



Pennsylvania GreenGov News

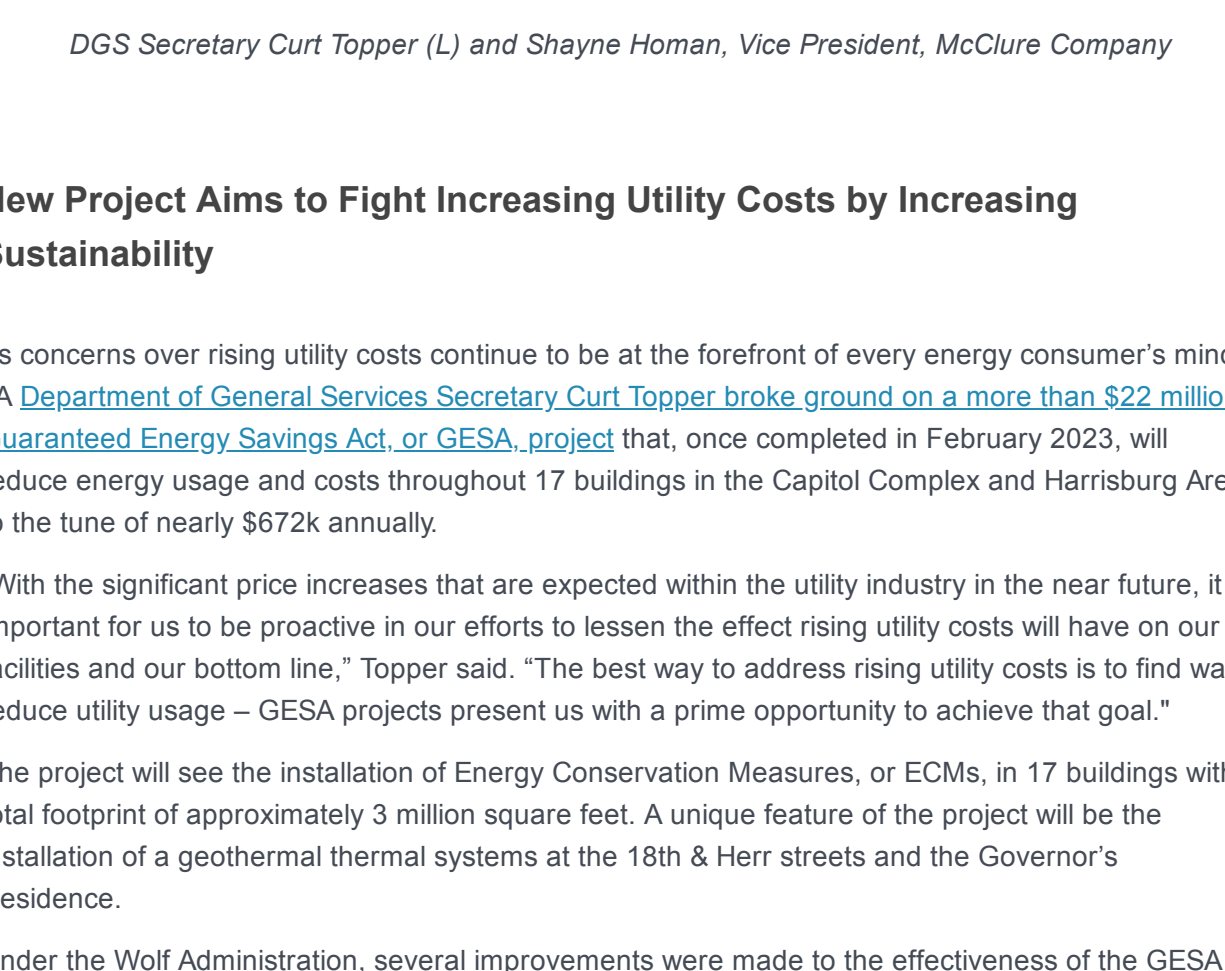
June 2022

It's summertime, and the living is – sustainable! The commonwealth is investing in energy efficiency in our buildings; helping to make our built environment more friendly to migratory birds; reducing plastic waste and paper use; and enhancing recycling in communities statewide. We offer you tools to build a productive sustainability team, make procurement part of your sustainability strategy, and measure carbon emissions and start a local climate action plan in your community. Please consider sharing this newsletter with your networks to help expand the knowledge base on emissions reduction and sustainability in Pennsylvania.

