to utilize waste-to-energy as a tool to reduce greenhouse gases from the power sector. There is a tremendous opportunity to benefit from reduced greenhouse gases made possible by Pennsylvania's past and future investment in waste-to-energy facilities.

There are 84 waste-to-energy (WTE) facilities in the United States, which produce clean, renewable energy through the combustion of municipal solid waste in specially designed power plants equipped with the most modern control equipment to minimize emissions.

America's waste-to-energy plants process approximately thirty million tons of trash per year, enabling them to send nearly 15 million megawatt hours of electricity to the grid, as well as export steam to local users. In addition, waste-to-energy facilities recover and recycle more than 700,000 tons of metals per year.

Pennsylvania is home to six WTE facilities, located in Chester, Conshohocken, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Morrisville and York. These facilities process more than 8,700 tons of trash per day and have an electric baseload capacity of 268 megawatts.

In 2012, these WTE facilities, produced roughly one-third of Pennsylvania's non-hydro renewable electricity, while reducing the emission of more than three million tons of greenhouse gases.

The Clean Power Plan recognizes waste-to-energy as an eligible compliance tool that can be included in state plans. Pennsylvania should incorporate waste-to-energy into its state plan for the following reasons:

- WTE reduces greenhouse gases;
- WTE is baseload power;
- WTE is compatible with recycling;
- WTE boosts local jobs and economies; and
- WTE is a cost-competitive source of renewable energy and GHG reduction.

WTE Reduces Greenhouse Gases

The climate benefits of WTE technology are well-documented, both internationally and in the U.S. According to U.S. EPA, life cycle emission analysis show that waste-to-energy facilities actually reduce the amount of greenhouse gases expressed as CO₂ equivalents (GHGs or CO₂e) in the atmosphere by approximately 1 ton for every ton of municipal solid waste (MSW) combusted.

Waste-to-energy achieves the reduction of greenhouse gas emission through three separate mechanisms: 1) by generating electrical power or steam, waste-to-energy avoids carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from fossil fuel based electrical generation, 2) the waste-to-energy combustion process effectively avoids all potential methane emissions from landfills thereby avoiding any potential release of methane in the future and 3) the recovery of ferrous and nonferrous metals from MSW by waste-to-

energy is more energy efficient than production from raw materials – thereby avoiding CO2 from fossil fuel combustion.

While the Clean Power Plan only recognizes avoided GHGs from the power sector, Pennsylvania can use WTE in its state plan to leverage other GHG reductions.

WTE is Baseload Power

It is important to consider that waste-to-energy plants supply power 365-days-a-year, 24-hours a day and can operate under severe conditions. Waste-to-energy facilities average greater than 90 percent availability of installed capacity. The facilities generally operate in or near an urban area, easing transmission to the customer.

Waste-to-energy power is sold as “baseload” electricity to utilities that can rely upon its supply of electricity. There is a constant need for trash disposal, and an equally constant, steady, and reliable energy generation.

WTE is Compatible with Recycling

Statistics compiled for nearly two decades have proven that waste-to-energy and recycling are compatible. Since research on the subject began in 1992, communities that rely upon waste-to-energy maintain, on average, a higher recycling rate than the national EPA average and very much in line with the recycling averages of the states in which they serve.

In a paper entitled, “A Compatibility Study: Recycling and Waste-to-Energy Work in Concert, 2014 Update,” Eileen Berenyi with Governmental Advisory Associate, Inc. researched the recycling characteristics surrounding 80 waste-to-energy facilities in 21 states. Recycling data was obtained from 700 local governments, as well as statewide data from the 21 states covered in the report.

In 2011, the report shows that communities with waste-to-energy have an average recycling rate of 35.4 percent. The national average for recycling as estimated by EPA is estimated at 34.7 percent, while BioCycle/Columbia University estimate it to be 28.9 percent.

