

— PA — Environment Digest

*An Update on
Environmental
Issues in
Pennsylvania*

Edited By David E. Hess, Holston & Crisci

December 13, 2004

Senate & House Schedule

- January 4 – Swearing in day for members
- January 17 – House non-voting session
- January 24 – Senate and House first week of voting session



**Holiday Green in Capitol
Tree Lighting Dec. 14**

Contents – On the Hill

- Quick Rundown on Remaining Bills Signed, Vetoed by the Governor

Other News

- Hardball: Growing Greener Lobbying Continues
- DEP Proposing Automatic Inflation Increases for Tank, Air Emission Fees
- Innovative “Philly Rewards Recycling” Program Gets Underway
- PA’s First Voluntary Clean School Bus Program
- EPA Helping Pennsylvanians Breathe Easier
- Eagles Team Up with Philadelphia Schools To Plant Trees
- Wharton School Study Finds Greening Good Investment.
- Student Test Scores Benefit from Environment Education
- [Pfizer, Lititz Borough Sign First Nutrient Trading Agreement in U.S.](#)
- [Applications Invited for Five-Star Restoration Matching Grants Program](#)
- [Apply for Banrock Station Wines Wetlands Conservation Program](#)
- New Online Tool Looks at Water Quality, Land Use Impacts
- Learn About Water, Wastewater, Nonpoint Source Financial Assistance
- PennDOT to Develop Long-Range Transportation ‘Mobility Plan’
- EPA Funds Pilot Deconstruction Project in Philadelphia
- Application Period Now Open for Emergency Response Grants
- Christmas Tree Farms Report Brisk Sales
- DEP Makes Personnel Announcements
- [Help Wanted – Northeast Sustainable Energy Fund Director](#)

Taking Positive Actions

- Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, Dept. of Transportation Win Anti-Litter Recognition

Special Report

- Bipartisan Commission Issues Strategy on U.S. Energy Challenges
- [Op-Ed: Energy Efficiency is a Smart Design Tool for Portfolio Standards](#)

On the Hill

Hardball: Growing Greener Lobbying Continues

Gov. Rendell went to Washington County this week for a [mock bill signing](#) of his Advanced Energy Portfolio Standards legislation, [Senate Bill 1030](#).

At the same time he said his environmental agenda was not complete without the passage of his Growing Greener II initiative early next year.

DEP Secretary McGinty this week again highlighted the need for funding the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund as part of Growing Greener II at an [event in Montgomery County](#) where residents were dealing with drinking water contamination issues. She said, “Dangerous levels of toxic chemicals are loose in our environment and the department does not have the money to protect residents. The hard fact is that once sample results are received, other than making recommendations on how best to filter levels of contamination noted, residents may be on their own.”

Secretary McGinty also said again this week that she was “within weeks” of having to furlough some or all of the 300+ DEP employees that depend on the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund to pay their salaries.

The [Washington Observer](#) quoted Secretary McGinty as saying, “The Legislature is failing the people of Pennsylvania by dragging their feet on that legislation (Growing Greener).”

NewsClip: [No Money for Well Cleanup Waste Coal on Display as Part of PA Energy Law Rendell Touts Clean Energy Legislation](#)

Quick Rundown on Remaining Bills Signed, Vetoed by the Governor

Mass Transit Districts: [House Bill 994](#) (Rubley-R-Chester) authorizes the creation of public transportation districts to work cooperatively with counties, local governments, transportation authorities, the private sector, AMTRAK and other providers of public transportation and passenger rail services. Act 238

Forest/Farmland Assessment: [House Bill 657](#) (Major-R-Susquehanna) amends the Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act to include land on which recreational activities occur and makes other changes to agricultural use value calculations. Act 235

===== **FYI** =====



[PA Christmas Tree Growers](#)



[Christmas Bird Count Dec. 14 to Jan. 5](#)

Mass Transit: [House Bill 2664](#) (Watson-R-Bucks) made flying under the influence a crime and provided funding for smaller mass transit agencies in the state. Veto # 11 This veto is part of the larger, animated discussion now going on in Harrisburg between the Governor and the General Assembly over how to permanently fund mass transit.

NewsClip: [Rendell Vetoes Mass Transit, Drunken Flying Bill](#)

In Other News

DEP Proposing Automatic Inflation Increases for Tank, Air Emission Fees

The Department of Environmental Protection has proposed the first changes to its regulations to charge fees that will automatically increase every year with the rate of inflation in the storage tank and air quality programs. DEP is expected to propose the practice across all its programs charging fees.

The full [Storage Tank Advisory Committee](#) met this week to discuss increases in tank fees that range from 50 to 100 percent to meet what DEP projected would be a shortfall in funds. Also included was the provision for an automatic annual increase based on the Consumer Price Index.

The proposed fee increases are outlined in the table below:

Aboveground Storage Tanks

Capacity	Current	Proposed	Increase
Over 250 to 5,000	\$50	\$100	\$50
5,000 to 50,000	\$125	\$200	\$75
50,000 to 500,000	\$300	\$450	\$150
500,000 to 2 million	\$300	\$600	\$300
Over 2 million	\$300	\$750	\$450

Underground Storage Tanks

Capacity	Current	Proposed	Increase
Over 110 to 8,000	\$50	\$100	\$50
Over 8,000	\$50	\$200	\$150

Members of the Committee raised questions about the immediate need for the new funds, citing DEP's own income/expense projections showing the Storage Tank Fund would not actually run in the red until sometime in 2008.