The [GreenGov Council](#) is co-chaired by the Pennsylvania Departments of General Services, Environmental Protection, and Conservation and Natural Resources.

— Mark Hand, Director, [GreenGov Council](#)

GreenGov Council News



DGS Secretary Curt Topper (L) and Shayne Homan, Vice President, McClure Company

New Project Aims to Fight Increasing Utility Costs by Increasing Sustainability

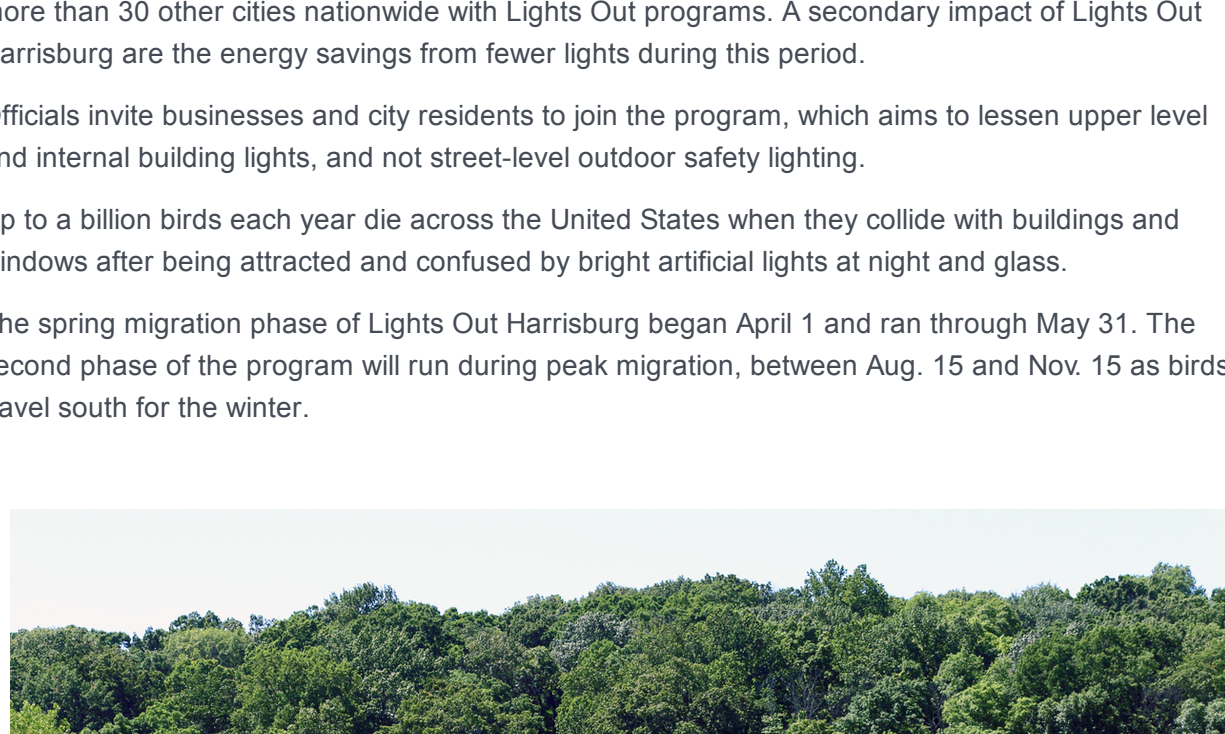
As concerns over rising utility costs continue to be at the forefront of every energy consumer's mind, PA [Department of General Services Secretary Curt Topper broke ground on a more than \\$22 million Guaranteed Energy Savings Act, or GESA, project](#) that, once completed in February 2023, will reduce energy usage and costs throughout 17 buildings in the Capitol Complex and Harrisburg Area to the tune of nearly \$672k annually.

"With the significant price increases that are expected within the utility industry in the near future, it is important for us to be proactive in our efforts to lessen the effect rising utility costs will have on our facilities and our bottom line," Topper said. "The best way to address rising utility costs is to find ways reduce utility usage – GESA projects present us with a prime opportunity to achieve that goal."