Recycling compatibility is borne out by the recycling rates of European countries as it relates to their reliance upon waste-to-energy or landfilling.

The most progressive countries recycle a lot, recover energy as much as possible, and landfill little. Less advanced countries landfill as much as possible, while doing little to no recycling or energy recovery.

WTE Boosts Local Jobs and Economies

In addition, waste-to-energy has a very positive economic impact on the communities in which these facilities are located. In Pennsylvania alone, the waste-to-energy industry directly employs approximately 400 people with salary and fringe benefits in excess of \$33 million per year.

In addition to direct employees, the WTE sector creates an additional 751 indirect or induced jobs, which pay salary and benefits of more than \$38 million per year. The total economic impact of revenues for waste-to-energy in Pennsylvania is \$586 million, including the \$299 million produced by the waste-to-energy sector directly. Every dollar of revenue generated by the waste-to-energy industry puts a total of 1.95 dollars into the economy through intermediate purchases of goods and services and payments to employees.

WTE is a Cost-Competitive Source of Renewable Energy and GHG Reduction

The U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration (EIA) uses Levelized Cost of Energy (LCOE) to measure the competitiveness of a particular energy resource. EIA defines LCOE as:

"Levelized cost is often cited as a convenient summary measure of the overall competitiveness of different generating technologies. Levelized cost represents the present value of the total cost of building and operating a generating plant over an assumed financial life and duty cycle, converted to equal annual payments and expressed in terms of real dollars to remove the impact of inflation. Levelized cost reflects overnight capital cost, fuel cost, fixed and variable O&M cost, financing costs, and an assumed utilization rate for each plant type."

The average LCOE from a new WTE facility is approximately \$85 per megawatt hour. This places WTE higher than combined cycle natural gas; comparable to onshore wind, hydro, and geothermal; and less than offshore wind, solar, biomass, coal with carbon capture and storage, and nuclear.

This is comparable to other recently published values for WTE's levelized cost, including those in a recent peer-reviewed article by Duke University scientists (\$94 / MWh) and a 2014 report coauthored by Bloomberg and the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (\$48 - \$130 / MWh) ([see figure in the testimony](#)).

In addition, WTE is a large source of low-cost GHG reductions upon which states can rely to meet their obligations under the Clean Power Plan.

WTE facilities can achieve GHG reductions of 70 million tons (megatons) of CO₂ equivalents per year, with a GHG abatement cost of approximately \$9 per ton CO₂e (2005\$), if the U.S. moves to a more sustainable waste management practices modeled after the European Union.

The abatement cost is comparable to that of onshore wind, and well below the cost of many other GHG abatement technologies including solar PV, biomass co-firing, and coal electrical generation with carbon capture & storage as reported in the latest McKinsey GHG abatement cost report prepared for the United States.

Incorporating WTE in the State Plan

The CPP clearly identifies WTE as an eligible compliance tool to displace electric generation from fossil fuel-fired electric generating units. Since the Clean Power Plan is implemented by states, it is imperative that Pennsylvania include WTE as part of its approved state plan to ensure that the benefits of WTE can be realized in Pennsylvania.

The type of state plan adopted can have a significant impact on the ability of a state to achieve its specific policy objectives.

For example, in a rate-based state plan, only generation from post-2012 renewable facilities can be used by regulated electric generating units to adjust their emission rates. This would make it impossible for existing (pre-2013) renewable facilities from monetizing their GHG reductions under the CPP.

States have greater flexibility to provide policy support to existing and new renewables (including waste-to-energy) under a mass-based plan through an allocation of allowances as well as complementary state measures.

Pennsylvania's compliance plan should support the investment in WTE made by local governments by ensuring that this reliable municipal waste infrastructure is supported with tradable compliance instruments (e.g. allowances).

Under a mass-based plan, states should allocate allowances to existing waste-to-energy facilities in recognition of historic and future GHG reductions. This support will provide financial stability to GHG-reducing WTE facilities, which operate in incredibly difficult markets dominated by cheap wholesale electricity, cheap landfilling rates, and extremely volatile commodity prices for recycled metal.

