



PA Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

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On the Hill

Senate Environmental Committee Hears About Recycling Waste Coal

Ten witnesses provided the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee with information this week on the current state of waste coal recycling and ideas for how to provide incentives for using more of the estimated 2.4 billion tons available in Pennsylvania.

The hearing was conducted by chair Sen. Mary Jo White (R-Venango) along with Sen. Musto (D-Luzerne) and Sen. Stout (D-Washington).

One of the primary uses of coal waste today in Pennsylvania is as a fuel to generate electricity. In fact, [ARIPPA](#) testified that Pennsylvania has 14 of the 20 waste coal plants in the United States fueled by coal waste. These coal waste burners have recycled over 95 million tons of coal waste and reclaimed nearly 3,600 acres of abandoned mine lands.

ARIPPA recommended waste coal fired plants be included in any legislation setting renewable or advanced portfolio standards for electric generators because of the environmental benefits derived from using waste coal as fuel. They also recommended consideration of tax incentives for the use of waste coal and using waste coal in facilities owned by the Commonwealth.

Robert Dolence, Dolence Consulting, reported there are 819 unreclaimed waste coal sites in Pennsylvania covering over 8,529 acres that would require over \$250 million of public funds to cleanup if they were not recycled.

With demand for energy increasing and prices with it, Dolence said diversifying energy sources beyond petroleum and natural gas is “not only a prudent approach to energy security, but necessary given the anticipated demand.” Waste coal should be included in any advanced energy portfolio standard with appropriate cost recovery mechanisms.

Several witnesses provided background on the new Beech Hollow waste coal fired generating plant being planned for Robinson Township, Washington County. The 300 megawatt facility will be constructed next to a 500 acre, 37.5 million ton pile of waste coal that will provide a 15 years supply of fuel for the plant.

In addition to reclaiming the waste coal pile next door, another 20 million tons of waste coal within a 10 mile radius of the plant will be used as well.

Beech Hollow project witnesses Garry Merrit, Joe Pezze and Jeffry Zick also supported including waste coal fired plants in any advanced energy portfolio standard, along with using other more traditional economic development tools like Keystone Opportunity Zones and economic development agency funding to promote these projects.

James Seif, from PPL, provided comments supporting the inclusion of waste coal fired plants in an advanced portfolio standard for utilities, with appropriate cost recovery, and reviewed the utility’s involvement in promoting renewable energy generation projects.

Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Kathleen [McGinty provided the Committee with an overview](#) of DEP historic support for waste coal projects, including recently through the Energy Harvest Program, increasing purchases of

electricity from “green energy” sources, and the reactivation of the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority.

DEP is also supporting the inclusion of waste coal in its proposal to create an advanced portfolio standard for electric generators as a tier two green energy source, along with fuel cells powered by non-renewable fuels. Tier one sources would include more traditional renewables, coal-mine methane and energy efficiency projects.

The Raccoon Creek Watershed Association, United Mine Workers and the Washington County commissioners offered comments that were very supported of the use of waste coal.

NewsClips: [Officials Ponder What to Do With Waste Coal](#)
[Scientists Call for Increased Use of Renewable Energy](#)

Water Infrastructure Subject of House Environmental Meeting

On September 28 the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will hold an informational meeting for its members on the issue of the Commonwealth’s water and wastewater infrastructure needs.

According to Committee Chair Rep. Adolph (R-Delaware), representatives of statewide and local organizations representing water and wastewater facilities will be presenting information to the Committee.

The House Environmental Committee also has scheduled an informational meeting on waste coal use for September 16 in Indiana.

Environmental Synopsis Highlights New State Park Initiatives

Pennsylvania’s newest State Park – Erie Bluffs and the Musto Environmental Education Center in Luzerne County – are highlighted in the latest Environmental Synopsis published by the [Joint Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee](#).

Also covered in this issue is: improving drinking water protection, water infrastructure needs and electronic waste.

The [Environmental Synopsis](#) newsletter is now available online.

In Other News

Heenan of Steel Recycling Institute Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

The National Recycling Coalition has given their Recycler of the Year-Lifetime Achievement Award to William Heenan, president of the Pittsburgh-based [Steel Recycling Institute](#).

Heenan is also Co-Chairman of [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful](#) that is dedicated to promoting anti-litter and beautification education and outreach programs.

Heenan has been with the Steel Recycling Institute since its formation in 1988 and its President since 1990.



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Earlier this year Heenan and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful along with DEP, PennDOT, DCNR and many other nonprofit and private partners sponsored the first ever [Great PA Cleanup](#) that resulted in tens of thousands of volunteers cleaning up roadsides and watersheds.

He reflected on the biggest changes in recycling since his early involvement.

