

# Conservation Committee Report

Volume 12 Issue 4

By Jack Walters, ACSL Conservation Chair

April 2010



## The Conservation Pledge

I give my pledge as an

American to save and faithfully defend from waste, the natural resources of my country; the soil, the water, the air, the minerals, the plant life and the wildlife.

This is my Pledge!

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## Attention Contractors and Consumers: New Lead-based Paint Rule Takes Effect April 22, 2010

### *Further Health Protections for Children from Lead-based Paint*

A significant new rule from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency dealing with lead-safe work practices goes into effect on April 22, 2010.

Anyone receiving compensation for renovating, repairing and painting work in residences built before 1978 that disturbs painted surfaces is subject to the new Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (RRP). Also affected by the RRP are those performing similar work on facilities occupied by children under six years of age, such as schools and day-care centers built prior to 1978.

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## DEP Successfully Plugs Moon Township Natural Gas Well

The Department of Environmental Protection reported that an abandoned well near a residential neighborhood in Moon Township, Allegheny County, has been successfully plugged. The well had been releasing natural gas into the air.

“Within 24 hours of DEP’s execution of an emergency contract on Feb. 24, the flow of gas from the well was stopped,” said DEP Southwest Regional Director George Jugovic Jr. “We are pleased that we were able to act quickly to prevent a dangerous situation.”

Jugovic said that after contractors stopped the flow of gas from the approximately 1,800-foot-deep well, work continued to fill the remainder of the well with cement by perforating a small-diameter pipe left in the hole.

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## Paint Rule Takes Effect April 22, 2010

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The requirements under the rule apply to maintenance, renovation or repair activities where six square feet (about the size of a poster) or more of a painted surface is disturbed inside, or where 20 square feet or more of painted surface (about the size of a door) is disturbed on the exterior. Window replacement is also covered by the rule. Under the new rule, child-occupied facilities are defined as public or commercial buildings where children under age six are present on a regular basis.

Those affected by the rule will be required to:

- Apply to EPA to be approved as a Certified Renovation Firm.
- Receive the necessary training and certification from an EPA-accredited training provider for Lead Safe Work Practices
- 
- Assign a Certified Renovator to be present at each project
- Ensure that lead safe work practices are used throughout the project
- Provide consumers or tenants with the EPA pamphlet “Renovate Right” prior to the start of any project that will disturb six or more square feet of interior painted surface or 20 or more square feet of exterior painted surfaces in housing and child occupied facilities built before 1978.
- Maintain records documenting that the required information has been provided at each project subject to the rule.

“This rule is the next step in EPA’s goal to protect children from the hazards of lead-based paint” said Shawn M. Garvin, EPA mid-Atlantic regional administrator. “Beginning April 22, 2010, consumers should ask for proof of certification from their contractors before work begins.”

Landlords, who perform the work described above, are also affected by the rule and bound by the same requirements.

Lead, a toxic metal that was used for many years in products such as lead-based paint, may cause a range of health effects from behavioral problems and learning disabilities, to seizures and death. Children six years old and under are most at risk. In 1978 the sale and use of lead-based paint was banned for residential use.

Until the new rule takes effect, contractors should follow these three simple procedures: contain the work area; minimize dust; and cleanup thoroughly.

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## Paint Rule Takes Effect April 22, 2010

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To find a certified firm near you go to [http://cfpub.epa.gov/flpp/searchrrp\\_firm.htm](http://cfpub.epa.gov/flpp/searchrrp_firm.htm).

For more information please go to: [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead) or call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD, that's 1-800-424-5323.

Individuals, contracting firms and property owners seeking to become certified and trained can find more information on the process and a list of accredited trainers at: <http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renovation.htm#contractors>.

Source: U.S. EPA

**DEP Successfully Plugs Moon Township Natural Gas Well  
(continued)**

During the next week, the area will be graded, seeded and returned as much as possible to its native state. A permanent marker providing the well permit number, which is required under the Oil & Gas Act, also will be placed at the site.

The well was discovered last fall after a property owner cleared brush from the area. DEP inspected the well and placed it on a list of abandoned wells to be plugged.

The department expedited the work after it received odor complaints from area residents on Feb. 6 and discovered that erosion had created a hole into the casing, allowing an uncontrolled release of natural gas.

While there was no indication that the well posed an immediate risk to area residents or to students attending the nearby J.A. Allard Elementary School, DEP moved quickly to prevent gas from migrating through the soils and away from the well. Migrating gas is unpredictable and can become an explosive risk if it becomes trapped in an enclosed area.