Through support for existing, as well as new, WTE facilities, Pennsylvania can ensure that the investment made in WTE can continue to provide long-lasting GHG reductions.

It is important to remember that if a WTE facility closes, and its waste supply is diverted to landfills, GHG gas emission in the state will increase immediately. This risk can be mitigated by treating WTE appropriately in the state plan.

The result will help protect local investment, keep disposal costs low for local governments, support local jobs and the economy, and reduce GHGs from fossil electric generators and landfills.

In summary, the Energy Recovery Council urges Pennsylvania to develop a state plan under the CPP that reinforces the Commonwealth's solid waste hierarchy and supports the investment that local governments have made in waste-to-energy.

Failure to support the waste-to-energy sector in the CPP plan will have the unfortunate impact of increasing the release of greenhouse gases, reducing renewable generation, and increasing the difficulty and cost of complying with the CPP. Thank you.

A copy of the complete testimony [is available online](#).

For more information and a schedule of the remaining sessions, visit DEP's [Climate Change](#) webpage. Comments on the Clean Power Plan [can be submitted online](#). [Click Here](#) to see comments submitted by others so far.

[**Note:** [Crisci Associates](#) represents [Covanta Energy](#) which operates five energy-from-waste facilities in Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster, Montgomery and York counties and an electronics waste recycling facility in Philadelphia.]

PA Clean Power Climate Plan Comments: Exelon Corporation

Posted: 18 Sep 2015 07:28 AM PDT

DEP held its [first listening session](#) on EPA's Clean Power Climate Plan requirements Tuesday in Harrisburg and heard from a variety of groups, [including these comments](#) from the Exelon Corporation--

Good evening. My name is Thom Chiomento, Director of State Government Affairs here in Pennsylvania for Exelon Corporation. Exelon has operations and business activities in 47 states, the District of Columbia and Canada.

Our company is one of the largest competitive U.S. power suppliers, with approximately 35 gigawatts of owned capacity comprising one of the nation's cleanest and lowest-cost power generation fleets.

We employ approximately 6,000 Pennsylvanians, and we own and operate three of Pennsylvania's five nuclear power stations: Three Mile Island right here in Dauphin County, Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station in York County, and Limerick Generating Station in Montgomery County.

We also own a significant portfolio of wind, hydropower, solar, gas, and oil-fired generation here in the Commonwealth and nationwide.

Exelon appreciates the Department's efforts to seek public input concerning Pennsylvania's implementation of EPA's Clean Power Plan, and we offer the following comments:

The Importance of Nuclear Power to a Lower-Carbon Fleet

Nuclear power is an often-overlooked lynchpin of the transition to a lower-carbon electricity generating fleet. Environmentalists and scientists around the world have concluded that the necessary emission reductions cannot be achieved without the continued operation of nuclear power.

Pennsylvania's five nuclear power plants generate 34 percent of Pennsylvania's electricity, and 93 percent of Pennsylvania's zero-carbon electricity. That equates to nearly 35 million tons of carbon emissions avoided through this reliable source of baseload generation.

Under the CPP, Pennsylvania must reduce CO2 emissions by 10 million tons from 2012 levels by 2022 and by nearly 26 million tons by 2030, so the loss of any nuclear plant here would nearly double the compliance obligation.

Nuclear Power is Exceptionally Reliable

As PJM has noted, nuclear plants provide unrivaled performance during all weather conditions.

Exelon Nuclear's 24 units across five states, including Pennsylvania, achieved an average capacity factor of 94.3 percent in 2014. That means that they are available 94 percent of the time.

While many plants struggle to run during extreme heat or cold, when their power is needed most, our nuclear plants are virtually always on. For example, during the peak of the polar vortex in January 2014, the nuclear fleet represented only three percent of the forced outages experienced across PJM.

