



Environmental Justice Task Force Newsletter January 2019

UU Seventh Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Environmental Justice (EJ): Addressing disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental effects in communities of low-income residents or persons of color.

UPCOMING UU CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITY

UU CONGREGATION OF MONMOUTH COUNTY (UUCMC) EVENT:

ARE WE COOKED?

Climate Reality and Hope

Dr. Eric Goplerud (Executive Director of Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, Fairfax, Virginia, <https://www.faithforclimate.org>) presents updates on latest climate reports and what we can do about the increasing urgency

*Sunday, February 10, 2019 at 2:30 pm
Unitarian Universalist Congregation
1475 W. Front Street
Lincroft, NJ 07738*



In addition to Dr. Goplerud's presentation, there are also planned to be tables from environmental organizations, with materials about the groups and action items ready to do (like write a postcard to a politician) or opportunities to sign up for activities. This event is organized by Lynn Dash, the chair of UUCMC's Climate Change Action Team in conjunction with Liz DeBeer, adult RE.

Dr. Goplerud's organization, Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions (FACS) of Fairfax, Virginia, helps people of faith develop local solutions to the climate crisis. The multifaith organization empowers and unites neighbors of all faiths to achieve real climate solutions, right now.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

“Handling our Trash: Getting to a Circular Carbon Economy”



Americans live with waste every day -- a growing problem. Recycling is one of the ways we can have a positive impact on our environment. Recycling can also provide us with renewable sources of energy which help reduce greenhouse gases. A zero waste recycling strategy only works if we understand our shopping, consumption and disposal habits, with the goal to move toward zero trash sent to landfill and incineration. This knowledge will not only make us better recyclers but also better voters as we help shape local, state and national environmental policy. This program will clear up confusion and address how to achieve renewable energy and a low carbon economy. Information and a flyer are available here:

https://d3n8a8pro7hmx.cloudfront.net/njppn/pages/1025/attachments/original/1547087192/March_7_2019_Flyer.pdf?1547087192 and information is here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/586122075162623/>

March 7, 2019, 7:30 pm

Westfield High School, 550 Dorian Rd, Westfield, NJ 07090 (in Cafeteria B)
Please RSVP at www.nfrpp.org - Free and Open to the Public - Walk-Ins Welcome –
Suggested tax-deductible donation is \$10

EJTF ACTIVITIES

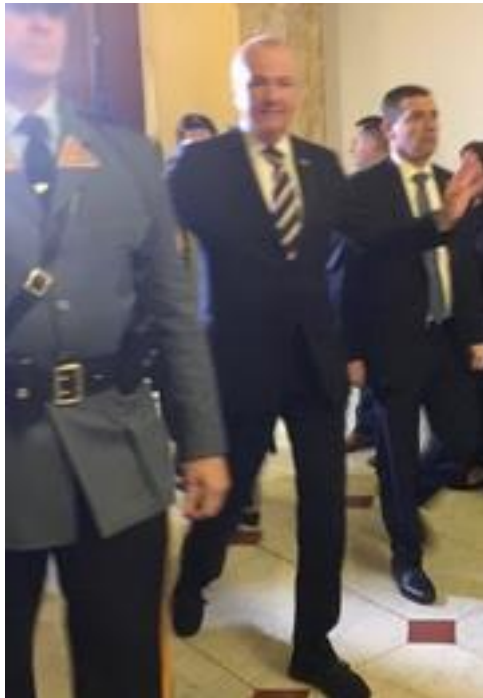
“Bird-dogging” Governor Murphy: One of EJTF’s 2019 goals (see page 4), is “Getting Off Fossil Fuels. Related to this goal, we are part of a coalition (“EmpowerNJ”) advocating for Governor Murphy to enact a moratorium on new fossil fuel infrastructure. On January 15, members of EJTF joined others from EmpowerNJ to “bird-dog” Governor Murphy at his “State of the State” speech at the State House Annex.