“Auto recycling has always been strong, but where we needed help was recycling cans and appliances,” said Heenan. “The biggest help was Act 101 (Pennsylvania’s curbside recycling law). It was a watershed event in recycling. It awakened communities to the idea they could do curbside recycling and had a nationwide impact.”

Heenan credited former Senator now Federal Judge Mike Fisher and Sen. Ray Musto (D-Luzerne) with taking a bipartisan approach to getting Act 101, a Casey Administration initiative, passed.

This is the second major national recycling award received by a Pennsylvania recycler. The Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania received the Outstanding Recycling Organization of the Year Award.

NewsClip: [DEP Secretary Praises Recycling Award Winners](#)

Bay States More Than Half-Way to New Wetlands Goals

In the Chesapeake 2000 agreement, the Chesapeake Bay Program partners committed that by 2010, they would try to: "achieve a net resource gain by restoring 25,000 acres of tidal and non-tidal wetlands" and "achieve a no-net loss of existing wetlands acreage and function in the signatories' regulatory programs."

Since 1998, 14,317 acres were restored in the Chesapeake Bay watershed portions of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. In order to achieve the 2010 goal, 10,683 additional acres need to be restored.

Since 1998, there was no-net loss in the regulatory programs; in fact an additional 1,312 acres were gained.

The new indicator, "[Wetlands Protection, Restoration, and Enhancement](#)," is available online.

Over 70 Communities Attend Pittsburgh Brownfields Workshop

Over 70 communities participated in the brownfields grant workshop sponsored by EPA Region III and the Department of Environmental Protection in Pittsburgh on August 24.

The workshop presented state funding opportunities for brownfields redevelopment. The purpose of the workshop was two-fold: 1) to train communities on how to apply for state and federal grants for brownfields redevelopment; 2) to foster better coordination between the state and federal brownfields programs.

EPA Grants to Assess and Cleanup Petroleum Contaminated Sites

Under the federal Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act communities can apply for grants to assess and cleanup brownfield sites contaminated by petroleum products.

The deadline for applications is November 12.

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In 2003, EPA awarded close to \$23 million for the assessment and cleanup of petroleum-contaminated brownfields.

Look for [more information online](#) or contact [Carletta Parlin](#) or call 215-814-3380.

Monitoring Matters Highlights Abandoned Mine Drainage Issues This Month

The [August issue of Monitoring Matter](#) put out by the Keystone Watershed Monitoring Network highlights the origins, cures and new developments surrounding the monitoring and treatment of discharges from abandoned coal mines.

Look for articles on:

Origins of Abandoned Mine Drainage, Deb Simko, WPCAMR

Oneida #1 Abatement Project, Ryan Koch, Schuylkill County Watershed Specialist

Funding Measures Stalled, Tim Schaeffer, PEC

Organizational Effectiveness, Anne Daymut, Blackleggs Creek Watershed Assn.

Guide to Stream Rehab, Janie French, Canaan Valley Institute

Citizen Monitoring Changes, Cheryl Snyder, DEP CVM Coordinator

New Developments at POWR, Judy Jordan

Sign up for your own copy at: [Monitoring Matters](#).

EPA Environmental Management Handbook for Wastewater Organizations

EPA has developed the first Environmental Management System ([EMS](#)) [handbook for water and wastewater operations](#) to help utilities better manage their facilities.

The EMS handbook describes a set of management processes and procedures that allow a utility to examine, control and reduce environmental impacts of its facility operations. The handbook also describes how an EMS can help utilities function with greater efficiency and encourage environmental performance.

Through a systematic approach, utility managers can improve environmental performance, establish effective environmental policies, comply with legal requirements and identify needed resources such as training.

The handbook includes practical experiences and advice from utility managers who have adopted and developed successful Environmental Management Systems. While several wastewater utilities have successfully implemented such systems and have seen significant benefits, until now there has not been a comprehensive guide to help other utilities understand the steps necessary to put an effective EMS in place.

EPA developed this handbook through a cooperative agreement with the Global Environment and Technology Foundation in coordination with a steering committee of wastewater industry representatives and other experts.

For more information on Environmental Management Systems for all types of organizations, visit the [EPA EMS webpage](#) or the [Department of Environmental Protection EMS webpage](#).

Educational Improvement Tax Credit Exhausted Funding for This Year

Pennsylvania's [Educational Improvement Tax Credit](#) (EITC) program reached its funding limit this week, highlighting the EITC's popular success. The state will now place

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companies that applied to the program after the \$26.7 million scholarship funding cap was reached on a waiting list.

The program allows companies to provide scholarship money in return for the tax credits so that a growing number of parents can send their children to the schools of their choice. Another \$13.3 million of EITC money, which previously also ran out, goes to innovative programs in public schools.

There are 143 scholarship organizations and 193 educational improvement organizations in Pennsylvania. Because of overwhelming demand, the Legislature increased funding for the EITC from \$30 million to \$40 million and doubled the maximum tax credit from \$100,000 to \$200,000 in December 2003.