In addition, members noted the federal government's Leaking Underground Storage Tank Fund owes millions of dollars to Pennsylvania and other states from fees it collects. Members offered to work with DEP to secure those funds in hopes of avoiding a fee increase.

The Committee, including farmers, local governments and tank owners, voted to recommend DEP not go ahead with the fee increase since their need for funds was not immediate. The Committee did approve other technical changes to Storage Tank Program regulations.

Staff from DEP indicated they planned to move ahead anyway and formally proposed the fee increases at the April Environmental Quality Board meeting in spite of the Committee's opposition.

The [Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee](#) meets on December 14 to consider a proposed rule change that would insert automatic, annual cost of living fee increases in regulation for air quality plan approvals, operating permits and Title V air emissions.

Innovative “Philly Rewards Recycling” Program Gets Underway

Beginning this week about 6,000 homes in the Germantown and Chestnut Hill sections of Philadelphia will be involved in testing a brand new approach to recycling that its backers hope will provide an incentive far beyond "doing the right thing" -- hard cash in your pocket.

The City of Philadelphia is teaming up with [Blue Mountain Recycling](#) and [RecycleBank](#) to introduce single stream recycling to residents as well as an incentive program that gives them dollars off grocery bills, movie rentals and sneaker purchases based on the amount of material they recycle each week.



In the first phase of the pilot program residents will be able to put bottles and cans (steel, glass, aluminum and, for the first time, plastic bottles and jugs) into their recycling container, and set out mixed paper and cardboard in a separate bundle. In the next phase, the pilot program households will be able to set out all recyclables in a new container that will be provided by the partnership.

Each new container is outfitted with an RFID tag coded for each household that can be read and weighed by the truck picking up the recyclables. This allows tracking the amount of material recycled by each household.

New technology, pioneered by Blue Mountain Recycling in Philadelphia, will separate the recyclables at their processing plant under their existing contract with Smurfit-Stone.

In phase two of the pilot, residents will each get a RecycleBank account that keeps a running total of the materials they recycle. Based on the amount they recycle, their account is credited with "dollars" that can add up to real dollar coupons redeemable at local participating grocery, restaurants, video, retail stores and sponsors like Home Depot and Coca-Cola. RecycleBank dollars can also be donated to local nonprofit and community groups.

It costs participating businesses nothing to be part of the initial coupon program since many businesses already have coupon programs of their own. The RecycleBank program becomes another way to deliver the coupons and drive potential customers to local businesses.

Each household will receive a monthly RecycleBank statement to track their recycling along with recycling reminders and special coupon offers. Households can "earn" up to \$300 a year through the program (about 40 pounds of recyclables a month)

and get access to their account and redeem coupons on a special website or over the telephone.

Blue Mountain Recycling and RecycleBank are underwriting some of the costs of the pilot program.

The sponsors hope to increase the recycling rate from about five percent of the total city waste stream (the current City average) to about 40 percent, pulling hundreds of thousands more tons of material out of the waste stream and increase the participation rate from 27 to 50 percent.

If this program is rolled out to other areas of the city, it is proposed that RecycleBank will be paid for managing the program and administering the coupon system through a portion of the savings in landfill dumping fees avoided by the City and recycling funds the City now receives. For each ton of material recycled, the City will save about \$52 by not having to take that waste to a landfill. Next year dumping costs are expected to increase under a new waste disposal contract. Savings expected by avoiding dumping costs above the cost of the program will be kept by the City.

City residents will get a simple recycling program that recycles many more materials than they have in the past in a way that directly rewards them for their efforts.

Blue Mountain Recycling, RecycleBank and the City Recycling Office will be carefully documenting the results of the program and making changes to the program based on those results before expanding it to more of the City's 530,000 households.

The [Philadelphia Office of Recycling](#) run by David Robinson, the City's Recycling Coordinator, oversees one of the largest curbside recycling programs in the country.

[Blue Mountain Recycling](#) in Philadelphia was founded by Herb Northrop and David DiIenno in 2000 and is the only full service recycling facility in the Eastern United States offering single-stream recycling for residential, office, stores and other commercial customers. Single-stream recycling makes it convenient for customers to recycle paper, cardboard, aluminum, tin, glass and plastic bottles and jugs in the same containers.

[RecycleBank](#) was founded in 2003 by Patrick FitzGerald and Ron Gonen and is based in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania and is a for-profit company affiliated with Columbia University. Its mission is to promote sustainability and "provide communities with a cost effective and environmentally conscious solution to waste collection and disposal."

NewsClip: [City to Reward for Recycling](#)

EPA Funds Pilot Deconstruction Project in Philadelphia

EPA's Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh presented a grant award to the Mid-Atlantic Consortium of Recycling and Economic Development Officials and the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, at an event at the EPA Region 3 Public Information Center on America Recycles Day. These organizations will use this grant to conduct building surveys beginning this winter, evaluate deconstruction techniques and establish a web-based materials exchange database. For more information on waste and materials exchange programs, go to [EPA's materials exchange website](#)

PA's First Voluntary Clean School Bus Program Gets Underway

Department of Agriculture Secretary Dennis Wolff this week helped the Conewago Valley School District in Adams County celebrate the beginning of the first voluntary program to run school buses on bio-derived diesel fuels.