“Bird-dogging” Governor Murphy (continued):

We greeted Governor Murphy with a strong, unified message: "You can't fight climate change and achieve 100% renewable energy while continuing to approve new oil and gas pipelines and power plants. New Jersey needs a moratorium on fossil fuel projects now!" There were about 10 of us in the hallway before Murphy's State of the State on January 15, 2019, including Matt Smith of Food and Water Watch (center, in the panorama picture on the page 2); also Junior Romero, Gene Schaedel, and Cassandra Worthington of Food and Water Watch; Rhyen Grech of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance; Rena Amada of UUCMC; Carol Gay of the NJ Industrial Union Council; and, Nancy Griffeth, Chair of the UUFANJ EJTF.

Environmentalists Jeff Tittel (Sierra Club), Dave Pringle (who was a candidate to replace Leonard Lance in NJ Congressional District 7 and is a public interest advocate), and Amy Goldsmith of UUCMC and Clean Water Action participated as invited guests and attended the speech.



Governor Murphy at “State of the State” speech

Although we didn't get a chance to speak to the governor, and we couldn't carry signs in the State House, we were able to wear T-shirts with messages.



EJTF KEY ISSUES FOR 2019:

1) Reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions from transportation

- Electric Vehicles (EV's)

We are working on a draft position on EV's and one of the bills in the NJ Assembly concerning EV's.

2) Fighting against fossil fuel infrastructure

We are working on actions related to achieving a moratorium on new fossil fuel infrastructure in NJ (see "Bird-dogging Governor Murphy" on pages 2 and 3). We have joined a coalition, named "EmpowerNJ" (Twitter hashtag, #empowernj). There's good information about it here: <https://www.cleanwateraction.org/releases/empower-nj-stop-fossil-fuel-campaign-launch>. Members of the "Stop Fossil Fuel Campaign" coordinating committee are preparing a report that will articulate the evidence-based case for a moratorium on fossil fuel projects in New Jersey. They hope to finalize and publish the report in the coming weeks,

We are also drafting letters that can be sent to local newspapers, and plan to begin having informational forums for our congregations and in our municipalities; the communications.

ACTIONS RELATED TO EJTF AREAS OF INTEREST

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

NJ Environmental Justice Executive Order No. 23 Draft Guidance Released with Public Comment Period and Listening Sessions

The Department of Environmental Protection has issued a draft guidance document that aims to improve public health, the environment and quality of life in all communities statewide. The document is the centerpiece of Governor Murphy's Executive Order No. 23, which calls upon all state government agencies to make environmental justice a key consideration in decision making that affects residents' environment, communities, homes and health. The goal is to ensure that every resident –regardless of race, ethnicity, color, national origin or income– receives equal protection under state laws and can live and work in a healthy, clean environment.

The executive order, signed by Governor Murphy on 4/20/2018, directs the DEP to take the lead in developing environmental justice guidance for state agencies. The draft document culminates an interagency panel's months-long effort to gather views and critical information on environmental justice from members of impacted communities, conservation and planning organizations, business and industry, and municipal and legislative representatives.

- The document is available at: www.nj.gov/dep/ej/eo23/docs/eo23-draft-guidance.pdf
- **There is a 60-day public-comment period and DEP is hosting three listening sessions.**
- **Written comments may be submitted until March 22, 2019, to: eo23@dep.nj.gov.**
- Following are details on the listening sessions. People are encouraged to sign up (i.e., RSVP) in advance

Central NJ Location – Trenton, Mercer County When: February 5, 2019 – 2-3:30 p.m. Where: Thomas Edison State College, 111 W. State Street, Trenton [Click here to RSVP](#).

Southern NJ Location – Bridgeton, Cumberland County When: February 12, 2019 – 6-7:30 p.m.
Where: Municipal Court Room, 330 Fayette Street, Bridgeton [Click here to RSVP](#).

