



A New Reality

By Matthew Stepp, PennFuture's EVP & Chief of Staff

The United States—and Florida in particular—is no stranger to hurricanes, but major Hurricane Milton will reset everyone's expectations for generations to come. Even before making landfall, Milton has reorganized the record books. In 24 hours, the storm went from a Tropical Storm to a Category 5 Hurricane, easily making it the fastest storm to reach peak intensity in the Gulf of Mexico. The damage to Florida's infrastructure will be beyond comprehension, and we hope residents heeded mandatory evacuations to limit loss of life.

While we waited anxiously for the storm to complete its destructive path, the sudden ferocity of Milton has made it a convenient target of conspiracy theories, many pointing to Milton being a product of government weather modification programs. Indeed, these conspiracy theories are patently wrong, but as they say, "there is a shred of truth in every story."

The reality is that **humans did make Hurricane Milton** stronger than it usually would have been, not because of our government cloud seeding as the conspiracies hold. Rather, humans in the developed world have burned so many fossil fuels over the last century that the carbon dioxide we've released into the atmosphere is actively trapping more heat close to Earth. Research shows that at least 90 percent of that heat has transferred to the world's oceans. Hurricanes feed off exceptionally warm oceans, making the irregularly hot Gulf of Mexico's influence on Milton the latest case study of the impact of human-caused global climate change.

Hurricane Milton is the most recent in a series of powerful storms fueled by fossil fuels, highlighting the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions to mitigate climate change's effects. It also underscores the necessity of revising our economic development policies to safeguard communities from such extreme weather events.

Pennsylvania is not exempt from these severe impacts and must prioritize its climate change, energy, and economic development policies.

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PennFuture's Executive Vice President & Chief of Staff Matthew Stepp holds a bachelors degree in Meteorology from Millersville University and a masters degree in Science, Technology, and Public Policy from the Rochester Institute of Technology. He is a professional member of the American Meteorological Society.



IRG Plastics Facility in Erie, PA

Plastic is produced from fossil fuels and there are a number of harmful emissions created in the extraction of fossil fuels to the end life of plastics.

PennFuture joined 100 representatives from other organizations to sign [a letter encouraging the Department Of Energy to withdraw the loan guarantee](#) to the IRG plastics recycling facility planned in Erie.

PennFuture's Clean Water Campaign Manager Jenny Tompkins discussed the sign-on letter with Allegheny Front: "Erie has basically bought into the smoke and mirrors of plastic recycling. We know that it is not really achievable at scale."

Once the state air permit for IRG is issued, the DOE plans to conduct an [environmental assessment](#) of the project before finalizing its loan guarantee. That process includes a public review and comment period.

READ:

Allegheny Front Story



The State of Fracking

Fracking is why the United States now produces more natural gas and oil than ever before.

But PennFuture's Senior Director of Energy & Climate, Rob Altenburg, calls out the inflated jobs numbers reported by the industry. He tells The Nation "Economically, it's a fairly tiny part of Pennsylvania's economy...We have initiatives going on in the legislature and other places to subsidize both the supply and the demand side of it, which I'm sure the industry is happy with. I don't think the economics of that make nearly as much sense."

READ:

The Nation story

BECOME A POLL WORKER

PennFuture staff
share their
experience.



Take Action: Help Your Local Polling Place

The November election is around the corner — Poll workers are critical to help maintain safe and accessible in-person voting for communities without reliable access to mail service, voters with disabilities, voters who need language assistance, or for voters who simply want to cast their ballot in person as they always have.

PennFuture's Managing Attorney for Litigation Jessica O'Neill and Advocacy Manager Michael Mehrazar have worked previously as election workers. They share their experience in this article [What You Need to Know About Being a Poll Worker.](#)

Join PennFuture to power our elections by recruiting the poll workers we need to make sure our polls - and our democracy - are accessible for everyone who wants to cast their vote.

Sign Up:

Become a poll worker!



November Election 2024 Important Dates

Vote Early in PA:

Many counties throughout Pennsylvania are set up to allow voters an opportunity to sign up, complete, and submit their mail ballot all in one visit to their county election offices or designated satellite location. Get your voting done early at your county's designated early voting location. Find yours at: vote.pa/early

Voter registration deadline:

Monday, October 21, 2024 is the last day to register to vote in the November 5 election. [Check your voter registration status here.](#)

Election Day 2024:

Vote in-person on Election Day, Tuesday, November 5.

**All logistics uses are now
conditional uses and allowed only
in the Business Development/
Light Industrial District.**



Kidder Township Adopts PennFuture's Model Municipal Logistics Ordinance!

Local advocacy groups LOVE Kidder Township and Save Carbon County rallied concerned community members to stop the unrestrained development of massive logistics facilities. Under Kidder Township's previous ordinance, few – if any – restrictions applied to these land uses beyond basic lot size and setback requirements.

Through the advocacy of LOVE Kidder Township and Save Carbon County, [Living with Logistics](#), PennFuture's model logistics use ordinance and guidebook, became the blueprint for Kidder Township's reconsideration of its zoning ordinance, and on September 12, 2024, the Board of Supervisors adopted a zoning ordinance amendment that imposes new, more appropriate restrictions based on PennFuture's model.

READ:

Kidder Township adopts PennFuture's Model Municipal Logistics Ordinance



2024 GENERAL ELECTION
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
CANDIDATE FORUM
WED. OCT 30TH 5-8PM
JACOB WOLL PAVILION, RENZINHAUSEN PARK,
2300 EDEN PARK BLVD., MCKEESPORT, PA 15132

U.S. PRESIDENCY U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES U.S. SENATE PA STATE TREASURER
PA ATTORNEY GENERAL PA AUDITOR GENERAL PA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PA SENATE

Logos: Environmental Justice, The Climate Reality Project, BREATHE PROJECT, CLEAN AIR ACTION, TAKE ACTION ADVOCACY GROUP, West End POWER, THREE RIVERS WATERKEEPERS, PSR, JUSTICE, MIS, VCAN, BACK VOTERS MATTER, 412 Justice.

MEET AND LEARN CANDIDATES PRIORITIES, GOALS AND STRATEGIES ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY
FREE DINNER, TRANSPORTATION AND CHILDCARE PROVIDED

Upcoming Events in PA

ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Environmental Justice Candidate Forum

Wednesday, October 30, 2024
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM FREE - plus free transportation, childcare, and dinner provided!

You have an opportunity to meet some of your federal and state representatives, ask them questions, and hear their strategies and priorities for Environmental Justice.

[REGISTER HERE!](#) (limited space)

STATEWIDE

Indigenous People's Day - Monday, October 14, 2024

Voter registration deadline:
Monday, October 21, 2024

Application for a Mail-in or Absentee Ballot deadline:



October 25, 2024 by 5:00 PM Your **APPLICATION** for a mail-in or absentee ballot must be received by your [county election office](#).

Donations Make a Difference

You can add your voice when you become a member.

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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