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## **WREN Community Leaders Gather in Carlisle**

On June 16-17, Community leaders from across the state gathered in Carlisle to share lessons learned from their successful 2008-09 WREN funded projects and to hear tips for carrying out new projects in 2009-10. But the most important aspect of the WREN meeting is the networking and sharing that occurs when 80 passionate water educators get together.

Joining WREN Project Leaders in Carlisle were representatives from water systems actively developing source water protection programs as well as DEP Source Water Protection staff from the regional offices.

The agenda featured Katherine Baer, Senior Director of American Rivers; John Hines, DEP Deputy Secretary for Water Management; Vicky Benetti from EPA Region 3's Office of Drinking Water and Source Water Protection and Brenda Barrett, Director of DCNR's Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

Other highlights included an update on Marcellus shale gas drilling and drinking water by Bryan Swistock of Penn State, how to talk about stormwater to the general public from Jeanne Clark of PennFuture. and several other speakers who are leaders in water communication. For many water suppliers the highlight of the meeting was hearing from Dave Warne, Assistant Commissioner for the New York City water system, talking about the many projects the city has underway to protect its reservoirs in the Catskills, the headwaters of the Delaware River.

Julie Kollar, WREN Program Director put together an incredible agenda for the conference. Attendees regularly report that hearing from important players in the water education field and sharing stories with fellow water educators from across Pennsylvania is a major benefit of receiving a WREN grant.

The conference agenda and speakers' presentations will be posted on the WREN website, [wren.palwv.org](http://wren.palwv.org).



[Rain Barrels - A Homeowners Guide](#)

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[Stream Redesignation Handbook](#)

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[Environmental Communication and Social Marketing Newsletter](#)

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## Lebanon County Greenfest Kids

Kids at Lebanon County's Greenfest build "water rings" - threading colored beads on pipe cleaners to represent the water cycle. A different shaped bead represented a house, using the water in the water

[Lebanon Conservation District's](#) Stephanie Harmon received a [WREN Opportunity Grant](#) to buy the beads and storage containers.



## "RAIN" Receives Grant for Automated Monitoring

The [River Alert and Information Network](#) will receive \$75,000 from PA DEP to remotely monitor the quality and temperature of the water at 13 locations along the Monongahela River. Additionally, DEP will purchase six probes that will be installed in the river to continuously collect the data.

RAIN is a collaborative effort of 33 water suppliers that use the waters of the Monongahela as their drinking water source, California University of Pennsylvania, Carnegie Mellon University, University of Pittsburgh, the Riverside Center for Innovation and DEP. The goal of RAIN is to provide the water utilities within the Allegheny, Monongahela, and parts of the Ohio River basins with advanced spill or contamination warnings based on real-time monitoring practices and a system of alerts and alarms.

RAIN got a boost last year with a [WREN grant](#) which was used to publicize the efforts of the partners about the need for collaboration and better water monitoring.

## McKean Pharmaceutical Collection A Success

[McKean County Conservation District's](#) WREN project to investigate the possibility of a pharmaceutical collection day turned into a well-organized and very successful collection event.

With the help of 24 volunteers, Bradford Hospital, the County sheriff's department, PA CleanWays, local senior centers and a Household Hazardous Waste grant from DEP, the District and partners collected unwanted medicines from 70 people, including several doctors' offices that brought in expired samples. Jim Clark, Penn State Extension Water Specialist, was instrumental in the Project's success. The uncontrolled medications were taken by Environmental Enterprises Incorporated of Cincinnati, OH. The controlled medications (narcotics) went with the sheriff's department who escorted these items to Hamot Medical Center in Erie, PA to be incinerated.



According to [Heather McKean](#), Watershed Specialist with the Conservation District, volunteers helped with each step, "most of them at the inventory tables as that was the most time consuming

step of the process."

## STATE WATER ATLAS COMPLETE



The Pennsylvania State Water Plan is complete, and the [State Water Atlas](#) is available on the DEP website. The Statewide Advisory Committee held its last meeting on June 18; regional committees will meet again in August and September.

One of the next steps is for the regional committees to prioritize Critical Water Planning Areas, and find funding to develop Critical Area Resource Plans (CARPs) for the priority watersheds.

The US Geological Survey developed a Water Analysis Screening Tool (WAST) to assist DEP in determining priority Critical Water Planning Areas. USGS has published a User's Guide to the WAST and a publication describing the development of the tool. Both pubs can be accessed in the [WREN Library](#).

**Water Policy News is published three times a year by the Water Resources Education Network, a project of the League of Women Voters of PA - Citizen Education Fund. Please send your water education related programs and activities to [WREN Communications Director](#).**

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