Northern NJ Location – Elizabeth, Union County When: March 5, 2019 – 6-7:30 p.m. Where:
Peterstown Community Center, 408 Palmer Street, Elizabeth [Click here to RSVP](#).

“GREEN AMENDMENT”

Sponsored in the Assembly by UU Nancy Pinkin

The “Green Amendment” bill (Senate Concurrent Resolution 134), for a proposed amendment to the NJ Constitution to grant every person the right to a clean and healthy environment, passed the NJ Senate Environment and Energy Committee by a bipartisan supermajority. It was sent to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee 10/15/2018.

A summary and a list of actions you can take are available at:

<http://delawareriverkeeper.org/ongoing-issues/new-jerseys-green-amendment-generations>



NEWS RELATED TO EJTF ISSUES

CLEAN VEHICLES

- **California Requires New City Buses to Be Electric by 2029** - California on 12/14/2018 became the first state to mandate a full shift to electric buses on public transit routes, flexing its muscle as the nation’s leading environmental regulator and bringing battery-powered, heavy-duty vehicles a step closer to the mainstream: <https://futurism.com/city-buses-california-electric-2029/>
- **7 Takeaways from a Wild Year for EVs** - While car shoppers can be forgiven for missing it, 2018 was an astonishing year in the world of electric transportation. It was a time when major automakers nervously shifted billions of dollars in future budgets from gas-powered cars toward the engineering of electric drivetrains. This was the year when trailblazers stuck electric motors on scooters and 18-wheelers, and when utility commissions grabbed the thorny rose of EV regulation. In a sign EVs have arrived, the industry also attracted new enemies: <https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060110359>
- **The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Will Conduct the First Test at a U.S. Port of an Electric Vehicle to Move Cargo Containers**, with an eye toward eventually replacing the current gas-powered fleet: www.nj.com/news/2019/01/nj-port-set-to-make-history-as-first-in-us-to-test-electric-cargo-moving-vehicles.html
- **New Jersey is Joining a Regional Effort to Reduce Carbon Pollution from the Transportation Sector**, the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/18/nj-joins-new-multi-state-plan-to-curb-pollution-from-trucks-buses-other-vehicles/>
- **New Jersey is Part of a Multistate Settlement of a Case Involving Attempts to Evade Diesel Emission Controls**. An engineering company is also paying for its involvement: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/14/nj-settles-with-fiat-chrysler-over-software-that-cheated-on-emission-tests/>

- **Op-Ed: New Jersey Can't Afford to Miss Out on Benefits of Electric Vehicles** - There's a lot to gain for the Garden State if it positions itself as a leader in EV adoption: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/08/op-ed-new-jersey-cant-afford-to-miss-out-on-benefits-of-electric-vehicles/>

FOSSIL FUEL INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES



- **Proposed Pipeline Station Blasted by Essex County Official** - Williams/Transco wants to build another gas compressor station near the Essex County Environmental Center. Activists aren't thrilled: <https://patch.com/new-jersey/verona/mistrust-proposed-essex-county-pipeline-station-divincenzo>
- **Environmental Groups Ask BPU, Pinelands Commission to Order Stop to Pipeline Construction** - Two environmental groups have asked the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities and the state Pinelands Commission to order a utility company to stop construction of a controversial natural gas pipeline through northern Burlington, Monmouth and Ocean counties: www.nj.com/burlington/2018/12/environmentalists-beg-for-a-halt-as-work-on-180m-pinelands-pipeline-begins.html
- **Phil Murphy Remains Quiet as Opposition Grows toward Meadowlands Power Plant** - Murphy has remained steadfastly poker-faced when it comes to a proposal to build a controversial power plant in the Meadowlands that would be one of the biggest greenhouse gas emitters in the state even as dozens of nearby towns voice opposition: <https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/environment/2018/12/20/phil-murphy-remains-quiet-meadowlands-power-plant-despite-growing-opposition-north-bergen-liberty/2311946002/>
- **Editorial: Governor, It's Time to Step Up, Oppose North Bergen Power Plant** - Which is it, Governor Murphy? Are you for clean energy, or aren't you? Because if you are, the right thing to do, the honorable, principled thing to do, the only environmentally conscious thing to do, is to stop this misguided plan to build a massive, gas-fired power plant in the Meadowlands dead in its tracks: <https://www.northjersey.com/story/opinion/editorials/2018/12/21/editorial-governor-its-time-step-up-oppose-north-bergen-power-plant/2390853002/>
- **Chris Smith Fights Trump On Atlantic Ocean Oil Drilling** - Trump has long said he wants to explore oil and gas drilling in the Atlantic Ocean. "Not here, not now, not ever," says Rep. Chris Smith: <https://patch.com/new-jersey/middletown-nj/chris-smith-fights-trump-atlantic-ocean-oil-drilling>

