

Here's a Weekly Update, shared from the NJDEP...



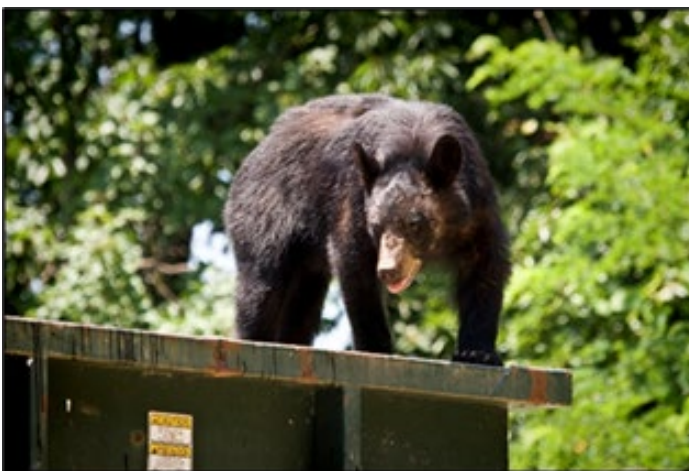
Good afternoon, Mayors, and Municipal Officials,

Happy spring! In this week's update you will find information on **NJDEP's statement on east coast whale mortalities**, Attorney General Platkin, NJDEP, and the Division of Consumer Affairs **joint announcement of 1,4-Dioxane Contamination Lawsuit**, Murphy administration's \$1.1 Million awards in **Urban And Community Forestry Grants**, NJDEP's **black bear educational outreach campaign**, the EPA's announcement of **\$3 Million for New Jersey to plan innovative climate projects** across the state, and the **NJ Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan Survey** with extended deadline, and other important grant and seminar registration information from the Department. Also included in this week's update is a copy of **Climate Action and the Inflation Reduction Act Guidebook**. The guidebook was developed to help local government leaders understand the climate provisions within the Inflation Reduction Act and the various strategic roles that local governments can play in maximizing the benefits of the law.

Read on...

DEP Public Outreach Campaign Offers Safety Tips As Bears Emerge From Winter Dens

Residents Urged To Properly Secure Trash And Take Other Steps To Reduce Risk Of Encounters [Read the full news release here.](#)



The Department of Environmental Protection is reminding residents and outdoor enthusiasts to take steps to reduce the potential for encounters with black bears as the animals emerge from winter dens. The DEP is also expanding its multimedia "[Know the Bear Facts](#)" outreach campaign to enhance information on ways for property owners and outdoor enthusiasts to stay safe throughout the year.

"People can reduce the likelihood of attracting bears if they diligently bear-proof their property by removing or properly securing any potential sources," **DEP Fish & Wildlife Assistant**

Commissioner David Golden said. “It is also critically important for people to *never* feed black bears. Feeding bears is dangerous, illegal and may result in bears becoming aggressive.”



Would you know what to do if you encountered a black bear in your neighborhood or outdoors while hiking or camping?

[Click here](#) to find out how to avoid encounters with black bears and how to react if an encounter occurs.

Report black bear damage or aggressive bears to your local police department or to Fish & Wildlife by calling **1-(877) WARN DEP** (1-877-927-6337). For more information about black bears in New Jersey, visit dep.nj.gov/njfw/bears/.

NJDEP Statement On East Coast Whale Mortalities

“While DEP has no reason to conclude that whale mortality is attributable to offshore wind-related activities, DEP will continue to monitor.” [NJDEP News Release on East Coast Whale Mortalities](#)

“In consultation with [NOAA Fisheries](#), the lead federal agency responsible for evaluating potential impacts to marine life and habitats from human activities in federal waters, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has been monitoring an unusual humpback whale mortality event that has been affecting Atlantic coast states since January 2016. In January of this year, the DEP began receiving concerns from stakeholders that the development of offshore wind energy infrastructure off New Jersey’s coast is causing whale mortality. All offshore wind survey activities have been permitted by NOAA Fisheries and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and deemed safe for marine mammals, i.e., no injurious activities have been permitted for offshore wind developers.