System operators need reliable, baseload units to maintain system reliability. For that reason, PJM's CEO has stated that it is "critical that the nuclear fleet in our region remains economically viable," and that retirement of the nuclear fleet in PJM is "unthinkable."

Economic Threats to the Nuclear Fleet

Despite their environmental, reliability, and economic value, a number of existing plants face premature retirement long before the end of their design life. Owners of six of the nation's 104 nuclear units have retired units or announced that they will soon retire units.

Other owners, including Exelon, have stated that they will continue to watch market developments and evaluate plant economics to inform decisions about the future operations of nuclear stations.

There are a number of factors causing the economic challenges facing many nuclear plants, but chief among them is the absence of market mechanisms to value the carbon-free nature of nuclear power

or to require carbon-emitting generation to internalize that social cost.

We do not expect the factors driving these economics to change in the near-term absent EPA's rulemaking. This was highlighted in the recent failure of TMI to clear in PJM's 2018/19 capacity auction.

Turning to EPA's Final Rule

Implementation of the Clean Power Plan implicitly relies on the continuing operation of the existing nuclear fleet in order to achieve CO₂ reductions while maintaining reliability and affordability.

Thus, we encourage PA DEP to implement a mass-based compliance program that includes new and existing fossil units in order to send the needed market signals to preserve existing nuclear and other zero-carbon generation now and once compliance begins in 2022.

Mass-based compliance programs are superior for a number of reasons.

First, mass-based programs are proven and well understood. For example, the power sector has utilized a mass-based program to control acid rain pollutants since 1995.

Since then, many other environmental programs have utilized similar methods to cost-effectively control pollution including the NO_x Budget Program, CAIR, and CSAPR.

Mass-based programs promote reliability through their ease of use and clear price signal – they naturally align with the least-cost dispatch principle of electricity markets, while other approaches may rely on artificial decisions that could impair reliability.

As you know, the [Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative](#) or RGGI has succeeded in reducing emissions in nine northeast states using a mass-based program since 2009.

Second, mass-based compliance programs will achieve the states' many objectives and obligations under the Clean Power Plan – they achieve actual, easily verified CO₂ reductions; they minimize total compliance costs, including ratepayer impacts; they preserve electric reliability; they are technology- and fuel-neutral; and they simplify compliance and reduce administrative burdens.

Third, mass-based programs may be single-state or allow trading between states. States do not need formal agreements with other states to allow interstate trading; in the final rule, EPA has removed this barrier.

Thus, state implementation plans can be as simple as requiring the submittal of one allowance for each ton of emissions, with no requirement that the allowance be obtained in-state. Pennsylvania would still retain control over allowance allocation and/or auction.

Last but not least, mass-based programs minimize costs to tax- and ratepayers. Mass-based programs are an efficient way to translate an environmental goal (e.g., level of emissions, usually expressed in tons) into a price signal easily understood by the market (e.g., an allowance price that is easily incorporated into generators' variable costs just like any other cost of operation).

As a result, mass-based price signals are simple and clear. Allowances are auctioned or sold in a transparent market, with a single point of cost-purchase of allowance. By contrast, rate-based programs require a multitude of often-opaque costs.

In conclusion, Exelon strongly encourages Pennsylvania DEP to recognize the important

environmental, reliability, and economic benefits of existing nuclear plants and the carbon-free, reliable generation they provide to Pennsylvania businesses and families. The best way to do this is to implement a mass-based compliance program for compliance with the Clean Power Plan.

Thank you for considering Exelon's comments on Pennsylvania's implementation of EPA's Clean Power Plan. I would be glad to address any questions that you may have.

A copy of the complete testimony [is available online](#).

For more information and a schedule of the remaining sessions, visit DEP's [Climate Change](#) webpage. Comments on the Clean Power Plan [can be submitted online](#). [Click Here](#) to see comments submitted by others so far.