- **Trump Wants to Drill Off the Jersey Shore – NJ Lawmakers are Moving to Block Him** - Rep. Frank Pallone Jr., the new chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, is once again pushing to ban oil and gas drilling in the Atlantic Ocean: www.nj.com/politics/2019/01/trump-wants-to-drill-off-the-jersey-shore-nj-lawmakers-are-moving-to-block-him.html
- **NJ Joins Lawsuit to Derail Offshore Oil Exploration** - Trenton joins in multistate effort to reverse Trump administration's approval of seismic testing: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/20/nj-joins-lawsuit-to-derail-offshore-oil-exploration/>
- **Bateman Maintains Pressure Against Fracking in Delaware Basin** - The state Senate has passed a bipartisan resolution sponsored by Sen. Christopher "Kip" Bateman (R-Somerset, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex) and Sen. Linda Greenstein (D-Mercer, Middlesex) urging Gov. Phil Murphy to block a proposed Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) rule permitting the storage, treatment, disposal and discharge of wastewater generated from fracking in the basin: <https://www.tapinto.net/towns/flemington-slash-raritan/articles/bateman-maintains-pressure-against-fracking-in-delaware-basin-2>
- **PennEast Now Faces Tough Scrutiny from DEP after Winning Court Battle** - Federal judge grants eminent domain in New Jersey, but pipeline company must still meet many environmental standards. Now comes the hard part for PennEast: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/16/penneast-now-faces-tough-scrutiny-from-dep-after-winning-court-battle/>
- **Freeholders Approve Road Closure for Natural Gas Pipeline** - The debate over the controversial Southern Reliability Link pipeline raged on 12/12/2018 at the county Board of Freeholders meeting due to a vote on whether to allow county roads to close during the line's construction. The board voted 3-2 along party lines to authorize the county Engineer's Office to approve the closure of County Routes 528 and 664 when utility company New Jersey Natural Gas moves forward with construction: <http://www.burlingtoncountytimes.com/news/20181212/freeholders-approve-road-closure-for-natural-gas-pipeline>

LEAD IN DRINKING WATER (and other drinking water issues)

- **Newark Sued over Handling of Lead-Contaminated Water** - Natural Resources Defense Council asks federal judge to force the city to immediately give water filters to East Ward residents; <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/16/suez-finds-elevated-lead-levels-in-water-in-bergen-hudson-counties>
- **Newark Doesn't Need to Give Water Filters to All Residents, Judge Says** - Currently, residents living in the East Ward are not eligible to receive the filters. The East Ward gets its water from the Wanaque treatment plant, "which does not have the same corrosion control problems that plague operations at the Pequannock treatment plant which serves the rest of the city": <https://www.nj.com/news/2018/12/despite-ongoing-problems-newark-doesnt-need-to-give-water-filters-to-all-residents-judge-says.html>
- **Where Are NJ's New Chemical Rules?** - Enviro Accuse DEP of More Foot-Dragging on PFAS: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/16/where-are-njs-new-chemical-rules-enviros-accuse-dep-of-more-foot-dragging-on-pfas/>