The project will see the installation of Energy Conservation Measures, or ECMs, in 17 buildings with a total footprint of approximately 3 million square feet. A unique feature of the project will be the installation of a geothermal thermal systems at the 18th & Herr streets and the Governor's Residence.

Under the Wolf Administration, several improvements were made to the effectiveness of the GESA program including an innovative financing method that allows the commonwealth to make energy efficient renovations that pay for themselves over time through cost savings achieved from reduced utility consumption, with no upfront funds for the renovations.

The Capitol Complex is an 18-year loan at 2.12% for \$22.6 million through the GESA master installment purchase agreement.



Turning lights out helps billions of birds, saves energy

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Department of General Services and the Appalachian Audubon Society are working with the City of Harrisburg to help reduce light pollution to assist millions of birds migrating in the spring and fall of this year through [Lights Out Harrisburg](#).

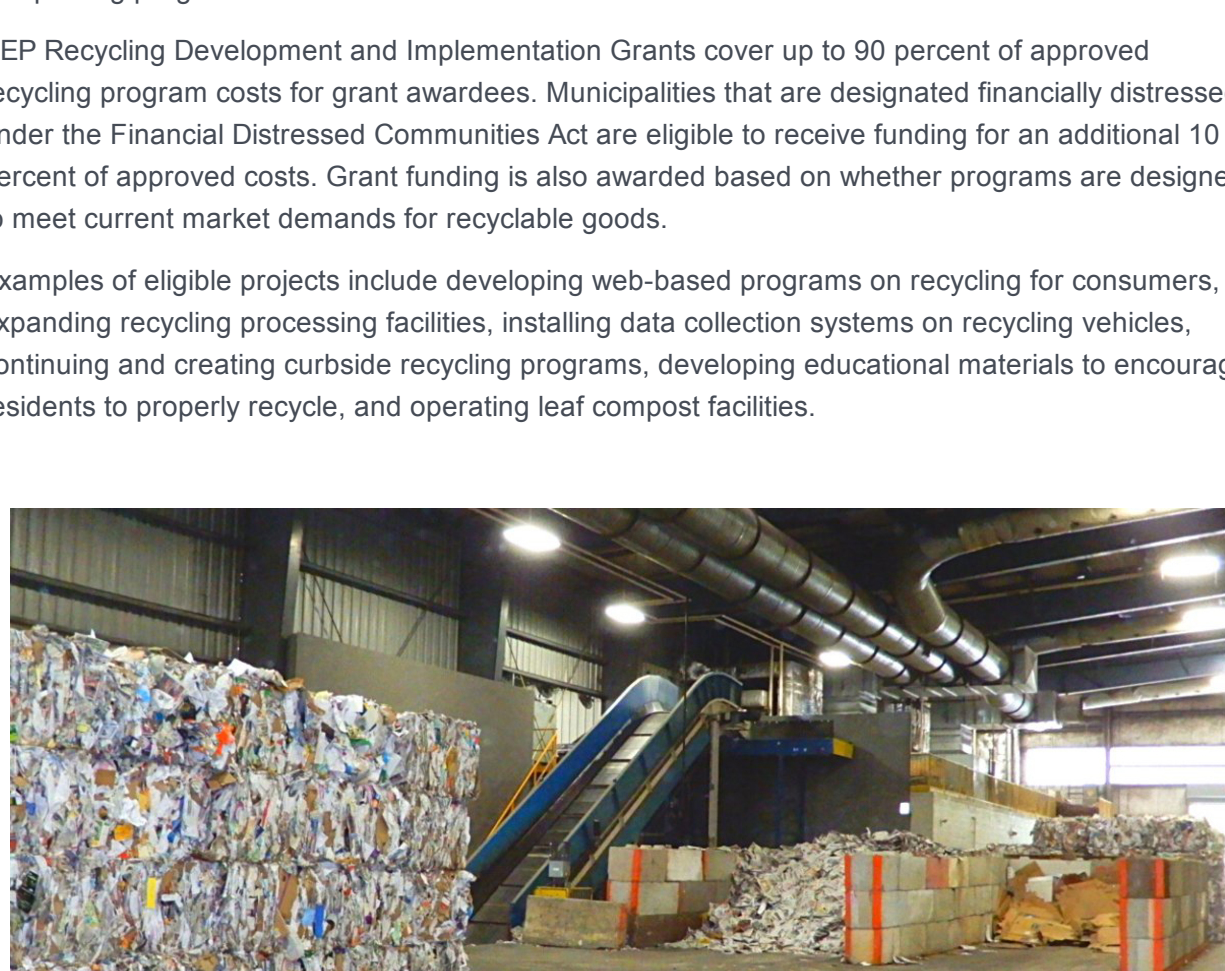
The voluntary program involves turning off or blocking as many external and internal lights as possible during migration seasons when birds pass through the area in large numbers. Spotlights were removed from the Capitol Dome and the lights have been turned out at the Keystone Building to serve as an example.

