



# Pennsylvania GreenGov News



TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR

December 2021

Welcome to *Pennsylvania GreenGov News!* In this edition, we show why recycling in Pennsylvania isn't just the same old story; how the Farm Show is lightening up on its energy usage; how buying and selling recycled materials in Pennsylvania is coming full circle; what DCNR is doing to help other agencies follow in its sustainability footsteps; and more.

Please consider sharing this newsletter with your networks to help expand the knowledge base as we work together to reduce emissions. To learn more about the GreenGov Council, co-chaired by the Departments of General Services, Environmental Protection, and Conservation and Natural Resources, [visit our website](#).

— Mark Hand, Director, GreenGov Council

## GreenGov Council News

### Commonwealth Kicks off New Activities on National Recycling Day

One of the biggest knocks on recycling is that it's always the same old story (sorry, we couldn't resist). On November 15, National Recycling Day, the Commonwealth took some deliberate steps to add some new content to Pennsylvania's story on recycling.

In a joint effort, the PA GreenGov Council teamed up with the Commonwealth Agency Recycling Office (CARO), the Department of General Services Bureau of Publications, Bureau of Facilities Management and Bureau of Supplies and Surplus Operations to develop a prototype recycling kiosk that was placed in the Lobby of the North Office Building in Harrisburg just in time to mark National Recycling Day.

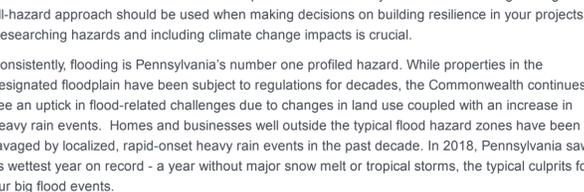
The kiosk features six deposit slots for various recyclable materials including, plastic bags, plastic materials/bottles, white office paper, newspaper and mixed paper, glass and aluminum/metal cans and lids. Designed with accessibility in mind, the kiosk is about more than just collection – it's about education, too! The outside of the kiosk features QR codes within the graphics that direct users to the CARO website for recycling information and facts.

Plans are in the works for more kiosks to be manufactured and placed in the lobbies of state office buildings in the coming months. The DGS Bureau of Supplies and Surplus will be responsible for coordinating the pick-up and collection of recyclables from the kiosks.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has released a simple guide to help residents and businesses understand recycling in Pennsylvania called "Guidelines for Recycling in Your Community." The booklet helps Pennsylvanians to recycle correctly by finding recycling programs in their local area, learning their local rules, and following them to maximize the social, environmental, and economic benefits of recycling.

The booklet is available to download at [dep.pa.gov/recycling](http://dep.pa.gov/recycling) and will be available through DEP's six regional offices ([dep.pa.gov/regions](http://dep.pa.gov/regions)).

For more information on recycling, check out the recent [2021 Sustainability Week message on Recycling and Food Waste Reduction](#) on the [PA GreenGov website](#), and see "Resources to Help Your Effort," below, for a new app to help organizations and businesses exchange recyclables.



### Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Emphasizes All-Hazards Approach to Building Projects

Are you making updates to existing facilities or planning a new construction project? Our changing climate should trigger conversations on investments necessary to ensure your property can withstand future severe weather-related impacts and avoid costly and time-consuming damages. An all-hazard approach should be used when making decisions on building resilience in your projects. Researching hazards and including climate change impacts is crucial.

Consistently, flooding is Pennsylvania's number one profiled hazard. While properties in the designated floodplain have been subject to regulations for decades, the Commonwealth continues to see an uptick in flood-related challenges due to changes in land use coupled with an increase in heavy rain events. Homes and businesses well outside the typical flood hazard zones have been ravaged by localized, rapid-onset heavy rain events in the past decade. In 2018, Pennsylvania saw its wettest year on record - a year without major snow melt or tropical storms, the typical culprits for our big flood events.

Building resiliency to heavy rain events is becoming increasingly critical for government and business. A report by the National Institute of Building Sciences in 2018 shows every \$1 spent in disaster mitigation is worth \$6 in savings from future impacts. The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) maintains a [Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), which is a useful guide on all-hazards analysis with suggested mitigation pathways.