- **Rain Gardens in NJ: Small Projects Help Alleviate Stormwater Problems** - It will take billions to bring New Jersey's water infrastructure up to standard. In the meantime, clean-water activists are helping communities make small changes to mitigate stormwater damage: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/13/rain-gardens-in-nj-small-projects-help-alleviate-problems-with-stormwater/>
- **DEP Moves to Require Green Infrastructure for Stormwater Management** - The impacts of climate change, especially heavier storms and longer dry spells, are contributing to water pollution and flooding and in general making stormwater management – the art and science of managing and routing heavy rainfall – ever more challenging. And the state's rules governing stormwater management have been robustly criticized for years by various stakeholders including developers, municipalities and environmental advocates, who view the rules as confusing, unenforceable and inadequate: <https://www.njfuture.org/2018/12/06/new-stormwater-rule/>
- **Green Groups: Proposed Overhaul of Stormwater Rules Doesn't Go Far Enough** - Only 5 percent of NJ waterways meet federal clean water standards, largely due to runoff from developed areas: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/08/green-groups-proposed-overhaul-of-stormwater-rules-doesnt-go-far-enough/>

RENEWABLE RESOURCES



- **Solar Energy for the Less Well-off in NJ –A Pilot Program is Approved –**

This is the Community Solar Pilot Program, one of the EJTF goals last year!! We pushed the state to consider Environmental Justice communities, have more hearings accessible to Environmental Justice communities, and include reporting of the actual impact on Environmental Justice communities.

The state on 1/18/2019 approved a pilot program aimed at making solar energy available to low- and moderate-income households, a policy that could lower their energy bills. Also available to schools, local governments and nonprofits, the program is a scaled-down version of what solar advocates originally wanted: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/17/solar-energy-for-the-less-well-off-in-nj-a-pilot-program-is-approved/>

- **NJ Senate Committee Advances Flawed Climate Bill, Rejects Demand For Enforceable Emissions Reductions and Pollution Fees** - The Senate Environment Committee on 12/3/2018 released a seriously flawed bill purported to accelerate greenhouse gas emissions reductions, a charade we predicted last week: <http://www.wolfenotes.com/2018/12/senate-committee-advances-flawed-climate-bill-rejects-demand-for-enforceable-emissions-reductions-and-pollution-fees/>