As of March 2023, no offshore wind-related construction activities have taken place in waters off the New Jersey coast, and DEP is aware of no credible evidence that offshore wind-related survey activities could cause whale mortality. While DEP has no reason to conclude that whale mortality is attributable to offshore wind-related activities, DEP will continue to monitor.

However, DEP remains concerned that ocean temperatures, which are projected to increase due to human-caused climate change caused primarily by the burning of fossil fuels, will continue to adversely impact marine mammals, including whales, their food sources, habitats, and migration patterns, as summarized in the [New Jersey Scientific Report on Climate Change](#) (Chapter 5.9). Due to these changes in ocean temperature and water chemistry, populations of marine species – including menhaden, a key whale food source—adapt by moving into new areas where conditions are more favorable. Changes that draw prey fish landward similarly increase the risk that these fish and their predators, including whales, may be drawn into conflict with human activities, such as vessel strikes that may increase whale mortality.

DEP is dedicated to the conservation, protection, and restoration of all natural resources, including aquatic habitats and the fish and wildlife that rely upon the sound management of marine environments. In fulfilling this mission, DEP administers [New Jersey’s Coastal Zone Management Program](#), regulates certain activities in state waters, including the development of energy-generating

facilities and infrastructure, and otherwise coordinates environmental reviews with federal government agencies. DEP expects that all regulated entities, including offshore wind project sponsors, pursue development objectives responsibly, including assessing potential environmental impacts and avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating likely adverse effects upon natural resources, including marine mammals and their habitats.

In addition, the Offshore Wind Research & Monitoring Initiative (RMI), a collaborative effort of the DEP and BPU, has authorized \$8.5 million in funding to date for scientific efforts to ensure the safe and ecologically responsible development of offshore wind energy. As part of the BPU's second wind energy solicitation, Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind, LLC, and Ocean Wind II, LLC committed \$10,000 per megawatt of project-nameplate capacity awarded – a total of about \$26 million – to fund regional research and ecological monitoring of the environmental impacts of offshore wind. The projects are being implemented by a variety of academic and research entities and include work to evaluate and minimize impacts to a variety of marine wildlife, including whales.” [NJDEP News Release - NJDEP Statement on East Coast Whale Mortalities](#)

For information from NOAA on humpback whale mortalities, visit [2016–2023 Humpback Whale Unusual Mortality Event Along the Atlantic Coast | NOAA Fisheries](#)

For a DEP microsite on whale mortalities, visit <https://dep.nj.gov/humpback-whale-unusual-mortality-event/>

Follow NJDEP Commissioner LaTourette on Twitter and Instagram @shawnlatur and follow the DEP on Twitter @NewJerseyDEP, Facebook @newjerseydep, Instagram @nj.dep and LinkedIn @newjerseydep

AG Platkin, NJDEP, and Division of Consumer Affairs Announce 1,4-Dioxane Contamination Lawsuit

State's Complaint Seeks Compensation for Natural Resource Damages and Consumer Fraud [Read the full news release here.](#)

Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Division of Consumer Affairs (DCA) today announced the filing of a lawsuit against the Dow Chemical Company (Dow), Ferro Corporation (Ferro), and Vulcan Materials Company (Vulcan), as well as other unnamed companies, for widespread 1,4-dioxane contamination across New Jersey. The suit alleges both environmental and consumer fraud claims, seeking natural resource damages, punitive damages, and other damages and penalties.

The lawsuit seeks to hold defendants accountable for injuries to the State's natural resources as a result of releases of 1,4-dioxane, a highly toxic and persistent contaminant, into the environment. The lawsuit alleges that the defendants “knowingly and willfully manufactured, promoted, and/or sold products containing 1,4-dioxane” in New Jersey despite knowing that the chemical was harmful and “would inevitably reach surface water and groundwater in substantial quantities, significantly pollute drinking water supplies, render drinking water unusable and unsafe, threaten the public health and welfare, and harm other natural resources, as it has done with respect to the water resources in New Jersey.”