The first lights out program was established in 1999. Harrisburg joins Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and more than 30 other cities nationwide with Lights Out programs. A secondary impact of Lights Out Harrisburg are the energy savings from fewer lights during this period.

Officials invite businesses and city residents to join the program, which aims to lessen upper level and internal building lights, and not street-level outdoor safety lighting.

Up to a billion birds each year die across the United States when they collide with buildings and windows after being attracted and confused by bright artificial lights at night and glass.

The spring migration phase of Lights Out Harrisburg began April 1 and ran through May 31. The second phase of the program will run during peak migration, between Aug. 15 and Nov. 15 as birds travel south for the winter.



Reducing use of plastics, waste at state parks pushes Pennsylvania forward

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) remains committed to being the commonwealth's leader in conservation. To that end the department is taking steps to reduce the use of plastics and the amount of waste generated from food concessions at state parks.

DCNR announced new efforts to implement new contracts with food providers to prevent use of plastic bags, straws and cutlery. Those items are to be replaced by compostable, paper, wooden, or plant fiber alternatives. These measures have already been implemented at Beltzville, Frances Slocum, Keystone, Marsh Creek, Presque Isle and Sizerville state parks. Contracts that will be updated this year include Bald Eagle, Black Moshannon, Caledonia, Codorus, Gifford Pinchot, Hickory Run, Locust Lake, Mt. Pisgah, Pine Grove Furnace, Point, Prince Gallitzin, Ricketts Glen, and Yellow Creek state parks.

Additional state parks will update their policies as the old contracts expire. DCNR's plastic and waste reduction efforts are in line with Wolf Administration's focus on addressing litter across the commonwealth. The encourages visitors to state parks and forests to [Leave No Trace](#) to minimize impacts on natural spaces and [focuses on sustainability](#) in all aspects of the agency.

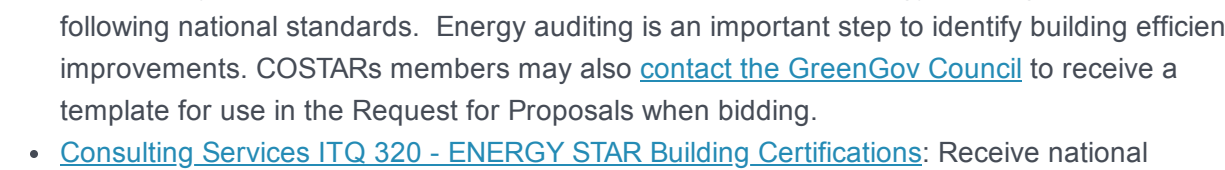
So when you're visiting a state park and looking to enjoy funnel cake, ice cream or so many of the other treats associated with summer, expect to see bioplastics, paper products and other compostable or recyclable materials that are better for the environment.

Wolf Administration Awards Nearly 160 County and Municipal Governments Funding for Waste and Recycling Programs

This spring [157 municipalities around the state received a total of \\$30.5 million in grant funding](#) from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to boost their recycling and leaf composting programs.

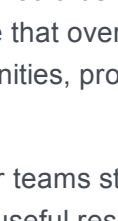
DEP Recycling Development and Implementation Grants cover up to 90 percent of approved recycling program costs for grant awardees. Municipalities that are designated financially distressed under the Financial Distressed Communities Act are eligible to receive funding for an additional 10 percent of approved costs. Grant funding is also awarded based on whether programs are designed to meet current market demands for recyclable goods.

Examples of eligible projects include developing web-based programs on recycling for consumers, expanding recycling processing facilities, installing data collection systems on recycling vehicles, continuing and creating curbside recycling programs, developing educational materials to encourage residents to properly recycle, and operating leaf compost facilities.