Soy Energy, Inc, Aero Energy, Ag Com, Inc. and the school district worked together to develop the initiative that not only uses an American-produced fuel, but also a fuel that eliminates many of the air pollutants associated with regular diesel fuel. Conewago buses will use about 4,000 gallons of bio-derived diesel fuel a year which is 5 percent soybean oil.

The bio-derived fuel was developed through the work of researchers at The [Pennsylvania State University Energy Institute](#), and their partnership with Ag Com, Inc. By studying the alternative uses for food crops and their bi-products, a new use for surplus soybeans was found as an efficient bio-blended fuel additive.

Ag Com, Inc., is located in New Chester, Adams County, and operates a Soybean Oil Manufacturing Plant.

The [Alternative Fuels Renewable Energies Council](#) helped organize the day's events.

For more information on Soy Energy, Inc., call 717- 624-4149 or on Ag Com, Inc., call 800-359-8899.

EPA Helping Pennsylvanians Breathe Easier

EPA Region 3 Regional Administrator, Donald S. Welsh presented a \$41,958 check to the Pennsylvania Department of Health at St. Luke's Presbyterian Head Start, in Philadelphia to increase awareness of tobacco smoke as a trigger that exacerbates asthma.

This grant award will promote smoke free vehicles and living areas of children, thus reducing the exposure of children to second hand smoke. Education and training will be provided to daycare centers and Head Start personnel in rural and urban areas of Pennsylvania to better understand asthma management and the impact of second hand smoke on children and especially those with asthma.

Berks County has the second highest asthma rate among school age children in the Philadelphia region and the highest number of missed school days due to asthma related symptoms. To educate people on asthma as a manageable condition, the Pennsylvania Department of Health arranged for an asthma panel (including a representatives from EPA Region 3, the American Lung Association, the Safe Kids Coalition, and a local pediatrician) to be on Berks County Community Action TV to discuss what asthma is, the warning signs and symptoms of asthma, the racial disparities, and how to minimize asthma episodes through medications and reduction of environmental triggers.

Eagles Team Up with Philadelphia Schools To Plant Trees

The Philadelphia Eagles joined state, city and school officials this week at Richard Wright Elementary School in North Philadelphia to kick off plans to plant 300 trees at 15 elementary schools and five park sites across the city as part of [TreeVitalize](#), a public-private partnership to restore tree cover to the five-county Philadelphia region.

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

Wright Elementary is the first school in the Philadelphia School District to benefit from a \$125,000 donation presented by the Eagles. The Eagles made the donation as part of the team's ['Go Green' initiative](#), championing care for the environment and recycling.

In November volunteers from Temple University and the Gibson Baptist Church planted 14 sugar maple trees in a grass strip that rings the asphalt schoolyard and parking lot. An additional six golden raintree and flowering cherry trees were planted at the church, adjacent to the school. Church members have agreed to help care for all the new trees.

Studies have shown that exposure to green and nature is good for children, and that views of trees and shrubs can increase concentration and reduce violence.

To prepare for this week's ceremony, third-grade students at Wright Elementary composed tree poems and adorned their new trees with paper decorations. During the ceremony, Eagles players Michael Lewis and Sheldon Brown helped students place their leaf-shaped poems on the newly planted trees.

The selection of school and park sites within the school district's elementary schools is underway. High priority will be given to those public elementary schools that are located in neighborhoods with low tree cover, have adequate spacing for at least 10 trees, and can link the planting to an environmental education program. Schools where community members are trained in tree care and are willing to help care for trees will be favored.

The Fairmount Park Commission, who oversees the planting and care of 250,000 street trees in Philadelphia, will manage the planting projects at the schools.

Launched by Gov. Rendell on Arbor Day this year, TreeVitalize aims to plant more than 20,000 shade trees in neighborhoods and 1,000 acres of forested riparian buffers in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. The \$8 million program targets neighborhoods in older cities, boroughs and townships where tree cover is below 25 percent. Tree cover refers to the percentage of land shaded by trees and shrubs.

TreeVitalize is designed to halt the loss of tree cover and revitalize older communities, improve air and water quality and enhance the quality of life for citizens living in cities and towns. Studies have shown that even a single street tree can increase a home's value and lower its energy use. It will provide local governments, which many times lack urban forestry resources, with the financial and technical tools to encourage tree planting and stewardship.

In addition to coordinating resources to support tree plantings, TreeVitalize aims to train 2,000 volunteer citizens in proper tree care techniques. These citizens will organize future tree planting projects and educate homeowners on proper tree care and planting.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has partnered with the state Department of Environmental Protection; Aqua PA; Philadelphia Eagles; PECO, an Exelon Co.; U.S. Forest Service; PA Horticultural Society; Morris Arboretum; and the PA Landscape and Nursery Association on Treevitalize.

Wharton School Study Finds Greening Good Investment.

Investments in greening and in vacant land management can increase property values by as much as 30 percent.

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

This fact is reported in "[The Determinants of Neighborhood Transformation in Philadelphia - Identification and Analysis](#)," a study undertaken by the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania's Real Estate Department with support from the William Penn Foundation to look at revitalization strategies and their impact on neighborhoods.

The author of the study, Susan M. Wachter, Richard B. Worley Professor of Financial Management; Professor of Real Estate, Finance and City and Regional Planning at the Wharton School, says the study looks at the entire city, and it is anticipated that the findings will be applicable to other cities throughout the United States.