[**Note:** [Crisci Associates](#) represents [Exelon](#) in Pennsylvania.]

DEP: Chesapeake Bay Reboot Not Ready Yet, DCNR: New PNDI Review Fee

Posted: 18 Sep 2015 05:42 AM PDT

DEP Secretary John Quigley told the [Citizens Advisory Council](#) Tuesday his plan for rebooting the Chesapeake Bay cleanup program is not done yet, but he hopes to be able to make an announcement in the near future.

Quigley said he continues to work with Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding and DCNR Secretary Cindy Dunn on the reboot. Lots of consultation is needed internally and with stakeholders in the future, he said to make the program more effective.

There are 467 days left (as of September 21) to put practices on the ground to meet the state's 2017 cleanup milestone-- eliminating 10 million pounds of nitrogen and 212 million pounds of sediment from going into our rivers and streams.

Pennsylvania is even further behind because we did not meet the 2013 pollution reduction milestones.

In June 2014, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reported Pennsylvania exceeded its 2013 Chesapeake Bay cleanup milestone for phosphorus by 242,000 pounds, but fell short in meeting the nitrogen goal by 2 million pounds and sediment reduction milestone by nearly 116 million pounds.

If Pennsylvania doesn't meet the milestones, it leaves [EPA free to come up with its own plan](#) on how the state can meet them, and as Rep. Garth Everett (R-Lycoming) said during DEP's budget hearing, "[It isn't pretty.](#)"

At his [budget hearing in March](#), DEP Secretary John Quigley acknowledged, to his credit, Pennsylvania is not meeting its commitments to clean up Pennsylvania watersheds contributing water to the Bay and promised a plan to reboot the program to get it back on track.

Quigley and Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding reiterated their commitment to reboot Pennsylvania's plans to meet Bay cleanup milestones at the [July Chesapeake Bay Executive Council](#) meeting.

Even by any rough measure, Pennsylvania will need to ramp up its watershed restoration

programs significantly to meet its commitments.

Using the Commonwealth's reported average rate of Chesapeake Bay Program implementation from 2009 to 2013, here's an estimate of how much each of key measures would have to increase to meet the 2017 milestones done in April of this year:

- Forested stream buffers on farms: from 6 acres per day to over 38 acres;
- Farm conservation plan development: from 46 acres a day to over 589 acres;
- Rotational grazing practices: from 8.5 acres to roughly 135 acres a day;
- Urban stormwater infiltration practices: from 7 acres to 368 acres per day;
- Stormwater treatment wet ponds & wetlands: from 0.4 acres to 28 acres a day; and
- Dirt and gravel road repair: from 334 feet per day to over 1,411 feet per day.

New PNDI Review Fee

Ellen Shultzbarger from DCNR's Division of Conservation, Science and Ecological Resources, gave Council a presentation on the changes coming to the [PA Natural Diversity Inventory](#) online Environmental Review Tool, including a new \$40 fee for permit-related review receipts.

The new tool will be called PA Conservation Explorer and is divided into two parts-- a Conservation Planning tool where anyone can get general information on threatened, endangered and species of special concern in a project area; and the Environmental Review tool meant for project developers who need to have formal reviews done related to DEP permit applications.

There is no fee for the Conservation Planning tool, since it gives out only general information, but there will be a \$40 fee for permit applicants using the Environmental Review tool for review receipts and registered to use the data.

[The formal notice](#) of the PNDI fee was published in the September 19 PA Bulletin with a 30 day comment period ending October 19. About 16,600 DEP permit reviews are done on the PNDI Environmental Review Tool each year.

One of many upgrades to the Environmental Review tool will be the ability to upload a project to the review agencies for their further review and consultation.

DCNR expects to rollout the new tools in November with training sessions scheduled in the following months. Shultzbarger's presentation will be posted on the [CAC Meeting](#) webpage.