- **Ørsted Submits Bid to Build NJ's First Offshore Wind Farm** - Ørsted submitted a bid to the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) Dec. 28 to build its Ocean Wind project in response to the first offshore wind request for proposal under Gov. Phil Murphy's clean energy agenda, according to a release: <http://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2018/12/rsted-submits-bid-to-build-njs-first.html#.XCITKC2ZNE4>
- **Offshore-Wind Developers And Officials Won't Reveal Key Details Of Proposals** - Three developers are vying to build offshore-wind farms aimed at achieving the Murphy administration's goal of building 1,100 megawatts of capacity off the Jersey coast in a process that is emerging as increasingly opaque. There's a lot at stake for utility customers who may end up subsidizing projects to the tune of billions of dollars: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/02/offshore-wind-developers-and-officials-wont-reveal-key-details-of-proposals/>
- **Op-Ed: New Jersey Needs to Develop Wind Energy Projects Far Offshore** - The recent denial of a project only 2.8 nautical miles from Atlantic City was the right decision. The focus should be on developing projects well outside the sensitive coastal zone: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/03/op-ed-new-jersey-needs-to-develop-wind-energy-projects-far-offshore/>
- **NJBPU seeks input on transition to new solar program** - The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) staff issued Wednesday a straw proposal to assist in the transition from the current Solar Renewable Energy Certificate (SREC) Program to a new system: <https://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2018/12/njbpu-seeks-input-on-transition-to-new.html#.XCITry2ZNE4>
- **Will the sun keep shining on NJ's successful solar system?** - Cautious optimism about the state's proposal to overhaul program that has been faulted for costing ratepayers too much in subsidies: http://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2019/01/will-sun-keep-shining-on-njs-successful_91.html#.XDEQQi2ZNE4
- **New Guidelines For Financing Solar Installations In NJ - But Few Details Yet** - Cautious optimism about the state's proposal to overhaul program that has been faulted for costing ratepayers too much in subsidies: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/03/new-guidelines-for-financing-solar-installations-in-nj-but-few-details/>
- **New Jersey BPU Moves to Change Solar Energy Subsidies** - The state is getting ready to lessen the financial burden of subsidizing solar energy development, shouldered for years by ratepayers: https://www.pressofatlanticcity.com/news/press/new_jersey/new-jersey-bpu-moves-to-change-solar-energy-subsidies/article_c587173d-f95f-58e6-ac70-775623e3c115.html
- **Sierra Club Reviews 2018, Looks Forward to 2019** - http://www.centraljersey.com/opinion/examiner/sierra-club-reviews-looks-forward-to/article_05600736-54a1-5e47-99ee-a1937e041b01.html
- **Is Business Buying into Murphy's Clean-Energy Goals? Looks Like It** - One company is doubling solar capacity at Warren County site, making it the second largest net-metered facility on the East Coast: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/06/is-business-is-buying-into-clean-energy-goals-of-murphy-administration-looks-like-it/>
- **DRPA to Use Bridges and Stations for Solar Power Project** - The Delaware River Port Authority is planning an ambitious project to site new solar panels on their bridges and stations for a greener future: http://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2019/01/drpa-to-use-its-bridges-and-stations.html#.XETLdu_sapo

- **State Rejects Atlantic City Offshore Wind Project for Third Time – Too Pricey** - Nautilus official says ‘state is missing out’ as Board of Public Utilities gives thumbs-down to 25-megawatt wind farm: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/18/state-rejects-atlantic-city-offshore-wind-project-for-third-time-too-pricey/>
- **Rejected for One Offshore-Wind Project, Company Rebounds with Bigger Plans** - EDF Renewables announces joint venture for a project eight miles out from Atlantic City, aims to have it in operation by mid-2020s: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/19/turned-down-for-one-offshore-wind-project-company-bounces-back-with-bigger-plans/>
- **Full Steam Ahead for Clean Energy as NJ, Other States Adopt New Policies** - New Jersey under Gov. Phil Murphy has aggressive goals for renewable sources of energy, but initiatives aren’t expected to deliver immediately: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/10/full-steam-ahead-for-clean-energy-as-nj-other-states-adopt-new-policies/>
- **Will Its Own Success Sabotage the Garden State’s Solar Sector?** - Add up solar installations — deployed and in the pipeline — and the Garden State has reached the point at which current subsidies expire — before a new program has been put in place: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/21/will-success-sabotage-the-garden-states-solar-sector/>

CLIMATE CHANGE



- **New Jersey is More Vulnerable Than Most States To Climate Change** - One scientific report says it’s up to us whether we respond to this threat ‘by implementing science-based, coordinated, and equitable solutions — or walk, eyes open, toward a crisis’: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/18/new-jersey-is-more-vulnerable-than-most-states-to-climate-change-what-can-we-do/>
- **The Murphy Administration Unveiled Steps for How it Will Rejoin the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative in 2020** after withdrawing from the multistate cooperative eight years ago - Under the rules issued 12/17/2018, the administration plans to pursue a carbon dioxide cap for the state’s electricity generation sector at 18 million tons in 2020. The administration said it would be able to lower the state’s annual greenhouse gas emissions to 11.5 million tons by 2030: www.pressofatlanticcity.com/news/n-j-sets-co-limits-to-rejoin-cap-and-trade/article_43377fa2-b6do-52dc-8c4d-68eb6a39e782.html