"For the first time, utilizing new technology that included the satellite Geographic Information System, spatial regression models, and econometrics, we were able to measure the steady impact of greening," says Professor Wachter. "Philadelphia is at the forefront of using place based policies to transform cities from decline to vibrant health."

The first report released by Wharton this month focused on the Kensington area of Philadelphia. Three key findings were noted in this preliminary report:

- Neighborhood blocks with higher concentrations of unmanaged vacant lots displayed lower house prices.
- Tree plantings showed a significantly positive effect on housing prices - increasing value close to nine percent (this equates to about a \$3,400 premium on the standard).
- There is a 64 percent rise in housing prices for neighbors of vacant lots that have been cleaned and greened. On the standard house, this would amount to a \$24,000 increase.

The Kensington area was the site of a vacant land management program coordinated and managed by [The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Green](#) in partnership with the New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC). The community-based land management system developed by Philadelphia Green, and funded by the city's Office of Housing and Community Development was designed to address the large number of derelict vacant lots in the area. The goal was to improve the appearance and curb appeal of the community and to help stem population loss, attract new residents, and encourage reinvestment.

The impact of these increases will contribute to the fiscal health of the City. "The transformation of Philadelphia's neighborhoods is not just about bricks and mortar," says Patricia Smith, Director of the City of Philadelphia's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative. "We believe that cleaning up vacant lots and investing in quality green spaces is one of the most effective ways to build thriving communities, enhance the quality of life and make Philadelphia one of the most desirable places to live, work, and do business. That's why the city has partnered with PHS and is investing in the Green City Strategy."

The Wharton School will release additional results in January 2005 that indicate the benefits of revitalization efforts with regards to public safety, schools, and business corridor investment.

NewsClip: [Study Shows Property Value Gain from Green](#)

Student Test Scores Benefit from Environment Education

Students involved in environmental education score higher on standardized tests, tend to have higher grades and stay in school longer, according to a new report from the

Environmental Education Association of Washington. "[Report Card on the Status of Environmental Education in Washington State](#)"

Pennsylvania has documented similar experiences through local initiatives like the [Monagacci Program](#) in the East Hills Middle School in Bethlehem.

You can get more background on environmental education issues at the [Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education website](#).

NewsClip: [New Report Illustrates Value of Environmental Education](#)

New Online Tool Looks at Water Quality, Land Use Impacts

In partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Purdue University, the [Local Government Environmental Assistance Network](#) (LGEAN) recently launched an online tool to help local government planners measure the water quality impacts of land use changes. Specifically, local governments provide information about their location, the proposed land use change, and the area's soil type. Based on community-specific climate data, the Long-Term Hydrologic Impact Assessment (L-THIA) model estimates changes in recharge, runoff, and non-point source pollution resulting from proposed development. (Courtesy: [Hourglass Foundation](#), Lancaster County)

PennDOT to Develop Long-Range Transportation 'Mobility Plan'

The Department of Transportation is embarking on an effort to develop a long-range "[Pennsylvania Mobility Plan](#)," a blueprint outlining goals, objectives and strategies to guide the future of the state's transportation system. It will also prioritize needed transportation investments.

The Pennsylvania Mobility Plan is based on Gov. Rendell's aspiration to consider transportation's role in economic development, community, environmental and quality of life issues. The plan will place an increased focus on alternatives and connections among transportation modes, such as air, highway and rail, and will examine ways to make the best use of limited funds.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation will incorporate extensive public outreach as the foundation of the program through the use of focus group discussions, interviews, surveys and other opinion-polling techniques.

Development of the Pennsylvania Mobility Plan was launched in the summer of 2004 and is slated for completion during the summer of 2006.

To date, PennDOT has involved 75 stakeholders, ranging from private corporations that use Pennsylvania's transportation system, to regional planning agencies and economic development organizations.

More information about the plan is available at the [Pennsylvania Mobility Plan website](#).

By visiting the site, users can get current project information and also participate in an online survey, allowing them to comment on topics such as the future of Pennsylvania's transportation system and thoughts they have on the current system. To take the online survey, click "Your Ideas."

Learn About Water, Wastewater, Nonpoint Source Financial Assistance

The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority will hold a series of five Information Exchange meetings across the state for project sponsors to learn about how PennVEST operates and about new nonpoint source control funding available.

Representatives of approved projects, as well as individuals from the consulting community and contractors are being invited to participate to discuss how PennVEST is making it easier to manage loans and grants under their programs through web-based processes.

During the meetings, discussion will also center on updates to other PennVEST non-point source initiatives. Staff from PennVEST will provide an overview of how additional money is being made available through the program.

Space at the meetings is limited. To reserve a spot, people are asked to contact Lou Ann Buffington at 717-787-8138 or by e-mail at lbuffingto@state.pa.us. Meetings begin with registration at 8:30 a.m. and adjourn at noon.

Meetings will be held as follows:

Dec. 20 – Mountain View Inn, 1001 Village Drive, Greensburg

Dec. 21 – Quality Inn, 1411 Liberty St., Franklin

Jan. 5 – Holiday Inn, 880 Kidder St., Wilkes-Barre

Jan. 12 – Days Inn, Rt 879 and I-80, Clearfield

Jan. 18 – Inn at Chester Springs, 815 N. Pottstown Pike, Exton

Application Period Now Open for Emergency Response Grants

The State Fire Commissioner announced this week the application period will open for the 2004-05 Volunteer Fire Company/Volunteer Ambulance Service grant program on January 3 and will run through February 28.