The Council's next meeting is October 20 in Room 105 Rachel Carson Building in Harrisburg starting at 10:00.

For more information, visit DEP's [Citizens Advisory Council](#) webpage.

Friday PA Environmental NewsClips

Posted: 18 Sep 2015 03:43 AM PDT

[Wolf's Latest Budget Plan Gets Chilly Reception](#)

[Drillers Urged To Be Transparent With Municipalities](#)

[Judge Urged To Dismiss Drillers' SLAPP Suit In Butler](#)

[Fracking Raises Concerns In Wilkins, Churchill](#)

[Executive Optimistic On Natural Gas Infrastructure Upgrades](#)

[FERC Still Accepting Comments On PennEast Pipeline](#)

[Erie's Pat Lupo Co-Authors Letter To Governor About Fracking](#)

[Op-Ed: Faith Leaders Call For Fracking Ban](#)

[Op-Ed: Keys To Expanding Benefits Of PA Shale Energy](#)

[DEP OKs Permit For Luzerne Natural Gas Power Plant](#)

[Climate Change Skeptics Attack Pope In Philadelphia](#)

[Climate Change Deniers Criticize Pope Ahead Of Visit](#)

[State Picks Law Firm To Go After HBG Incinerator Claims](#)

[Presque Isle Open As Budget Impasse Continues](#)
[Trout Unlimited Tour Highlights NE's Environmental Issues](#)

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[DEP: Friday Air Quality Action Day In Mid-State, Lehigh Valley, Philadelphia Area](#)

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 02:06 PM PDT

The Department of Environmental Protection and its regional [air quality partnerships](#) have forecast a Code Orange Air Quality Action Day for ozone on Friday, September 18, for Berks, Bucks, Cumberland, Chester, Dauphin, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, and York counties. [Click Here](#) for more information.

[DEP Issues Air Permit For Natural Gas-Fired Power Plant In Luzerne County](#)

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 11:57 AM PDT

The Department of Environmental Protection Thursday announced it has approved an air quality plan

approval for [Moxie Freedom Energy, LLC](#) of Virginia to construct and operate a 1050-megawatt [natural gas-fired power plant](#) in Salem Township, Luzerne County.

The approval was granted by DEP's Air Quality Program on September 1, 2015.

"The application received a thorough review by the Department and we determined that Moxie's proposal satisfies applicable emissions control requirements, including use of Best Available Control Technology and Lowest Achievable Emission Rate", said Mike Bedrin, Director of DEP's Northeast Regional Office in Wilkes-Barre. "This plant will also have emissions testing, recordkeeping and continuous emission monitoring requirements to assist DEP in monitoring emissions from the facility to help ensure compliance."

Moxie Freedom submitted an air quality plan approval application to DEP on October 6, 2014. The company plans to utilize a combustion gas turbine and a steam turbine to produce electricity. Each combined turbine and a duct burner will exclusively fire pipeline-quality natural gas.

The burners will be equipped with selective catalytic reduction to minimize nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions and oxidation catalysts to minimize carbon monoxide and volatile organic compound emissions.

The project will be capable of producing 1050 Megawatts (MW) of electricity, which will then be distributed to the power grid for use.

DEP published a notice of receipt of the application in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on January 24, 2015 and asked for public comment.

DEP then published a notice of the intent to issue a plan approval in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on May 30, 2015, again asking for public comment on the project.

A public hearing on the air quality plan approval was held on July 7 at Berwick High School and was attended by Representatives from DEP and Moxie Freedom, LLC.

During the hearing DEP took testimony from residents regarding the plan approval and afterward it prepared a comment/response document to address the public comments it received about Moxie's proposal.

Copies of the plan approval and comment/response document [are available online](#).

