

Pennsylvania Laws

Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection has the responsibility for administering most of Pennsylvania's laws that relate to groundwater protection. Other agencies with jurisdiction include the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Labor and Industry, and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Safe Drinking Water Act (Act 43 of 1984, as amended) - authorizes DEP to implement the federal safe drinking water program and to develop maximum contaminant levels for substances for which no standard has been set by EPA. Does not authorize the state to regulate underground injection wells.

Clean Streams Law (Act 394 of 1937, as amended) - regulates discharges to the waters of the Commonwealth, both surface water and groundwater.

Storage Tank and Spill Prevention Act (Act 32 of 1989, as amended) - regulates installation and operation of storage tanks, both aboveground and underground, and tank facilities.

Dam Safety and Encroachment Act (Act 325 of 1978, as amended) - regulates activities in the waters of the Commonwealth, including construction of encroachments or filling in of wetlands.

Stormwater Management Act (Act 167 of 1978) - requires counties to develop watershed based stormwater management plans that address surface water and ground water concerns.

Sewage Facilities Act (Act 537 of 1965) - requires municipalities to develop plans for managing sewage.

Surface Mining and Conservation and Reclamation Act (Act 418 of 1945, as amended) - regulates the surface mining, and hydrologic impact, of coal mining. Mining of noncoal minerals is regulated by the Noncoal Surface Mining and Conservation Act (Act 219 of 1984).

Solid Waste Management Act (Act 97 of 1980, as amended) - authorizes DEP to regulate management of municipal, residual (nonhazardous industrial), and hazardous waste. Other laws relating to waste management include the Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act, (Act 101 of 1988), the Land Recycling and Environmental Remediation Standards Act (Act 2 of 1995) which establishes cleanup standards (including groundwater) based on health and environmental risks and the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act (Act 108 of 1988, as amended) which authorizes DEP to investigate hazardous sites and to cleanup sites that are releasing hazardous substances.

Worker and Community Right-to-Know Act (Act 159 of 1984) - requires employers and chemical suppliers to provide information about the identity and dangers of hazardous substances used in the workplace.

Pesticide Control Act (Act 24 of 1974, as amended) - authorizes the Department of Agriculture to regulate the labeling, distribution, storage, transportation, use, application and disposal of pesticides as regards food safety.

Nutrient Management Act (Act 6 of 1996) establishes a multi-agency effort led by the State Conservation Commission to manage the flow of farm nutrients.

Water Well Drillers Licensing Act (Act 1840 of 1965) - requires any person who drills a well to be licensed.

Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247 of 1968, as amended) -authorized municipalities to regulate land use, including provisions regarding water supply and water resources.

Excerpted from: *Groundwater: A Primer for Pennsylvanians*. The PDF version is available on the WREN Website at <http://pa.lwv.org/wren/pubs/primer.html>. To obtain a print copy of the *Primer* or to learn about other resource materials available from WREN, call the WREN Resource Center at 1-800-692-7281. Or visit the WREN website at: <http://pa.lwv.org/wren/>