New projects and retrofitting existing properties can involve nature-based or "green" solutions, often at a lesser cost. The Federal Emergency Management Agency provides a [Nature-Based Solution Guide](#). While geared toward local government officials, the suggested approaches are universal, and include ideas such as stormwater parks, rain gardens, rainwater harvesting, green roofs, tree canopies and trenches, and more. Many of these options provide multiple layers of protection to other hazards as well.

As you research your options to build more resiliency to climate change, federal grant support may be available to fund some of these solutions. Visit the [PEMA Grant website](#) to see if you are eligible for funding.

### Want To Reduce Your Carbon Footprint? Follow DCNR's Steps

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is known for its beautiful system of 121 state parks, 2.2 million acres of forests, and myriad outdoor recreation opportunities, but did you know it is also a leader in promoting sustainability among commonwealth agencies?

As a part of its 2021 Sustainability Tour Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced some major energy-saving initiatives at our state parks, including [expanded use of battery-powered tools](#) such as leaf blowers, string trimmers, and chainsaws, at 20 state parks. These tools reduce DCNR's carbon footprint, the noise for those enjoying parks and help save the commonwealth money on fuel costs. They, and other sustainability choices the department have made, also set an example for changes you can make in your own lives.

The secretary also touted the electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at Colonel Denning that allow free charging for park visitors who have shifted to driving EVs. Those EV charging stations are available at 32 state parks and forests and free for public use if you want to get a hike in while you charge your EV.

Here are some other sustainable initiatives from DCNR:

- 17 Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified facilities, with three additional buildings in the queue for LEED certification
- 33 plug-in hybrid electric vehicles in its fleet and an electric motorcycle at Presque Isle State Park, with plans to convert 25 percent of its agency passenger vehicle fleet to EVs by 2025
- Guaranteed Energy Savings Act Program compliance at DCNR facilities
- [New vendor contract language](#) that aims to reduce plastic waste at state parks and encourage use of compostable materials
- Increasing solar upgrades at [Presque Isle State Park](#) and other facilities will bring at least \$30 million in energy cost savings over the next 20 years.

DCNR is hopeful that its commitment to sustainability serves a model for other state agencies, but also for people and families across the commonwealth. Many of those same green measures can be taken for private homeowners, whether that is installing new energy efficient windows, investing in solar at your home, or composting your trash. The little things add up in big ways and investing now can have an impact for generations.



Secretary Dunn demonstrated using the equipment, which staff at Colonel Denning State Park said is just as effective and easier to use than gas-powered tools, and encouraged Pennsylvanians to consider switching to more sustainable, battery-powered equipment in their own lives.

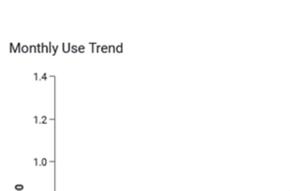
## Shout Out: Pennsylvania Farm Show

### Farm Show Complex Looks to the Bright Side of Its Facility



The Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex & Expo Center is one of the commonwealth's greatest assets. With one million square feet of event and entertainment space, the facility historically has been home to over 200 events annually and drives over \$300 million in economic impact into the commonwealth each year. The diligent efforts of the Farm Show team have allowed this historic building to remain operational with every opportunity taken for cost saving improvements. In 2019, the Farm Show electrical team of four began to transition the facility to LED lighting. To date, the team has completed a 98% conversion. The GIANT Expo Hall was the first hall to be converted at an original estimated cost of \$50,500. After utilizing a rebate of \$16,160, the net cost came out to \$34,340 with an anticipated cost savings of more than \$25,000 annually. This savings is a result of both energy reduction and time saved on maintaining the old lights.

While cost savings is most important to the Farm Show Complex's bottom line, customer service has been the most significant result. As you can see in the [Penn National Horse Show video](#), the lighting has created a very impressive facility to host this prestigious event.

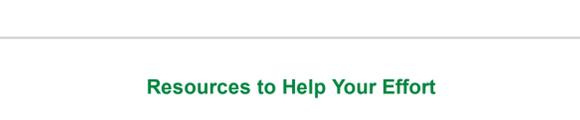


Lighting improvements in the concourse of the New Holland Large Arena

While many convention centers were closed because of COVID-19, the Farm Show Complex remained open, serving as a community support facility.