- **State Greenhouse Gas Action Prompts Public Comment Period, Hearings in Trenton Next Month** - The state Department of Environmental Protection earlier this week filed two proposed rules dealing with climate change and sea level rise expected to put New Jersey in a leadership role as it prepares to re-enter the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI): www.nj.com/politics/2018/12/murphy-just-made-this-move-to-fight-climate-change-and-heres-how-much-it-could-cost-you.html
- **Administration Sets Rules for NJ Rejoining Regional Initiative to Curb Pollution** - There's muted praise for proposed new cap on carbon emissions, as some environmental groups push for tougher restrictions: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/17/administration-sets-rules-for-nj-rejoining-regional-initiative-to-curb-pollution/>
- **Economic Star Lineup Supports Federal Carbon Tax** - An all-star lineup of economists, from Alan Greenspan to Paul Volcker, is endorsing a plan to combat climate change by slapping a tax on greenhouse gas emissions and then distributing the revenue to American households. http://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2019/01/economic-star-lineup-supports-federal.html#.XETMAe_sapo
- **Carbon Emissions Surged in 2018 Even as Coal Plants Closed** - America's carbon dioxide emissions rose by 3.4 percent in 2018, the biggest increase in eight years, according to a preliminary estimate: http://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2019/01/carbon-emissions-surged-in-2018-even-as.html#.XETK8O_sapo

POLLUTION



- **The Many Unknown Facets of Plastics in Ecosystems** - Few studies have examined lakes or wide swaths of ocean areas, leaving critical data gaps in how plastic pollution affects wildlife and moves across food webs: <https://eos.org/articles/the-many-unknown-facets-of-plastics-in-ecosystems>
- **N.J. Awards Grants to Shore Municipalities for Recycling Enhancement** - New Jersey has awarded grants to Shore municipalities to enhance and promote recycling efforts. Of the \$14.3 million in grants from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Marlboro in Monmouth County received \$119,531, while in Ocean County, the following municipalities garnered support: Brick (\$153,319), Lakewood (\$140,559), and Toms River (\$183,933): <https://whyy.org/articles/n-j-awards-grants-to-shore-municipalities-for-recycling-enhancement/>

- **Leak at Newly-expanded Delaware River Chemical Plant Jams Highways** - The Croda chemical plant at Atlas Point on the Delaware River, which was recently expanded by its British owners to produce two tons of hazardous ethylene oxide per hour so the material didn't have to be shipped from Texas by rail, was shut down due to a leak on the Sunday afternoon after Thanksgiving, stopping holiday traffic on I-295 over the Delaware Memorial Bridge and jamming drivers on the direct routes between New York and Washington, D.C: <http://www.philly.com/philly/news/delaware-memorial-bridge-closure-chemical-gas-leak-thanksgiving-20181125.html>
- **Number of New Jersey Towns Banning Plastic Bags Grows in 2019, More Poised to Join the Crowd** - Pennsylvania lags behind in this environmental push, though Philadelphia could consider restrictions in the new year: <https://www.phillyvoice.com/banning-plastic-bags-2019-new-jersey-pennsylvania-philadelphia/>
- **Water Resources Challenges Expected to Increase** - A new report identifies the highest-priority challenges and recommendations for the U.S. Geological Survey's water mission: <https://eos.org/articles/water-resources-challenges-expected-to-increase>
- **Microplastic Pollution in Raritan River to Become Major Problem?** - Newly released study documents presence of nearly invisible plastic particles along stretch of river, particularly downstream of wastewater treatment plants: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/07/could-microplastic-pollution-in-headwaters-of-raritan-river-become-major-problem/>
- **When the Delaware River Was Dying** - About 1 million pounds of waste was going into the river every day in the '60s and the river was dying: <https://whyy.org/articles/the-delaware-of-the-delaware-river/>
- **How the Clean Water Act Fixed the Delaware River's Pollution Problem** - Before the Clean Water Act of 1972, parts of the Delaware River below Trenton were considered "dead zones." Oxygen levels in the river began to increase after cities like Philadelphia began treating wastewater: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/22/how-the-clean-water-act-fixed-the-delaware-rivers-pollution-problem/>
- **Record Rains Increased Pollution in Chesapeake Bay** - Record rainfall helped tick up levels of two widespread pollutants in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in 2018, and worried scientists say bigger storms could be the new norm, according to a recent report: <http://www.philly.com/science/climate/chesapeake-bay-climate-change-rain-storms-20190107.html>
- **NJ Businesses Bringing in Big Guns to Fight Plastics Ban** - The global push to ban everyday plastic products that litter oceans and waterways has no greater fight in the U.S. in 2019 than in New Jersey where the most far-reaching set of plastics regulations in the nation is slowly making its way through Trenton: http://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2019/01/nj-businesses-bringing-in-big-guns-to.html#.XETLLO_sapo
- **The Right Shape is Key to Recycling in This NJ County** - The Atlantic County Utilities Authority is getting pickier about which materials it will accept for recycling, in response to an ongoing crackdown by China on what types of materials it wants: https://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2018/12/to-be-recycled-in-this-nj-county-it.html#.XETJBe_sapp