Several environmental groups, including the Pennsylvania Resources Council and the Delaware Valley Earth Force have qualified as educational improvement organizations.

The EITC was signed into law in 2001 by Gov. Ridge. It provides a 75 percent tax credit (and increases to 90 percent for a two-year commitment) to companies contributing to non-profit scholarship or educational improvement organizations.

More than 90 percent of companies that applied this year opted for the two-year commitment.

Pennsylvania's Connection to the Federal Wilderness Act



The federal Wilderness Act celebrated its 40th anniversary on September 3rd, but most people don't know one of its architects was from Pennsylvania.

[Howard Zahniser](#), born in Franklin, Venango County, wrote 66 drafts of the bill and helped steer it through 18 Congressional hearings before it became law; sadly six months after his death in 1964.

Through his efforts, the legislation established the National Wilderness Preservation System which now permanently protects over 104 million acres across the United States.

Zahniser defined a wilderness this way, "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Zahniser also served as executive secretary of The Wilderness Society and editor of its magazine, *The Living Wilderness*, from 1945 until his death in 1964.

As a tribute to his work, the [Zahniser Institute for Environmental Studies](#) was founded at Greenville College in Illinois that Zahniser attended to promote the preservation of unique and wild places and educate students and the public on sustainable use and management of natural resources and public lands.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission placed an historic marker in Franklin County in 2001 commemorating Zahniser's role in developing the Wilderness Act saying: *Howard C. Zahniser - Conservationist and architect of the National Wilderness Preservation System Act of 1964. Although he died four months before*

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President Lyndon Johnson signed the bill his efforts led to the preservation of over 100 million acres across the nation. Zahniser was born in Franklin, Pa., and Tionesta became his hometown. An advocate for preserving wilderness area, he was executive director of The Wilderness Society & editor of its journal. (Thanks to Wayne Kober, [PA Association of Environmental Professionals](#), for reminding us of Zahniser's contributions.)

NewsClips: [Tionesta Native Had Hand in Wilderness Act](#)
[Pennsylvania Environmental Hero: Howard Zahniser](#)

Taking Positive Action

Watershed Minutes – People Making a Difference For the Environment



Listen to [Watershed Minutes](#) too see and hear learn how 14 different groups around Pennsylvania made a difference in their watershed by taking positive action.

Watershed Minutes is a project of the [Western Pennsylvania Watershed Protection Program](#) and the [GreenTreks Network](#).

Watershed NewsClips

[Montgomery County Holds Open Space Forums](#)
[SRBC & PPL Offer Streamside Cleanup Grants](#)
[Local Organizations Receive \\$3 Million in Bay Restoration Grants](#)
[Westmoreland County Gets Federal Education Funds](#)
[Susquehanna River, Divided By Dams, Offers Adventures](#)
[Allegheny River Ideas flow During 4 Public Discussions](#)
[Conservationists Hope Effort to Stop Pollution Will Stick](#)
[Effort Targets a Colorful Market for Acid Mine Drainage](#)

Regulations

[Pennsylvania Bulletin – September 11, 2004](#)

[Comment Deadlines Open](#)

[Copies of Proposed Regulations](#)

[Status of Regulations, 6-Month Calendar](#)

Technical Guidance & Permits

DEP proposed this revised technical guidance this week--

DEP ID: 274-4000-004 Title: Compliance Assurance Policy for Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (CEMS) on Fluid Catalytic Cracking Units. Comments due October 1. (Check below in draft technical guidance for a posted copy.)

[For copies of Draft Technical Guidance](#) [For copies of Final Technical Guidance](#)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **Sept. 16** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee informational meeting on use of waste coal in Pennsylvania. Indiana
- **Sept. 21** – [DEP Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting. Harrisburg.
- **Sept. 22** – [DCNR Citizens Advisory Council](#) meeting. Harrisburg
- **Sept. 28** – House Environmental Resources & Energy Committee information meeting to review the water and wastewater infrastructure needs. Harrisburg.
- **Oct. 20** – PEC Northeast Environmental Partners Awards dinner. Wilkes-Barre. Contact: ellen@pecnepa.org
- **Nov. 18** – Pennsylvania Environmental Council annual Harrisburg dinner. Contact: PAENVIRON@aol.com .

[DEP Calendar of Events](#) [Watershed Events](#)

Helpful Web Links

[Daily NewsClips](#) [Weekly DEP Update](#) [GreenTreks Network](#) [Watershed Weekly](#)

[DEP Press Releases](#) [DEP Advisory Committee Meetings & Agendas](#)

Contributions Invited

Send your stories about environmental issues, programs and positive actions to **PA Environment Digest** - DHess@HolstonCrisci.com .

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