The work was performed under an emergency contract with Hydrocarbon Well Services.

Because abandoned wells can cause many problems, the Oil and Gas Act of 1984 requires well operators to plug non-producing wells. However, many wells were abandoned prior to when state regulations took effect.

In 1992, the legislature amended the Oil and Gas Act to allow certain oil or gas wells abandoned before April 1985 to be classified as "orphan" wells. That amendment also gave DEP the authority and the financial means to plug them.

Funds for well plugging come from Growing Greener grants and from surcharges on well-drilling permits issued in Pennsylvania.

For more information, visit [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us) or call 412-442-4000.

Source: PA DEP

## EPA Recognizes Leaders in Energy Efficiency

### *Winners save energy and money through Energy Star program*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is honoring a select group of manufacturers, retailers, public schools, hospitals, real estate companies, home builders and other organizations as 2010 Energy Star award winners. These organizations are being recognized for their long-term commitment to fighting climate change through greater energy efficiency.

"Organizations across the country and around the world are now making energy efficiency and reducing environmental impact a priority," said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin. "I commend this year's Energy Star Award winners for leading the way in that transition."

2010 Energy Star Award winners in the mid-Atlantic region are: Building Owners and Managers Association International, Washington, D.C.; Community Housing Partners, Christiansburg, Va.; Continental Refrigerator, Bensalem, Pa.; Council Rock School District, Newtown Pa.; Giant Eagle Inc., Pittsburgh, Pa.; Gorell Enterprises Inc., Indiana, Pa.; Loudon County Public Schools, Ashburn, Va.; PECO Energy Company, Philadelphia, Pa.; Saint-Gobain Corporation, Valley Forge, Pa.; Sunoco Inc., Philadelphia, Pa.; and, West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund, University Park, Pa.

Organizations are recognized in one of three major award categories: Sustained Excellence, Partner of the Year, and Excellence. The 50 Sustained Excellence winners have continued to exhibit exceptional leadership year after year in the Energy Star program while remaining dedicated to environmental protection through superior energy efficiency. Forty organizations are receiving Partner of the Year for strategically and comprehensively managing their energy use. These organizations promote Energy Star products and practices in their own operations, in addition to providing efficient products

and services to consumers and within their community. Twenty organizations are recognized with an Excellence award for a specific activity to promote energy-efficient products, homes or buildings thereby helping to expand the reach of the Energy Star program.

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## **EPA Recognizes Leaders in Energy Efficiency**

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American consumers and businesses have been saving energy and protecting the environment for more than two decades by partnering with EPA's Energy Star program. In 2009 alone, Americans, with the help of Energy Star, saved nearly \$17 billion on their energy bills and prevented greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those of 30 million vehicles. To date, 1 million new homes and nearly 9,000 office buildings, schools, hospitals and public buildings have earned the Energy Star. Since 2000, 3 billion Energy Star certified products have been sold.

A complete list of the winners: <http://www.energystar.gov/awards>

Source: US EPA

## **WPC Invites Outdoor Enthusiasts to Register for the 2010 Allegheny River Sojourn**

The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) invites nature lovers to take a scenic canoe trip down the Allegheny River by registering for WPC's annual River Sojourn on Saturday, June 12 and Sunday, June 13. Open to the general public as well as WPC members, the event begins in Warren, Pa. and ends at Indian Waters Livery, located a few miles north of Tidioute, Pa.

The trip includes activities and presentations that are centered on the theme "Soaring Down the Allegheny." The upper Allegheny River is home to a variety of unique and interesting birds. Since the 1970s, bald eagles have been making a strong comeback in this region, and populations of great blue herons are on the rise. Come learn more about the birds that depend on the Allegheny River for their survival.

Registration for the River Sojourn, which costs \$60 for one day and \$90 for both days, includes daily meals, entertainment, canoes and shuttle service. Participants are responsible for their own overnight accommodations. The first day of the trip covers nine miles, from Allegheny Outfitters in Warren to Buckaloons Recreation Area. On the second day, participants will travel 10 miles and will float past some of the Allegheny River's designated National Forest Islands.

Since the 1960s, the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy has worked to protect the Allegheny River, its tributaries and wildlife. Over the decades, the Conservancy has protected 22 river islands totaling more than 500 acres and has also conserved 19,500 acres of shoreline, floodplain, valley slope and tributary watersheds.