September 17 DEP News Now Available

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 11:17 AM PDT

The [September 17 edition of DEP News](#) is now available from the Department of Environmental Protection featuring articles on--

-- [DEP Holds 1st Of 14 Listening Sessions On Federal Clean Power Climate Plan](#)

-- [DEP Secretary Discusses Climate Change With Floodplain Managers](#)

-- [DEP Reaches Penalty Agreement With Research Laboratory REI Consultants](#)

-- [DEP To Update The Public On Lackawanna County Mine Fire Project](#)

-- [Williamsport Joins Partnership For Safe Water's Optimization Program](#)

-- [Volunteers Needed For Lake Erie Shoreline Cleanup](#)

-- [Click Here](#) to sign up for your own copy.

Williamsport Joins Partnership For Safe Water's Optimization Program

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 11:16 AM PDT

[Williamsport Municipal Water Authority](#) in Lycoming County recently became a member of a new program operated by the [Partnership for Safe Water](#).

The Distribution Optimization Program is specifically focused on preserving distribution system integrity to include water quality preservation, hydraulic reliability and physical security.

Surface water, groundwater, and consecutive water systems are eligible to enroll in the voluntary program that consists of four phases including a commitment to the program, annual data collection and submittal, a self assessment phase, and a final phase of Excellence in Distribution System Operation.

Williamsport's water system provides drinking water service to approximately 51,000 people.

For more information, visit DEP's [Partnership for Safe Water](#) webpage or contact Kevin Anderson by sending email to: keanderson@pa.gov.

(Reprinted from the [Sept. 17 DEP News](#). [Click Here](#) to sign up for your own copy.)

DEP Secretary Discusses Climate Change With Floodplain Managers

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 11:16 AM PDT

The [PA Association of Floodplain Managers](#) held its annual fall meeting in Harrisburg on Sept. 16. DEP Secretary Quigley delivered the keynote address.

"Floodplain managers will be on the front lines of climate disruption," he said before a group of more than 60 flood and stormwater professionals. "Science is showing us that not only are the changes and disruptions to our state's climate significant, but they are occurring alarmingly fast."

Quigley explained that, according to the [Climate Impacts Assessment Update](#) published by the Pennsylvania State University, Philadelphia can expect to have a climate similar to present-day Richmond, Virginia by 2050.

He also noted that with that warming has come disruption in the water cycle, and as such a higher flood potential.

Quigley discussed the need for smart updates to Pennsylvania's water plan, as well as DEP's partnership with DCNR to commit to riparian buffers, to combat the impacts of climate change.

"We have to partner and collaborate to address the implications of climate change, the largest

uncontrolled chemistry experiment in history,” he said.

DEP is accepting comments on the [Climate Impacts Assessment Update](#) until November 4.

(Reprinted from the [Sept. 17 DEP News](#). [Click Here](#) to sign up for your own copy.)

DEP Holds 1st Of 14 Listening Sessions On Federal Clean Power Climate Plan

Posted: 18 Sep 2015 07:29 AM PDT

DEP Secretary John Quigley, Policy Director Patrick McDonnell, and Deputy Secretary Ken Reisinger led the first of an unprecedented 14 listening sessions on Pennsylvania’s compliance with the [EPA’s Clean Power Plan](#).

More than 60 people attended the session held September 15 at DEP’s Southcentral Regional Office in Harrisburg.

“DEP is in full listening mode,” Quigley said as he opened the floor to 27 speakers.

Citizen and stakeholder groups discussed their concerns about the plan to reduce carbon emissions in Pennsylvania by 33 percent by 2030. A majority of the speakers underscored the need for DEP to submit a plan tailor-made for Pennsylvania’s unique energy portfolio while still growing the economy.

Speakers offered suggestions such as building greener buildings, emphasizing nuclear power, and focusing on natural gas power as ways Pennsylvania can comply with the Clean Power Plan.

For more information and a schedule of the remaining sessions, visit DEP’s [Climate Change](#) webpage. Comments on the Clean Power Plan [can be submitted online](#). [Click Here](#) to see comments submitted by others so far.

