

EJ UPDATE

Your Environment, Your Voice



TOM WOLF, GOVERNOR • PATRICK MCDONNELL, DEP SECRETARY

Greetings, Environmental Justice partners!

We hope you are staying safe and well. The Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) team is writing to send you important updates and resources from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

DEP Updates

EJAB Meeting

The next Environmental Justice Advisory Board (EJAB) meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, August 19 from 1:00 to 7:00pm. The meeting agenda, link to the meeting and other materials will be posted on the [EJAB webpage](#). The meeting will include a presentation on the draft revised EJ Policy and presentations on EJ initiatives from partners in the southcentral region of the Commonwealth.

EJ Policy Revision

DEP will present the first draft of the EJ Policy at the EJAB meeting on Thursday, August 19. DEP and OEJ will host public hearings to gather feedback on the revised EJ Policy later in 2021. Please visit our [EJ Policy Revision webpage](#) to learn more and stay up-to-date on the revision process!

Pennsylvania Climate Leadership Academy Now Open

Enroll now in the [Climate Leadership Activator Program](#). This program is a free, in-depth, online training. 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 three (3) sessions are scheduled on August 24, August 31, and September 7.

DEP Grants, Loans, and Rebates

If your environmental improvement project needs funding, DEP can help. We offer [31 grant and rebate programs](#) to support a range of projects to improve or protect the water, land, and air in Pennsylvania. Grant opportunities that are currently open include:

- [Alternative Fuel Vehicle Grants and Rebates](#)
- [Driving PA Forward Grants and Rebates](#)
 - [Level 2 Electric Vehicle Charging Rebate](#)
 - [On-road Rebate](#)
- [Recycling and Waste Grants for Local Governments](#)

Partner Opportunities and Updates

Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative

On July 20 the White House released Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative outlined in Executive Order (EO) 14008. The Justice40 Initiative requires that Federal investments are made with a goal of 40% of overall benefits flowing to disadvantaged communities. The [Interim Implementation Guidance](#) issued by the White House for the Justice40 Initiative includes an interim definition of disadvantaged communities and outlines examples of federal programs subject to the Justice40 Initiative.

Washington State Environmental Justice Laws

Washington State recently passed two laws that focus on Environmental Justice. These laws include the [Healthy Environmental for All \(HEAL\) Act](#) and the [Climate Commitment Act](#). Key components of the [\(HEAL\) Act](#) include requirements to: define EJ in state law; direct funding with environmental benefits to overburdened communities; ensure tribal sovereignty and rights around EJ; advance equitable community participation in planning, resource allocation, and enforcement; create and fund an EJ Council; require an EJ assessment; and fund and apply the Washington Environmental Health Disparities (WA-EHD) Map.

The [Climate Commitment Act](#) focuses on establishing a cap and invest program that includes requirements on air quality targets and emissions control initiatives in overburdened communities. The Act requires at least 35%, with a goal of 40%, of these investments to provide direct and meaningful benefits to communities that are disproportionately burdened with environmental harms and health impacts, and for these investments to be guided by an Environmental Justice assessment. In addition, 10% of the investments must also go to tribal projects and programs.

Temple University Policy Proposal for a More Equitable Green Future

A Policy Brief from Temple University's Public Policy Lab focuses on the importance of addressing social and racial inequities in cities like Philadelphia in order to combat climate change. The Policy Brief, [From Struggle Space to an Inclusive and Climate-Ready Philadelphia: Policy Proposals for a More Equitable Green Future](#), notes that climate planning and policy must prioritize equity and resident-identified needs or you run the risk of replicating and exacerbating historic racial injustices. The Policy Brief describes the "struggle space". The struggle space is "where daily struggles to survive resulting from histories of disinvestment and discrimination can create challenges for long-term climate planning". The authors suggest that Philadelphia and other cities can use climate planning to build a racially-just city and amend past inequities.

EPA to Hold National Environmental Justice Advisory Council Call

EPA is holding the next National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) public meetings on August 18 and 19, 2021. These free meetings are open to the public and are being held from approximately 3:00-7:00pm EST each day. [Registration is REQUIRED to attend either meeting](#). Members of the public are encouraged to provide comments relevant to the specific issues being considered by the NEJAC. To learn about the Public Comment Guidelines, please visit the [NEJAC Guidelines for Public Comment Sessions](#) page.

Please contact Fred Jenkins at nejac@epa.gov or by phone 703-308-7049. For more information, [visit the NEJAC website](#).

EPA EJ Grants and Funding Opportunities

EPA has several funding opportunities and resources available supporting environmental justice communities. Please go to EPA's [Environmental Justice Grants, Funding and Technical Assistance webpage](#) for more information.

Brownfields and Job Training Grants

EPA's [Brownfields Job Training \(JI\)](#) program provides funding to recruit, train, and place local, unemployed and under-employed residents with the skills needed to secure full-time employment in the environmental field. [The PowerPoint presentation and recording of a webinar session hosted for prospective applicants can be found on the EPA webpage](#). The grant round will close on October 5, 2021.

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