Sponsors for the sojourn include Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR), Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Indian Waters Canoe and Kayak Rental, Pennsylvania American Water, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

To register for the sojourn or for more information, go to [WaterLandLife.org/287](http://WaterLandLife.org/287) or contact Kelly Horrell at (724) 459-0953 ext. 113. The registration deadline is Friday, May 28, 2010.

Source: The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

**Residents Can Learn to Plant, Care for Trees this Spring  
with TreeVitalize Training Sessions**

TreeVitalize—an initiative to plant one million trees and restore tree cover in Pennsylvania’s 14 metropolitan areas—is offering citizens the opportunity to learn about planting and caring for trees, according to Department of Conservation and Natural Resources acting Secretary John Quigley.

“Trees, like people, need to be nurtured to thrive,” Quigley said. “Many urban street trees die within the first seven years of planting. These classes will teach people how to help our investments in trees to survive.”

During eight hours of Tree Tenders® training, participants will learn about tree biology, identification, pruning and root care, as well as how to raise funds, manage volunteers and work with local government.

“Pennsylvania has seen the loss of millions of trees in our urban and suburban areas, and we each have a role to play if we want to turn that around,” Quigley said.

The Tree Tenders training program was developed by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society in collaboration with Penn State Extension Urban Foresters in the Philadelphia area. It is now being offered with instruction provided by DCNR’s Bureau of Forestry, in partnership with PHS, Penn State, and other local urban forestry experts.

Participants are expected to volunteer time to community tree planting projects in exchange for the training.

Registration for all classes is required. Classes are being held this spring in Pittsburgh; Blue Bell, Montgomery County; Havertown, Delaware County; and the City of Philadelphia.

Workshops also will be offered later this summer in Altoona, York, Easton and Wilkes-Barre.

For the first time this year, TreeVitalize also is offering training beyond Tree Tenders, called the Municipal Tree Institute.

Developed by Penn State Cooperative Extension in partnership with DCNR, the institute will be an intensive two-day workshop intended for municipal staff, current and prospective Shade Tree Commission members and others responsible for the long term care and management of public shade trees.

The program will provide training and support on shade tree ordinances, inventories, management plans and budgeting necessary to effectively manage public trees. The first institute will be offered May 20-21 in the Pittsburgh area, with a second one under development for the fall in the Allentown area.

For a Tree Tenders schedule and to register, visit the TreeVitalize Web site at [www.treevitalize.net](http://www.treevitalize.net) and look under “TreeVitalize Events.” Registration also is required for the Municipal Tree Institute workshop, details of which will be posted on the Web site when available.

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**Residents Can Learn to Plant, Care for Trees this Spring****(continued)**

DCNR spearheads the TreeVitalize project with many public and private partners. The program works to revitalize urban areas by increasing tree cover with a goal of 1 million new trees planted statewide by 2012. More than 186,000 trees have been planted to date. Tree cover refers to the percentage of land shaded by trees and shrubs.

**Media contact:** Christina Novak, 717-772-9101.

Source: PA DCNR

Ohio River Sweep - June 19, 2010

River Sweep is a riverbank cleanup of the Ohio River and its tributaries. River Sweep encompasses the entire length of the river, from its origin in Pittsburgh, PA to its end in Cairo, IL, including 1,962 miles of shoreline and many tributaries.

Each year, more than 21,000 volunteers from public organizations, civic groups, recreational clubs, and the general public in six states bordering the river come together to collect more than 20,000 tons of trash and other debris from the banks of the Ohio River and tributaries.

**Allegheny County Sites**

Pennsyl- vania			
	Allegheny	Southside Riverfront Park	8:00 am- 12:00 pm
		Glenwillard Boat Club	8:00 am- 12:00 pm
		Natrona Heights	8:00 am- 12:00 pm
		Elizabeth Riverfront Park	8:00 am- 12:00 pm
		Nine Mile Run	8:00 am- 12:00 pm
		West End	8:00 am- 12:00 pm

Come on out on June 19, 2010 and give us a hand cleaning up the River Banks.

Remember, most of us get our drinking water from the 3 Rivers.

## Web site for the Interagency Task Force on Carbon Capture and Storage

The White House Council on Environmental Quality, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announce the launch of a Web site for the Interagency Task Force on Carbon Capture and Storage.

The Task Force is charged with proposing a plan to overcome the barriers to the widespread, cost-effective deployment of carbon capture and storage within 10 years, with a goal of bringing five to 10 commercial demonstration projects online by 2016.

The Web site provides background information on the Task Force, public meeting announcements, and an area for submitting public comments. The site can be viewed at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/ccs>