Under the Volunteer Fire Company/Volunteer Ambulance Service grant program, \$22 million will be allocated for fire company grants and \$3 million for ambulance service grants.

Watch the [Office of State Fire Commissioner website](#) for more details or call 1-800-670-3473.

Christmas Tree Farms Report Brisk Sales

The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau says farmers are reporting strong sales of “live” Christmas trees at Pennsylvania farms. Growers say the supply of trees is just right to meet the demand and that it’s a growers market.

Pennsylvania is one of the top five Christmas tree producing states and leads the United States in the number of farms (2,164) with Christmas trees in production. Nationally, overall sales of natural Christmas trees have declined over the past decade, while sales of artificial trees has risen.

“Although more people are buying artificial trees, there is a new trend of people who are buying live Christmas trees for the first time. Many of my customers from suburban Pittsburgh say they were raised on fake trees and can’t believe how beautiful

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

real trees are and how nice they smell,” added Mancabelli, who operates E-Mar Acres Tree Farm in Saltsburg, Indiana County.

One segment of Christmas tree sales that is growing involves farms where customers can choose and cut their own trees. “Families have made the process of buying a Christmas tree an event. They’ll pack food, take pictures and play in the snow while trying to pick out the perfect tree,” said Mancabelli.

Many farmers are providing other activities to encourage families to come out and buy a tree. “We have a cookie hut, where customers can get free hot chocolate, hot cider and cookies. Santa Claus is also there on weekends and there is an area where you can write Santa a letter,” said Sue McCain, co-owner of Sheerlund Forests in Reading, Berks County.

The extras offered at Sheerlund Forests make a big difference in the bottom line. “Our Christmas tree sales have been very good, and there’s no question that added features such as free wagon rides, our ornament shop and our 94 cent children’s ornament tree helps bring customers to our farm,” added McCain.

A new trend in Christmas tree buying this year appears to be bigger is better. “There has been some pressure this year for larger trees. Many people have purchased new homes with cathedral ceilings and are looking for trees 12 feet and up to fill their rooms,” said Bill Hartzell, owner of Seven Springs Tree Farm in Orrtanna, Adams County.

For more information visit the [Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association website](#).

DEP Makes Personnel Announcements

The Department of Environmental Protection this week made two major personnel announcements.

Thomas K. Fidler has now been approved as Deputy Secretary for Air, Recycling and Radiation Protection. He had been acting in that position.

Richard Struble has been appointed the new Director of the Bureau of Land Recycling and Waste Management. Struble has more than 35 years experience in managing environmental programs and projects with both the public and private sectors. Richard started his career as a regional office manager for New York State’s Department of Environmental Conservation. Most recently, he was responsible for corporate quality review of hazardous and solid waste management projects for a private environmental consulting firm. He has both undergraduate and advanced degrees in Civil Engineering from Cornell University. He will begin work on December 13.

And long-time waste management “guru” **William Pounds**, chief of the Division of Municipal and Residual Waste at DEP, announced he was retiring at the end of the year.

Taking Positive Action

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, Dept. of Transportation Win Anti-Litter Recognition

The non-profit [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful](#) was recognized for its efforts to fight litter and promote beautification last week at the national conference of the [Keep American Beautiful](#) organization.

KPB won the William Nash award as the best new affiliate to the KAB organization, competing against 35 other groups who were less than three years old.

KPB also won the President's Circle Recognition Award for achieving all its KAB objectives for the past year.

The Department of Transportation was the recipient of the 2004 KAB Partnership Award that goes to the state department of transportation which best promotes the goals of Keep American Beautiful through partnership efforts.

PennDOT has promoted Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful for 30 years through a variety of partnerships—7,500 local groups through the [Adopt-A-Highway Program](#), adult and juvenile litter brigades, nearly 100 [Adopt and Beautify](#) groups and the [Sponsor a Highway](#) Programs.

Through its Agility Program, PennDOT has bartered litter removal and beautification services with other state agencies, local governments and nonprofit partner organizations.

NewsClip: [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Wins National Award](#)



Watershed NewsClips

[Erie Bluff Recession Study to be Updated Along Lake Erie](#)

[Delaware Basin Commission Seeking Water Demand Forecasting Help](#)

[Lackawanna River Corridor Group Updates Water Quality Manual](#)

[Pine Creek cleanup project targets debris](#)

[Wild pheasants from South Dakota to the Pike Run Watershed](#)

[Dozens Try to Rescue Habitat from Delaware Spill](#)

[Time now to act to preserve Highlands](#)

[Streams marked to aid awareness](#)

[Dam bypass channels shad upstream](#)

[Time to pay up](#)

Regulations

The Environmental Quality Board published final regulations covering [small sources of nitrogen oxides, cement kilns and large internal combustion engines](#) .

The Public Utility Commission published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking on the subject of [quarterly and annual electric reliability reports](#).

The Environmental Quality Board meeting on December 21 has been cancelled to allow time for a more thorough review of the proposed omitted rulemaking concerning changes regulations on handling of explosives. DEP will also report in January on its intentions regarding the petition to impose Pennsylvania's own mercury standards on power plants in advance of federal regulations.