These grants help bolster recycling in communities all over Pennsylvania and reduce the amount of waste going into our landfills. Whether it's from increased education for residents or an entire facility for sorting recyclables, these grants are making a difference.

DEP SECRETARY PATRICK MCDONNELL



Agency Shout Out

Building review modernization saves paper by digitizing building review plan processes

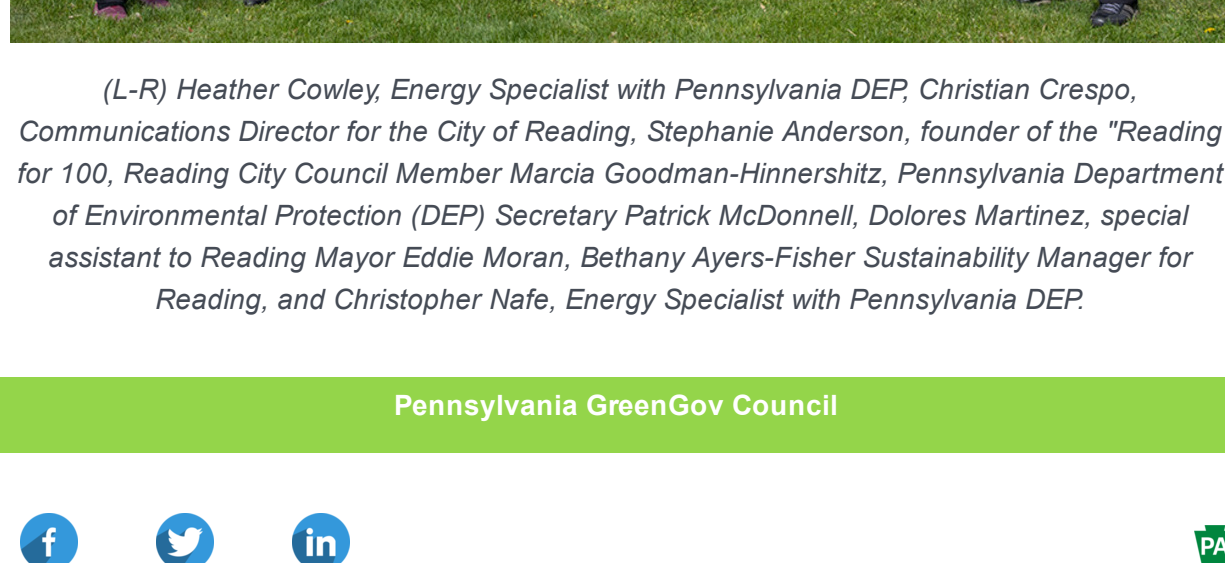
The Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) Bureau of Occupational and Industrial Safety (BOIS) recently worked with a third-party vendor to streamline its electronic building plan review and approval services for its customers.

Using practices to determine value while eliminating waste, models like LEAN, Customer Service Transformation, and Green Government initiatives, the consolidation of services will provide customers one portal to submit application materials, track their progress, and include additional information if needed. The integration of the portal will also terminate the need for documents to be emailed, mailed, or physically picked up from the Harrisburg office – everything is completed through the portal.

The creation of the portal generates an environmental and monetary Return of Investment (ROI) for BOIS and L&I. Determining the average of received paper applications, and the number of pages typically in a paper application, the reduction of paper produced lessens L&I's waste by an estimated 38,400 pounds (that's almost 19 tons, or 48 trees saved) – while the monetary cost reduction is approximately \$108 per plan review or \$259,000 annually. Also, BOIS estimates that 1,840 pounds of hydrocarbons could be saved in a year by ending travel time for customers to physically deliver plans to Harrisburg, concurrently saving fuel costs.

In addition, BOIS anticipates further cost savings by eliminating hours to process paper plans and scan documents for retention. Combining all the estimated savings, BOIS foresees the ROI of a break-even time of three months. After the first three months of go-live, savings will increase, allowing staff to shift their focus to other responsibilities within the division.

Resources to Help Your Effort



DGS.PA.GOV/COSTARS

Procurement Options to Support the GreenGov Executive Order and Reduce Carbon Emissions

The GreenGov Council continues to work with state agencies to reduce carbon emissions. Several new tools help state agencies and [COSTARS](#) members make procurement part of a sustainability strategy. They're a great way to lead by example and partner with local governments, schools, and other eligible members to meet climate needs.