From the 1950s through 1990s, 1,4-dioxane, a synthetic chemical, was primarily used as a stabilizer for chlorinated solvents. Dow and Ferro were the main manufacturers of the chemical, and Dow and Vulcan manufactured solvents containing 1,4-dioxane. It has been listed as an animal carcinogen for over 50 years and is classified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency as “likely carcinogenic to humans.” According to the complaint, 1,4-dioxane can also cause kidney and liver damage, among other adverse human health effects. Even at low levels, long-term exposure increases the risk of cancer.

“In New Jersey, we recognize our unique natural resources as precious, and we make companies that harm them pay. Today’s lawsuit demonstrates our ongoing commitment to forcing polluters to address the damage they cause to our environment,” **said Attorney General Platkin.** “If anyone threatens public health, contaminates our environment, or harms natural resources, the State of New Jersey is going to hold them accountable. The costs of cleaning up this forever chemical should be borne by the defendants in this lawsuit, not New Jersey taxpayers.”

“The Department of Environmental Protection is continually working to identify potential sources of 1,4 dioxane that may adversely affect our natural resources, and we will take every appropriate action to protect public health, safety, and the environment from 1,4-dioxane contamination,” **said Shawn LaTourette, Commissioner of DEP.** “The manufacturers of 1,4 dioxane knew full well that this chemical could contaminate our water supplies. Together with the Attorney General, DEP will hold them responsible for this contamination, accountable for the costs of investigation and cleanup, and ensure that the public is compensated for injuries to their natural resources.”

[Read the full news release here.](#)

Murphy Administration Awards \$1.1 Million In Urban And Community Forestry Grants To Enhance Management Of New Jersey’s Urban Trees And Forests [Read the full news release here.](#)

The Department of Environmental Protection is awarding 23 Urban and Community Forestry grants totaling \$1,106,934 to local governments non-profit organizations to help municipalities advance the stewardship of their urban and community trees and forests, Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette has announced.

Awarded through a competitive process since 2000, the DEP’s Urban and Community Forestry grants assist in the establishment and growth of local, self-sustaining urban and community forestry programs. With proper care and maintenance, trees in community and urban settings can be healthy and live many decades. The announcement was made on the [International Day of Forests](#), which the United Nations General Assembly established in 2012 to raise awareness about the importance of forests.

“The stewardship of urban trees has never been more important than now, especially as New Jersey continues to experience the adverse impacts of a changing climate,” **Commissioner LaTourette said.** “These grants will help improve the urban tree canopy throughout the state providing ecosystem

services, reducing heat island effects and improving human health. Proper planning and management of trees and forests also mitigates storm water and other flooding, as well as air pollution.”



Funding for the 2022 grants comes from the “Treasure Our Trees” state license plate sales and the [New Jersey Forest Service’s No Net Loss Compensatory Reforestation Program](#).

“Trees and forests are important to New Jerseyans on so many levels. Trees store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases and energy use, which lessens the impacts of climate change and strengthens the resilience of towns and cities, **said John Cecil, Assistant Commissioner for State Parks, Forests & Historic Sites**. “It is a priority of the New Jersey Forest Service to not only plant trees in communities and urban areas, but to ensure their long-term survival through proper planning, care and management.”

PHOTO: Forester Levon Bigelow inspecting a tree planted under a NJUCF stewardship grant.