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

[Comment Deadlines Open](#)

[Copies of Proposed Regulations](#)

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

Technical Guidance & Permits

The Department of Environmental Protection published this interim final technical guidance and notices this week-

- DEP ID: 254-2412-002. Title: Act 90 Waste Transportation Safety Program Placarded Authorizations. Description: This guidance document establishes procedures for owners of demonstrator vehicles, vehicles under rental/short-term leases, vehicles utilized for temporary storage and intermodal transportation vehicles to obtain written authorization from the Department under the Waste Transportation Safety Act.
- [Bond rate guidelines for calculating land reclamation bonds](#) for surface coal mine operations.
- Proposed changes to the Air Quality State Implementation Plan for [architectural and industrial coatings](#). Two public hearings are scheduled, with comments due January 20.

[For copies of Draft Technical Guidance](#)

[For copies of Final Technical Guidance](#)

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **Dec. 14** – [Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee](#) meets to discuss fee increases.
- **Dec. 21** – **(CANCELED)** Environmental Quality Board meeting.
- **March 2, 2005** – Senate Appropriations Budget Hearing for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. 2:45
- **March 9, 2005** – Senate Appropriations Budget Hearing for the Department of Environmental Protection. 2:45
- **April 19-20, 2005** [Environmental Laws & Regulations Conference and Trade Show](#), Harrisburg.

Special Report

Bipartisan Commission Issues Strategy on U.S. Energy Challenges

The [National Commission on Energy Policy](#), a bipartisan group of top energy experts from industry, government, labor, academia, and environmental and consumer groups today released a consensus strategy, more than two years in the making, to address major long-term U.S. energy challenges.

The report, [“Ending the Energy Stalemate: A Bipartisan Strategy to Meet America’s Energy Challenges.”](#) contains detailed policy recommendations for addressing oil security, climate change, natural gas supply, the future of nuclear energy, and other long-term challenges, and is backed by more than 30 original research studies.



“Political and regional polarization has produced an energy stalemate, preventing America from adopting sensible approaches to some of our biggest energy problems,” said John W. Rowe, Commission co-chair and Chairman and CEO of Exelon Corp. “Our Commission reached consensus on effective policies because of a willingness to take on cherished myths from both right and left. We believe that this package of recommendations can be of value to Congress and the Administration in energy legislation next year and beyond.”

“Taken together, the Commission’s recommendations aim to achieve a gradual but decisive shift in the nation’s energy policy, toward one that directly addresses our long-term oil, climate, electricity supply, and technology challenges,” said William K. Reilly, former EPA Administrator and Commission co-chair. “Oil reliance is a fact we will face for some time. So we recommend incentives to spur global oil production, to increase domestic vehicle fuel economy, and to increase investment in alternative fuels. Our climate change plan would both limit greenhouse gas emissions and cap the costs of doing so. At the same time, it provides incentives for low- and non-carbon sources like natural gas, renewable energy, nuclear energy, and advanced coal technologies with carbon capture and sequestration, as well as for increased efficiency of energy end use. We are proposing programs that can work in the real world.”

“It's essential to take some prudent steps now to avoid intolerable costs and impacts later,” said John Holdren, Heinz Professor of Environmental Policy at Harvard University and Commission co-chair. “The task of energy policy is to ensure the reliable and affordable energy services that a prosperous economy requires while simultaneously limiting the risks and impacts from overdependence on oil, from global climate change, and from other environmental and political liabilities of the available energy-supply options. Meeting this challenge requires measures to encourage increased use of the best available technologies for energy supply and energy end-use efficiency in the years

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

immediately ahead, as well as increased investments in energy research and development to improve the options available to us in the future."

A summary of the recommendations follows:

To ***enhance US oil security***, the Commission recommends:

- Increasing and diversifying world oil production while expanding the global network of strategic petroleum reserves.
- Significantly strengthening federal fuel economy standards beginning no later than 2010 for cars and light trucks, giving due consideration to vehicle performance, safety, job impacts and competitiveness concerns.
- Reforming the 30-year-old Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) program to allow more flexibility and limit compliance costs.
- Providing \$3 billion over ten years in manufacturer and consumer incentives to encourage domestic production and boost sales of efficient hybrid and advanced diesel vehicles.
- Developing non-petroleum transportation fuel alternatives, particularly ethanol and clean bio-diesel from waste products and biomass.

The Commission estimates its recommendations could reduce U.S. oil consumption in 2025 by 10–15 percent or 3–5 million barrels per day.

"Raising CAFE standards and reforming the program go hand in hand," said Holdren. "The \$3 billion package of consumer and manufacturer incentives, together with important program reforms, will enable domestic manufacturers to significantly raise fuel economy by the end of the decade while protecting U.S. jobs."

Regarding oil supply, the Commission believes the U.S. government should apply diplomatic pressure to encourage nations with significant but underdeveloped oil reserves to allow foreign investment in their energy sectors to increase and diversify global oil production.

To the extent that unilaterally imposed U.S. economic sanctions may be limiting investment in foreign energy markets and constraining world oil supply, the oil security implications of these sanctions should be carefully considered.

In focusing on world oil supply, the Commission report notes that "reducing vulnerability to high oil prices and supply disruptions are more meaningful and ultimately achievable policy goals than a misplaced focus on energy independence."

"The near-term key to reducing oil price shocks is curbing U.S. demand and increasing world supply," said Reilly. "We have to do both. We also have to make big investments in alternatives like bio-fuels made from domestic crops and agricultural waste."