The graph, provided by PSFE's EnergyCap report, shows a pattern all its own. There is a decline in usage for more than half of 2020. In December 2020 and January 2021, a slight increase is noted due to the cold weather months. All previous year's show a large spike in Jan except in 2019, a sharp drop occurred. The drop is a result of several no usage bills or lack of tracking.

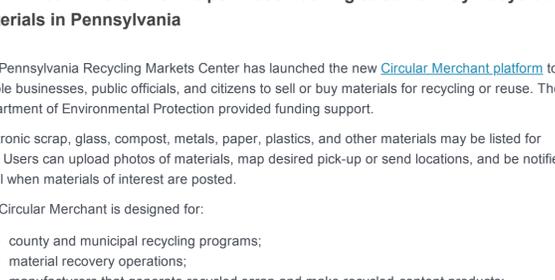
Monthly Use Trend



In June and July of 2021, the Farm Show Complex & Expo Center started to slowly open for business and fully reopened in September 2021.

The Farm Show Complex & Expo Center looks forward to continuing this amazing story of savings.

## Resources to Help Your Effort



### New "Circular Merchant" Helps Those Looking to Sell or Buy Recycled Materials in Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center has launched the new [Circular Merchant platform](#) to enable businesses, public officials, and citizens to sell or buy materials for recycling or reuse. The Department of Environmental Protection provided funding support.

Electronic scrap, glass, compost, metals, paper, plastics, and other materials may be listed for sale. Users can upload photos of materials, map desired pick-up or send locations, and be notified by email when materials of interest are posted.

The Circular Merchant is designed for:

- county and municipal recycling programs;
- material recovery operations;
- manufacturers that generate recycled scrap and make recycled-content products;
- composting, mulch and soil amendment operations;
- reuse and refurbish operations; and
- the general public.

The Pennsylvania Recycling Markets Center will offer [free webinars on how to use Circular Merchant](#) in December and January.

The Circular Merchant is also available as a free mobile app from the Apple Store and Google Play.

## Join us: GreenGov Events

### Pennsylvania Climate Leadership Academy Training

[Climate Leadership Activator Series](#)

This three-part virtual training series is designed to build a foundational understanding of the risks and opportunities that climate change poses for Pennsylvania state/local government agencies, infrastructure organizations and businesses. The program will examine the impacts of climate change upon mission, operations and constituents, as well as prospective opportunities to advance readiness and solutions grounded in economic vitality, public health and security. Attend all three parts to complete this training opportunity. Please register through the website linked above.

- Session 1: January 14, 2022 from 9:30AM to 12:00 pm
- Session 2: January 21, 2022 from 9:30AM to 12:00 pm
- Session 3: January 28, 2022 from 9:30AM to 12:00 pm

### Sustainability Webinar Series

Webinars are free and open to the public. Please [complete this survey](#) to indicate which presentations you plan to attend. We'll send out Microsoft Teams meeting calendar invitations to all interested attendees for their selected webinars. Webinars are sponsored by the GreenGov Council and Penn State University Sustainability Institute.

#### Pennsylvania Climate Leadership Academy Overview

Date: January 14, 2022 | 1:00-1:45 pm

Speaker: Daniel M. Kreeger, Executive Director, Association of Climate Change Officers

#### Pennsylvania Recycling Markets: Using Recyclables in Facility Construction

Date: February 11, 2022 | 1:00-1:45 pm

Speakers: Tad Radzinski, President, Sustainable Solutions Corporation; Robert J. Bylone, Executive Director, Penn State Recycling Markets Center

#### Sustainability and Resilience in the Community

Date: March 11, 2022 | 1:00-1:45 pm

Speaker: Maureen Krouse, MPH, MCHES, Manager of Community Health and Outreach, Hokenau Medical Center

#### Household Carbon Reduction, Part 1: Energy Saving Utility Programs

Date: April 8, 2022 | 1:00-1:45 pm

Speaker: Joseph Sherrick, Supervisor, Technical Utility Services, Policy & Planning, Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Pennsylvania GreenGov Council



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