Reforestation and tree planting grants totaling \$598,216 have been awarded to:

- Bergen County:** Bogota (\$40,000), Englewood (\$66,830)
- Burlington County:** Moorestown (\$8,000)
- Hunterdon County:** Clinton Town (\$25,000)
- Middlesex County:** Highland Park (\$150,000) and East Brunswick Township (\$30,000)
- Monmouth County:** Interlaken Shade Tree Commission (\$42,150)
- Morris County:** Pequannock Township Department of Public Works (\$50,000)
- Passaic County:** Clifton (\$49,026)
- Somerset County:** Somerville (\$137,210)

Resiliency planning grants totaling \$508,718 have been awarded to:

- Bergen County:** Ramsey (\$20,000)
- Camden County:** Haddonfield Shade Tree Commission (\$50,000)
- Essex County:** Caldwell (\$11,258) and Essex County (\$20,000)
- Hunterdon County:** Lambertville (\$37,000) and Readington Township Environmental Commission (\$50,000)
- Mercer County:** Trenton (\$50,000) and Princeton (\$50,000)
- Morris County:** Morris County Park Commission (\$50,000)
- Monmouth County:** Long Branch (\$50,000) and Millstone Township (\$50,000)
- Warren County:** Lopatcong (\$46,145) and Belvidere (\$24,315)

[Read the full news release here.](#)

For more information about the New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry Program, including details on accreditation with the program, visit www.communityforestry.nj.gov

For more about Urban and Community Forestry Stewardship grants and related programs, visit www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/forest/urbanandcommunity/grants.html

EPA Announces \$3 Million For New Jersey to Plan Innovative Climate Projects Across the State

Funds from EPA’s New Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program were made possible by President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act [Read the full news release here.](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it will award \$3 million for New Jersey to plan innovative strategies to cut climate pollution and build clean energy economies across the state. Earlier this month, EPA announced the availability of the funds, which represent the first funding going to states, local governments, Tribes, and territories from the **Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG)** program created by President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act. Later this year, EPA will launch a competition for \$4.6 billion in funding to implement projects and initiatives included in the plans. New Jersey will be eligible to receive that implementation funding also because it has opted in to receive the planning grant.

New Jersey is among the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico that are eligible to receive \$3 million each in EPA Climate Pollution Reduction planning grant funds. New Jersey will use the funds to augment planning already underway in the state in collaboration with partners, including municipalities statewide, and conduct meaningful engagement, including with overburdened communities throughout the state that are often the most impacted by climate change. New Jersey met its 2020 greenhouse gas reduction goal years ahead of schedule and has multiple efforts underway to mitigate the impacts of climate change. New Jersey will use these funds to support its ongoing effort to achieve a low carbon economy and reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. This includes expanding clean energy infrastructure and building resilient communities across the state.

[Read the full news release here.](#)

“New Jersey thanks its congressional delegation and the EPA for once again prioritizing and supporting innovative climate action,” **said New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy.** “Now more than ever, it’s clear that we must confront the urgency of the worsening climate crisis by leveraging every resource and tool at our disposal. Made possible by President Biden’s historic Inflation Reduction Act, these funds will provide support for updates to our foundational climate plans and allow us to further prioritize and implement our accelerated clean energy goals and ongoing efforts to build resilient communities across the state.”

"New Jersey is excited to advance its critical work of reducing and responding to climate change in partnership with our colleagues at USEPA whose support will bring more resources to our collective efforts," **said State Commissioner of Environmental Protection Shawn M. LaTourette.** "This historic program will enable us to accelerate New Jersey's Global Warming Response Act initiatives, which are centered on planning and implementing measures that reduce emissions of climate pollutants, improve air quality and public health, and better serve our communities.

About the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Program

The CPRG planning grants will support states, territories, Tribes, municipalities, and air agencies, in the creation of comprehensive, innovative strategies for reducing pollution and ensuring that investments maximize benefits, especially for low-income and disadvantaged communities. These climate plans will include:

- Greenhouse gas emissions inventories;
- Emissions projections and reduction targets;
- Economic, health, and social benefits, including to low-income and disadvantaged communities;
- Plans to leverage other sources of federal funding including the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act;
- Workforce needs to support decarbonization and a clean energy economy; and
- Future government staffing and budget needs.

In program guidance released earlier this month, EPA describes how the agency intends to award and manage CPRG funds to eligible entities, including states, metropolitan areas, Tribes, and territories.