To ***reduce risks from climate change***, the Commission recommends:

- Implementing in 2010 a mandatory, economy-wide tradable-permits system designed to curb future growth in the nation's emissions of greenhouse gases while capping initial costs to the U.S. economy at \$7 per metric ton of carbon dioxide-equivalent.

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

- Linking subsequent action to reduce U.S. emissions with efforts by other developed and developing nations to achieve comparable emissions reductions via a review of program efficacy and international progress in 2015.

“The Commission believes the United States must take responsibility for addressing its contribution to the risks of climate change,” said Rowe. “But we must do so in a manner that recognizes the global nature of the challenge and does not harm the competitive position of U.S. businesses internationally. Our plan meets those goals.”

Under the Commission’s proposal, the U.S. government in 2010 would begin issuing permits for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions based on an annual emissions target that reflects a 2.4 percent per year reduction in the average GHG intensity of the economy (where intensity is measured in tons of emissions per dollar of GDP). An emissions intensity metric is also the basis of President Bush’s plan, which calls for voluntary GHG intensity reductions of 1.8 percent per year from 2002-2012.

Under the Commission’s proposal, most GHG permits would be issued at no cost to existing emitters, but a small pool — 5 percent at the outset, increasing gradually thereafter to a maximum of 10 percent — would be auctioned to accommodate new entrants, stimulate the market in emission permits, and fund research and development of new technologies.

The Commission’s proposal also includes a “safety valve” or cost-capping mechanism to limit the total cost of the program to the U.S. economy. The cost cap allows additional permits to be purchased from the government at an initial price of \$7 per metric ton of carbon dioxide (CO₂)-equivalent. The safety valve price would increase by 5 percent per year in nominal terms to generate a gradually stronger market signal for reducing emissions without prematurely displacing existing energy infrastructure.

“The Commission’s climate change proposal is designed to be a logical next step for the nation, building upon many of the themes and features of the current Administration’s program,” Reilly said. “Such a program is entirely compatible with separate legislative efforts by the Bush Administration and the Congress to address nitrogen, mercury and sulfur emissions from electric power generation. The Commission did not study specific legislation, but supports multi-pollutant approaches as a means of improving public health, providing business certainty and accelerating investments in cleaner burning technologies, such as IGCC.”

“The Commission’s climate plan explicitly caps the total cost to the economy while reducing emissions. Even in 2020, the estimated cost of the plan per household will only be \$30-100 a year.” said Reilly. “This is no Kyoto.”

In 2015, and every five years thereafter, Congress would review the program and evaluate whether emissions control progress by major trading partners and competitors (including developing countries such as China and India) supports its continuation.

Conservative modeling analyses suggest that the Commission’s proposal would reduce total emissions in 2020 by approximately 540 million metric tons. Emission reductions could be much higher — as much as 1 billion metric tons in 2020 — if the investments in technology innovation and efficiency proposed elsewhere in this report further reduce abatement costs.

To ***improve the energy efficiency*** of the U.S. economy, the Commission recommends:

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

- Updating and expanding efficiency standards for new appliances, equipment, and buildings to capture additional cost-effective energy-saving opportunities.
- Integrating improvements in efficiency standards with targeted technology incentives, R&D, consumer information, and programs sponsored by electric and gas utilities.
- Pursuing cost-effective efficiency improvements in the industrial sector.

Efficiency improvements in buildings and industry are important complements to the Commission's efficiency recommendations for the transportation sector, which include fuel-saving opportunities in the heavy-duty truck fleet, which is responsible for roughly 20 percent of transportation energy consumption, but is not subject to fuel economy regulation, and in the existing vehicle fleet where a substantial opportunity exists to improve efficiency by, for example, mandating that replacement tires have rolling-resistance characteristics equivalent to the original equipment tires used on new vehicles.

“Absent substantial gains in the energy efficiency of motor vehicles, buildings, appliances, and equipment, it becomes difficult to imagine how energy supplies, and especially clean energy supplies, can keep pace with increased U.S. and global demand,” said Holdren.

To ***increase U.S. energy supply***, the Commission recommends:

Natural Gas: To diversify and expand the nation's access to natural gas supplies, the Commission recommends:

- Adopting effective public incentives for the construction of an Alaska natural gas pipeline.
- Addressing obstacles to the siting and construction of infrastructure needed to support increased imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

“Natural gas is the key bridge fuel for electricity over the next several decades,” said Rowe. “We simply must find ways to increase supply to U.S. markets.”

Advanced Coal Technologies: To enable the nation to continue to rely upon secure, domestic supplies of coal to meet future energy needs while addressing the climate risks associated with greenhouse gas emissions, the Commission recommends:

- Providing \$4 billion over ten years in early deployment incentives for integrated gasification combined cycle (IGCC) coal technology.
- Providing \$3 billion over ten years in public incentives to demonstrate commercial-scale carbon capture and geologic sequestration at a variety of sites.
- Coal gasification holds promise for economically capturing carbon emissions while also reducing emissions of pollutants like mercury and sulfur dioxide. The process is commonly used in the manufacture of chemicals, but — with the exception of a handful of demonstration facilities — has not yet been widely applied to producing power on a commercial scale.

“Coal's abundance in the United States, and in major developing countries like China and India, makes finding clean ways to use it among our highest priorities,”

said Reilly. “Coal gasification, when combined with carbon sequestration, has the potential to revolutionize energy production.”

