



PJM and Rising Energy Prices

Energy prices are high, but are expected to surge this summer.

The causes: Our region's grid operator is failing to effectively run their "capacity market", and complacent elected officials would allow the fossil-fuel industry to exploit the failure to reap massive, unjust profits by pretending to add "reliability."

Unfortunately, on February 12, 2025 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approved PJM's fracked-gas queue jumping plant. [PennFuture vehemently disagrees with this decision](#) to “fast track” fracked gas power plants over new renewable energy generation projects.

If you missed our webinar "Why is My Electricity Bill So High?" on March 4, it is available on our YouTube channel!



Additionally, **The Morning Call** and **Centre Daily Times** published an article on rising energy costs featuring PennFuture's President & CEO Patrick McDonnell, **As consumers prepare for rising electricity bills, Pennsylvania debates whether more solar power could help.**

READ: Centre Daily Times article



Sustainable Economics

 **SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LENS by Donna Kohut:**

Decision-makers need to do the thing that saves people money and do it quickly. That means solar deployment and battery storage, which is cheaper

and faster than building gas plants. Pennsylvania working families struggling to pay their bills simply cannot afford more delays.



Legal Victory! Scrubgrass Cryptomining Facility in Venango County to Expedite Removal of Toxic Coal Ash 'Mountain'

Just this week — PennFuture, represented by EarthJustice, reached a settlement with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Scrubgrass Reclamation Company to expedite the removal of Scrubgrass' unpermitted coal ash pile near the Allegheny River. The cryptomining facility must remove the ash 'mountain' by September 2026.

Coal ash is the waste leftover from burned waste coal, containing a toxic mix of carcinogens, neurotoxins, and hazardous materials [linked to health issues](#).

We held Scrubgrass and the DEP accountable for violating waste rules. The facility now must speed up the cleanup and rebuild a lot of its stormwater management.

READ: The Press Release



New Litigation Filed: PennFuture Challenges Stormwater Permit for Distribution Center in Monroe County



On Monday, March 3, 2025, PennFuture filed a challenge to the final National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater permit for the Core 5 distribution center in Pocono Township, Monroe County.

The 702,000 square foot warehouse/distribution center threatens the water quality of the watershed of Pocono Creek, a High Quality and Class A trout stream, including EV wetlands.

"It is unfortunate that DEP continues to issue permits that fail to protect our key streams and wetlands in the Poconos. The final Core 5 permit will result in a degradation of water quality of the historic Pocono Creek, a well-loved fishing stream and one of the key tributaries in the Brodhead Watershed," says **Emma Bast, Staff Attorney for PennFuture**. "Protecting the High Quality and Exceptional Value headwaters of the Poconos is a core focus of PennFuture's mission, and we will fight threats to these critical watersheds."

PennFuture attorney Brigitte Meyer is also quoted in WBRE-TV's recent report on warehouse development in Monroe County.

WATCH: WBRE-TV

"Residents express concerns over Monroe County warehouses"



Solar-Ready Warehouse Legislation

PennFuture supports two new bills that will mandate millions of square feet on new logistics development will be made available to clean energy: "SolarReady Warehouse and Distribution Center Act" and the "Solar-Ready Warehouse and Distribution Center Retrofit Tax Credit Act". **These initiatives could also capitalize on the adoption of a community solar program in Pennsylvania.**

Under the legislation, all newly constructed large-scale warehouses and distribution centers shall be designed and constructed to accommodate solar installations, with a minimum of 40% of the roof area built to accommodate solar photovoltaic systems. Additionally, all existing warehouses and distribution centers will be eligible for a tax credit to retrofit at least 40% of their roofs as solar-ready zones.

We can use your help! Can you ask your representative to cosponsor these bills? We've created a draft letter, which you can edit and send directly to your lawmaker.

TAKE ACTION:

Support Solar-Ready Warehouses



Sustainable Economics

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LENS by Donna Kohut:

"Why aren't there solar panels on warehouses?!" The simple, cynical, and honest answer is: because there is no economic incentive or framework to encourage it. Passing these bills will jumpstart momentum that both accelerates the addition of clean energy to the grid and offers more opportunities for communities to use carbon-free energy in their everyday lives. That combination reduces electricity costs, which puts more money back into the pockets of working families.



PennFuture Member Survey!

For active PennFuture members: look in your inbox to take our membership survey. **Deadline is coming up — Monday, March 10, 2025!**

The survey includes questions about your interests, how you prefer to receive updates, and how we can enhance your experience as a member. Your responses will guide our efforts to create more engaging and impactful opportunities for you and our community.

We truly appreciate your participation and insight.



Back to Court: Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Case

Latest update on RGGI — the PA Supreme Court issued an order that they will hear oral argument!

PennFuture’s Managing Attorney for Litigation Jessica O’Neill and **staff attorney Emma Bast** are leading our defense of RGGI by raising the Environmental Rights Amendment — Pennsylvanians’ constitutional right to clean air and a healthy, stable environment — by preparing for oral arguments. The PA Supreme Court has decided that it will hear arguments but has not set the date yet.



March Events

International Women's Day

March 8, 2025

Grant Deadline Approaching

The Mid-Atlantic Environmental Justice Fund

Deadline: Friday, March 14

This is a grant program - up to \$200k per project - that leverages forestry to address environmental justice issues in the Mid-Atlantic region.

<https://cbtrust.org/grants/maejf/>

Monessen, PA

Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill Community Meeting

March 13

7:00 PM

Monessen High School, 1245 State Rd,
Monessen, PA

Three Rivers Waterkeeper, Protect PT, and Physicians for Social Responsibility Pennsylvania will host a conversation on the the Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill's NPDES application permit regarding leachate disposal into Speers Run/Monongahela River.

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All gifts made to PennFuture, no matter how large or small, make you a member of our organization. The official registration and financial information of PennFuture may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling within Pennsylvania toll free 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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