Next Steps

This funding for climate planning will be followed later this year by a national grant competition for \$4.6 billion in implementation grant funding that will support the expeditious implementation of investment-ready policies created by the CPRG planning grants, programs, and projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the near term. Through the CPRG program, EPA will support the development and deployment of technologies and solutions that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and harmful air pollution, as well as transition America to a clean energy economy that benefits all Americans.

By summer 2023, EPA Regional Offices expect to award and administer the funding agreements once all legal and administrative requirements are satisfied.

[More information on the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants](#)

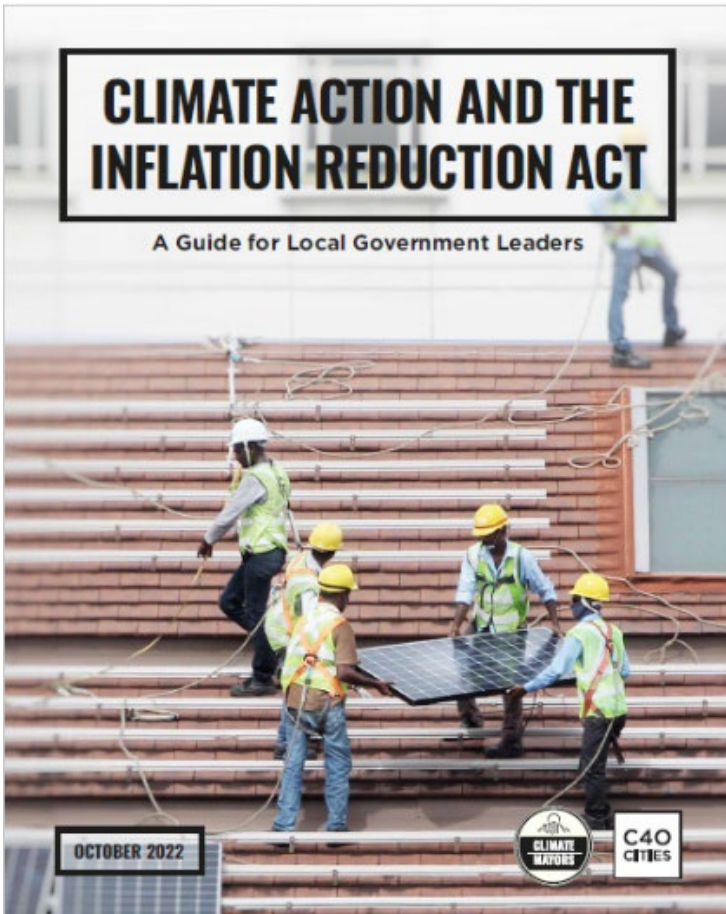
[CPRG Planning Grant Program Guidances](#)

[Sign up for notifications about the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants](#)

[More information about New Jersey's Global Warming Response Act, and the state's pathways for reducing emissions of climate pollutants.](#)

Climate Action and the Inflation Reduction Act Guidebook

A Guide for Local Government Leaders



The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) is the largest investment by Congress to date to address climate change. With \$369 billion for climate solutions and environmental justice, it represents a massive infusion of federal funding intended to leverage billions more in private capital to supercharge the clean energy transition and put us on a path to achieve an estimated 40% emissions reduction by 2030.

The IRA was passed into law through the budget reconciliation process, which means that its provisions are financial—not regulatory. Coming on the heels of the American Rescue Plan and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, it is a very different kind of federal funding package, with the majority of its climate-related funding in the form of tax credits and financing for business and individuals, and smaller amounts available as grants or direct payments to governments and

other entities. The ultimate impact of the IRA—on climate pollution, environmental justice, job creation, and strengthening the economy—will depend on if and how businesses, individuals, organizations, and public agencies take advantage of these incentives.

The guidebook was developed to help mayors and their staff to understand the climate provisions included in the IRA, the opportunities for local government, and the multiple roles that we can play in maximizing the benefits of the law while actively minimizing the real and potential harms posed to frontline communities exposed to fossil fuel infrastructure and development.