- [Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment Invitation to Qualify](#): Provides opportunities to work with contractors who sell and support electric vehicle charging equipment in preparation of zero emission electric vehicles.
- [Consulting Services ITQ 319 – Commercial Building Energy Audits](#): Creates pathway to work with Pennsylvania Small and Diverse Businesses that provide energy auditing services following national standards. Energy auditing is an important step to identify building efficiency improvements. COSTARS members may also [contact the GreenGov Council](#) to receive a template for use in the Request for Proposals when bidding.
- [Consulting Services ITQ 320 - ENERGY STAR Building Certifications](#): Receive national recognition for updating and operating buildings to high performance levels. ENERGY STAR certification demonstrates your commitment to climate progress and superior energy performance. Support small and diverse businesses in Pennsylvania and work toward achieving this recognition.

GreenGov Introduces New Tool for Building Successful Sustainability Teams

As highlighted in [Governor Tom Wolf's announcement of the GreenGov 2021 Annual Report](#), one of the primary focuses for the year ahead will be the establishment and growth of Agency Sustainability Teams in all agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction. This focus is a direct result of the requirement for agencies to establish "Agency Sustainability Teams" within a year of the enactment date of [Management Directive 720.05](#), which will be Sept. 21, 2022.

As a refresher, Agency Sustainability Teams should be comprised of internal staff covering multiple disciplines, including executive staff and those that oversee fiscal and facilities operations. The role of the team is to identify energy savings opportunities, projects and uncover sustainability initiatives within the agency.

As the deadline nears for agencies to get their teams started deadline nears, the GreenGov Council continues to work with agencies by providing useful resources on how to create, strengthen and (no pun intended) sustain these groups. The latest tool developed by the GreenGov Council – The Commonwealth Agency Sustainability Team Formation Guide – does just that by laying out some best practices and checklist for forming an agency team.

The tool is broken down into three key areas. Under **Team Formation** some best practices in five key areas - Team Selection, Assessing Existing Sustainability Initiatives, Defining Sustainability, Workplan & Process and Communication – are provided to assist in getting you team off the ground; then the **Team Members** section allows visibility into the make-up of your team; and finally the **Workplan Development** section where agencies can connect their lines of business and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, then plan activities and identify goals around those connections.

The GreenGov Council encourages all agencies to use this tool and we believe it may also be useful for our external stakeholder partners looking to establish their own teams. Visit our webpage to review the [Sustainability Team Formation Guide](#).

Local Climate Action Training Available to Municipalities

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Local Climate Action Program has trained 53 cities, townships, boroughs, counties, and regional organizations, representing approximately 380 municipalities statewide, in its first three years.

The fourth year of the Local Climate Action program begins in August. Find information at [dep.pa.gov/localclimateactionprogram](#). To sign up, please contact Chris Nafe in the DEP Energy Programs Office at [chnafe@pa.gov](#) or 717.783.9722.

Municipalities receive free technical and personnel assistance to measure local greenhouse gas emissions and determine local vulnerabilities to climate change impacts, such as flooding. They develop plans of actions to lower emissions and make their communities more sustainable and resilient to climate-related risks. They present their draft plan to local leaders and residents for input and finalization. An additional program, providing the expertise of an energy manager, can help municipalities start implementing their plan.

"The city's staff has done an outstanding job utilizing the training, technical support, and available resources to shape and improve our future. I thank DEP for supporting the City of Reading in its transition to become more climate-resilient and a regional leader in renewable energy and sustainability." — Reading Mayor Eddie Moran on the [city's announcement of its draft Local Climate Action Plan, April 21, 2022](#).

(L-R) Heather Cowley, Energy Specialist with Pennsylvania DEP, Christian Crespo, Communications Director for the City of Reading, Stephanie Anderson, founder of the "Reading for 100, Reading City Council Member Marcia Goodman-Hinnershitz, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Patrick McDonnell, Dolores Martinez, special assistant to Reading Mayor Eddie Moran, Bethany Ayers-Fisher Sustainability Manager for Reading, and Christopher Nafe, Energy Specialist with Pennsylvania DEP.

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