(Reprinted from the [Sept. 17 DEP News](#). [Click Here](#) to sign up for your own copy.)

Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference At Lehigh University On Oct. 13

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 11:16 AM PDT

The [6th Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference](#) will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on October 13 at Lehigh University’s STEPS Building, 1 West Packer Avenue, Bethlehem.

The Conference serves as a forum that brings together community watershed organizations, municipal officials, educators, students, scientists, technical experts, natural resource agency staff, industry representatives and the public to discuss effective ways to improve and protect the land and water resources throughout the greater Lehigh Valley.

This year’s conference is titled “Freshwater Ecology” and will provide a focus on understanding and protecting our freshwater environments and the organisms that live in them.

As in past conferences, there will also be sessions on perennial and emerging issues associated with watershed conservation.

New to this year’s Conference is a landscaper’s track, with four sessions focused on

environmentally-sensitive landscaping practices for professional landscapers, with continuing education credits available.

The Conference will also include two half-day workshops: one on aquatic insect identification and the other on working with publicly available information to build effective watershed GIS.

The Conference will close with a networking reception from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Cost for the full day conference is \$45, which includes conference sessions, lunch, snack breaks and the networking reception.

Students with college ID may attend free of charge; however, all students must register before the conference and include their college affiliation in their registration.

The Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference is organized by the [Watershed Coalition of the Lehigh Valley](#) and its many organizational partners.

For more information and to register, visit the [Lehigh Valley Watershed Conference](#) webpage or send email to: lehighwatershedconf@gmail.com.

Call For Nominations: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve Land Ethics Award

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 11:44 AM PDT

[Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve](#) in Bucks County is seeking nominations for the [2016 Land Ethics Award](#). The deadline for submissions is January 15.

The award honors and recognizes the creative use of native plants in the landscape, sustainable and regenerative design, and ethical land management and construction practices in the Delaware Valley Region in Southeast Pennsylvania, including Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey.

(Photo: [Longwood Gardens Meadow Garden Expansion](#).)

Honorees may be selected from three categories: Public Spaces (such as Public Gardens, Nature Preserves, Municipal or Corporate Campuses), Residential Projects, and Individuals or Community Groups.

Individuals, non-profit organizations, government agencies, community groups, and business professionals are encouraged to apply.

Projects must be a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years old.

Land Ethics Award winners will be notified in mid-February 2016. Awards will be presented at the Preserve's [16th Annual Land Ethics Symposium](#) at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, PA on March 10.

Professionals and property owners with an interest in sustainable design and land management are encouraged to attend the full day symposium.

Past Land Ethics Award winners include: Longwood Gardens Meadow Garden Expansion; Buckingham Friends School; Bucks County SPCA – Upper Bucks Shelter; Duke Farms Foundation; and

Haycock Township Community Wildlife Habitat

For more information and to complete an application visit the Preserve's [Land Ethics Award](#) webpage or contact Jennifer Pennington, Membership and Communications Coordinator, at [215-862-2924](tel:215-862-2924) or send email to: pennington@bhwp.org.

Save The Date: Bowman's Hill Preserve Land Ethics Symposium March 10

Posted: 17 Sep 2015 10:18 AM PDT

The [Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve](#) in Bucks County will hold the [16th Annual Land Ethics Symposium](#) on March 10 at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown.

The Symposium is geared toward professionals, including landscape architects, designers, contractors and the green industry, environmental consultants, land planners, managers and developers, and state/municipal officials. Continuing education credits were available.

Participants also had opportunities to network and share their experiences with peers at this professional program.

Last year's Symposium attracted over 260 attendees making it one of the largest symposiums to date.

Check the Preserve's [Land Ethics Symposium](#) webpage about speakers and registration in mid-October or contact Jennifer Pennington, Membership and Communications Coordinator, at [215-862-2924](tel:215-862-2924) or send email to: pennington@bhwp.org.