The guidebook details the major programs that fund local government directly, those available administered through states, as well as the consumer and business tax credits. For each, it describes what the funding can be used for, how it will flow, and the process and timeline for accessing resources.

Get the [Climate Action and Inflation Reduction Act Guidebook](#).

If you are unable to open the link above find your copy of the guidebook in attachments.

The Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan Survey Deadline Extended

The Survey Deadline Has Been Extended to Friday March 31st.

The New Jersey Interagency Council on Climate Resilience (Interagency Council) is seeking public input on how the state should address statewide climate action priorities and concerns as part of the Interagency Council's development of a series of plans outlining how state agencies will incorporate climate resilience into their policies, programs, and regulations.

The series of documents, known as Resilience Action Plans, will build on the Statewide Climate Change Resilience Strategy released in 2021 and provide more detail on how the strategy's recommendations are being implemented. The Resilience Action Plans will discuss both anticipated climate impacts as well as actions that will increase each participating agency's resilience to that natural hazard.

New Jersey's first Resilience Action Plan, to be released later this year, will focus on state agency efforts to address increasing extreme heat events resulting from climate change, such as those experienced during the summer of 2022.

Complete the NJ Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan Survey Today!

We invite you to provide feedback via the Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan survey and view recording of our webinars, and access relevant materials regarding this initiative by visiting <https://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/resilience-action-plans.html>.

Registration is open for NJDEP's 2023 Virtual Harmful Algal Bloom Summit

The Virtual Summit Will Be Held On Thursday, March 30 from 9AM - 2:30PM RSVP Now!

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection is pleased to invite you to the 2023 Harmful Algal Bloom Virtual Summit on **Thursday, March 30th from 9-2:30** via Microsoft Teams. Please check the [Harmful Algal Bloom Summit website](#) for the agenda in the coming days. Should you not be able to attend the live event due to schedule constraints, the entire summit will be recorded and posted online. Please share this registration link with all who are interested.

Please RSVP to the event by completing the “Going” button in the RSVP section. For tracking purposes, it is requested that each registrant complete their own individual form.

The Microsoft Teams meeting link will be sent to registrants one hour prior to the meeting.

Questions may be directed to: Jessica Cobb at jessica.cobb@dep.nj.gov

Jersey Clean Communities Grant

PURPOSE OF FUNDING

To provide financial assistance for the implementation of litter abatement programs in eligible municipalities and counties within the State

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Rolling

[Click here for Grant Eligibility and Qualifications.](#)

For or information contact New Jersey Clean Communities at 609-989-5900 or njcc@njclean.org.

Stormwater Competitive Grants and Resilience/Stormwater Utility Feasibility Technical Assistance Grants



PURPOSE OF FUNDING

To modernize stormwater management systems and to provide technical assistance to municipal, county and utility authorities to plan to become more resilient, including conducting feasibility studies



for forming stormwater utilities and resilience planning for local governments impacted by Tropical Storm Ida, that will focus on strategies to better manage the impacts of stormwater.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

September 14 for the Stormwater Competitive Grant Program.

September 23 for the Technical Assistance and Stormwater Resilience Planning for Ida-affected communities.

[Click here for Eligibility, Qualifications and Application Procedures.](#)

For More Information or to Request an Application, Contact
stormwatergrantsinfo@dep.nj.gov or resilientnj@dep.nj.gov

Wetland Restoration Opportunity

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Freshwater Wetlands Mitigation Council is sending out Request for Proposals (RFP) for wetland restoration with a tidal component in the Atlantic Water Region. The RFP is linked to the Councils website with instructions and time frames.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE

Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 5:00 PM

Proposals should be emailed to Faelyn Meyers at faelyn.meyers@dep.nj.gov along with mailed to address provided in the instructions.

[View the Request for Proposal \(RFP\)](#)

Thank you for reading to the end. If you have questions regarding any item in this week's update, write to us at localgov@dep.nj.gov.

Best regards,

Keiona Miller
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