OTHER

- **PSEG First to File for Subsidies (a Whopping \$900M) to Keep Its Nuclear Plants Online** - If BPU approves filing, ratepayers could shell out \$900 million over three years, but independent market monitor says units will operate in the black through 2021:
<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/18/12/19/pseg-first-to-file-for-subsidies-to-keep-its-nuclear-plants-online/>
- **PSEG Drives Home Vow to Shutter Nuclear Plants Unless Public Subsidizes Them** - Company maintains new filings with state demonstrate case for up to \$300 million in annual aid for three years, but most financial information has been redacted:
<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/22/pseg-drives-home-vow-to-shutter-nuclear-plants-unless-public-subsidizes-them/>
- **PSEG Sells Defunct Coal Plants in Jersey City and Hamilton for Redevelopment** - Developer plans to repurpose the sites as state-of-the-art industrial parks serving growing warehouse-distribution business in region: <https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/09/pseg-sells-defunct-coal-plants-in-jersey-city-and-hamilton-for-redevelopment/>
- **Has Murphy Made Good on His Promises? Taking Stock at the 1-Year Mark** - The governor hasn't realized several of his top priorities. Some observers blame inexperience or his desire to be liked, but one lays the fault squarely at the door of Sweeney and Coughlin:
<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/15/has-murphy-made-good-on-his-promises-taking-stock-at-the-1-year-mark/>
- **Our New Governor Vowed to Work Toward A Greener Future**, especially in the areas of energy and climate change. Overall, it's been a year of environmental progress for this state we're in. Here's a quick tally of key gains and losses: <https://www.njconservation.org/a-new-administration-a-new-environment/>
- **Environmentalists Say Phil Murphy Is a Disappointment** - As environmentalists reviewed accomplishments and setbacks in 2018, the New Jersey Sierra Club is expressing buyer's remorse over its endorsement of Phil Murphy for Governor in the 2017 New Jersey election:
<http://njtoday.net/2018/12/31/environmentalists-say-phil-murphy-is-a-disappointment/>
- **Governor Nominates Two Conservationists to Pinelands Commission** - Murphy addresses concerns of leading environmentalists who had wanted Christie-era holdovers to be replaced:
<https://www.njspotlight.com/stories/19/01/21/governor-nominates-two-conservationists-to-pinelands-commission/>
- **NJ Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee to Hear from Princeton Professor on UN Climate Report and Possible Impacts for New Jersey** – The article includes a list of legislation to be considered by the committee:
http://enviropoliticsblog.blogspot.com/2019/01/assembly-enviro-panel-to-hear-from.html#.XEjW--_sapo

UUFaithAction NJ - Environmental Justice Task Force - <https://uufaithaction.org/environment/>
Chair - Nancy Griffeth; Vice Chair - Ray Nichols

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