Nuclear Power: To help enable nuclear power to continue to play a meaningful role in meeting future energy needs, the Commission recommends:

- Fulfilling existing federal commitments on nuclear waste management
- Providing \$2 billion over ten years from federal research, development, demonstration, and deployment budgets for the demonstration of one to two new advanced nuclear power plants.
- Significantly strengthening the international non-proliferation regime.

“The contribution of nuclear energy to meeting the nation’s electricity needs will decline absent concerted efforts to address concerns about cost, susceptibility to accidents and terrorist attacks, management of radioactive wastes, and proliferation risks,” said Holdren. “Given the risks from climate change and the challenges that face all of the low-carbon and no-carbon supply options, it would be imprudent in the extreme not to try to keep the nuclear option open.”

Renewable Energy: To expand the contribution of clean, renewable energy, the Commission recommends:

- Increasing federal support for renewable technology research and development by \$360 million annually, targeted at overcoming key hurdles in cost competitiveness and early deployment.
- Extending the federal production tax credit for a further four years (i.e., from 2006 through 2009), and expanding eligibility to all non-carbon energy sources, including solar, geothermal, new hydropower generation, next generation nuclear, and advanced fossil fuel generation with carbon capture and sequestration.
- Supporting ongoing efforts by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to promote market-based approaches to integrating intermittent resources into the interstate grid system.
- Establishing a \$1.5 billion program over ten years to increase domestic production of advanced non-petroleum transportation fuels from biomass (including waste).

“The Commission’s renewable energy proposals are aimed at finding ways to reduce costs and bring competitive sources to market,” said Reilly. “Any scenario for tackling climate change and developing clean domestic energy resources must involve expanded use of renewable power.”

To ***strengthen energy supply infrastructure***, the Commission recommends:

- Reducing barriers to the siting of critical energy infrastructure.
- Protecting critical infrastructure from accidental failure and terrorist threats.
- Supporting a variety of generation resources — including both large scale power plants and small scale "distributed" and/or renewable generation — and demand reduction (for both electricity and natural gas), to ensure affordable and reliable energy service for consumers.

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

- Encouraging increased transmission investment and deployment of new technologies to enhance the availability and reliability of the grid, in part by clarifying rules for cost-recovery.
- Enhancing consumer protections in the electricity sector and establishing an integrated, multi-pollutant program to reduce power plant emissions.

“There is a national imperative to strengthen the systems that deliver energy,” said Rowe. “Priorities include siting reforms to enable the expansion and construction of needed energy facilities, greater efforts to protect the nation’s energy systems from terrorist attack, and reforms to improve the reliability and performance of the electricity sector.”

To promote the *development of improved energy technologies for the future*, the Commission recommends:

- Doubling of federal government funding for energy research and development, while improving the management of these efforts and promoting effective public-private partnerships.
- Increasing incentives for private sector energy research, development, demonstration, and early deployment (ERD³).
- Expanding investment in cooperative international ERD³ initiatives and improving coordination among relevant federal agencies.
- Providing early deployment incentives for coal gasification and carbon sequestration; domestically produced efficient vehicles; domestically produced alternative transportation fuels; and advanced nuclear reactors.

“Overcoming the energy challenges faced by the United States and the rest of the world requires technologies superior to those available today,” said Holdren. “To accelerate the development and deployment of these technologies, the federal government must increase its own investments in energy-technology innovation as well as its collaboration in this domain with the private sector, with states, and with other nations.”

The Commission notes that investments by both the private and public sectors in energy research, development, demonstration, and early deployment have been falling short of what is likely to be needed to meet the energy challenges confronting the nation and the world in the 21st century.

Revenue Neutrality

The Commission proposes that the nation devote the resources generated by the sale of greenhouse gas emissions permits to enhance the development and deployment of improved energy technologies. The approximately \$36 billion that Commission analysis indicates will be generated over ten years by the proposed greenhouse gas tradable-permits program — most of which will come from auctioning a small portion of the overall permit pool — offsets the specific additional public investments it recommends overall.

PA Environment Digest – Holston & Crisci

The Commission's recommendations were developed in more than a dozen two-day meetings over two years and are informed by over 30 original, Commission-sponsored studies on major energy topics. The group also met with hundreds of leading stakeholders, including industry; environmental groups; state, local, and federal governmental officials; labor and consumer groups; agricultural interests; and many others. A full list of consulted organizations, copies of the Commission's report, supporting research studies, and other information can be found on the [Commission's website](#).

The Commission will spend 2005 advocating for the ideas in its strategy to Congress, the Administration, the States, industry, and other key stakeholders.

"For more than 30 years, Energy has been the graveyard of many a brave policy titan," said Reilly. "But our analysis shows that these recommended policies can curb U.S. oil use, begin to address greenhouse gas emissions, develop viable new technologies, and put the U.S. in a much stronger energy posture. We intend to carry that message to the highest levels throughout 2005."

NewsClip: [Energy panel calls for cleaner coal, more efficient cars](#)

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.

PA Environment Digest is edited by David E. Hess, former Secretary Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and is published as a service to the clients of Holston & Crisci and the public. Holston & Crisci is a Harrisburg-based government affairs firm whose clients include Fortune 500 companies and non-profit organizations. For more information on Holston & Crisci call 717-234-1716.

Content may be reproduced by members of the Pennsylvania House and Senate without attribution. All other rights reserved.