



EPA Region 7 Communities Information Digest

July 8, 2016

Welcome to the latest EPA Region 7 Digest!

EPA Region 7's Communities Information Digest provides communities with the latest news about funding and technical assistance opportunities, webinars, conferences, and other activities related to human health and the environment.

An * indicates a new item.

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Muscatine, IA selected for EPA's Greening America's Communities



Check out the regional headlines to learn more!

CDC launches new Harmful Algal Bloom website



The new [Harmful Algal Bloom website](#) provides information about harmful algal blooms and associated illnesses for the general public.

Headlines

National

***Volkswagen to Spend Up to \$14.7 Billion to Settle Allegations of Cheating Emissions Tests and Deceiving Customers on 2.0 Liter Diesel Vehicles**

Volkswagen will offer consumers a buyback and lease termination for nearly 500,000 model year 2009-2015 2.0 liter diesel vehicles sold or leased in the U.S., and spend up to \$10.03 billion to compensate consumers. In addition, the companies will spend \$4.7 billion to mitigate the pollution from these cars and invest in green vehicle technology.

***U.S. EPA to Help Six Communities Develop Sustainable Design Strategies**

EPA announced it has selected six cities for technical assistance with sustainable design strategies under its Greening America's Communities (GAC) program. The 2016 cities chosen for assistance are: Columbia, SC; Brownsville, TX; Oklahoma City, OK; Muscatine, IA; Honolulu, HI; and Multnomah County, OR.

***During Obama Administration, USDA Has Made Most Significant Food Safety Updates Since 1950s**

Over the past seven years, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has instituted some of the most significant updates to our country's food safety system since the 1950s, leading to a 12 percent drop in foodborne illness associated with meat, poultry and processed egg products from 2009 to 2015.

***U.S. Department of Transportation Announces Columbus as Winner of Smart City Challenge**

Columbus, OH has been selected as the winner of the U.S. Department of Transportation's (U.S. DOT)'s Smart City Challenge. As winner of the Challenge, Columbus will receive up to \$40 million from U.S. DOT and up to \$10 million from Paul G. Allen's Vulcan Inc. to supplement the \$90 million that the city has already raised.

***During National Pollinator Week, USDA Announces Key Measures to Improve Pollinator Health**

A review of USDA's most popular conservation program found that farmers and ranchers across the country are creating at least 15 million acres of healthy forage and habitat for pollinators, and the department has also entered into a new partnership with leading honey bee organizations to ensure future conservation projects provide benefits to these species.

***New Resource: EPA Drought Resilience and Water Conservation Technical Brief**

In many areas of the United States, the frequency, intensity, and duration of drought events are increasing. This pattern is expected to continue and to shift outside of historical trends, making forecasting our water quality and supply more difficult. EPA is conducting research and working with stakeholders to better understand the impact of drought on water quality and availability, and to provide solutions to help communities conserve water.

***New Report: Natural Defenses in Action**

This report highlights the important role that natural and nature-based approaches can play in reducing the mounting risks to our communities from weather and climate-related natural hazards. The report highlights how properly managed ecosystems and well-designed policies can help reduce disaster risk in ways that are good for both people and nature.

***EPA Extends Public Comment Period on Draft EJ 2020 Action Agenda**

EJ 2020 is EPA's overarching strategic plan to advance environmental justice for the years 2016 to 2020. EPA is undertaking this strategy to better incorporate environmental justice into everything we do, cultivate strong partnerships to improve on-the-ground results, and chart a path forward for achieving better environmental outcomes and reducing disparities in the nation's most overburdened communities.. **Comments due July 28.**

***Now Available for Public Comment: NCA4 Draft Outline**

The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) is seeking public comments on the proposed content and scope of the Fourth National Climate Assessment (NCA4). **Comments due July 29.**

[Water Infrastructure and Finance Innovation Act Public Comment Period is Open](#)

EPA published the Water Infrastructure and Finance Innovation Act (WIFIA) Information Collection Request and draft application materials for public comment. The purpose of the WIFIA program is to provide federal credit assistance in the form of direct loans and loan guarantees to eligible clean water and drinking water projects. **Comments due July 22.**

Region 7 News

[*Muscatine, Iowa, to Receive Technical Assistance for Sustainability through EPA's Greening America's Communities Program](#)

Muscatine, Iowa, is one of six communities selected to receive technical assistance with sustainable design strategies under EPA's Greening America's Communities (GAC) program for 2016.

[*EPA Settlement with Owner of Fertilizer Plant in Culbertson, Neb., to Resolve Risk Management Program Issues](#)

The owner of an agricultural fertilizer plant in southwest Nebraska has agreed to comply with federal Risk Management Program (RMP) requirements as part of a settlement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency related to its storage and use of large quantities of anhydrous ammonia.

[*Green Infrastructure at Fort Riley](#)

Researchers with EPA's Net Zero Program are working with the U.S. Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas Unified School District 475, and others to test and demonstrate green infrastructure technology, such as permeable pavement, at Fort Riley in Kansas.

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Funding & Technical Assistance Opportunities

[BIA Energy and Mineral Development Program](#) **July 8**

[EPA 2016 Targeted Air Shed Grant Program](#) **July 11**

[*North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grant](#) **July 14**

[2016 Nsedu Obot Witherspoon \(NOW\) Youth Leadership Award](#) **July 15**

[Historic Preservation Fund Grants to Underrepresented Communities](#) **July 15**

[EPA Building the Capacity of Tribes to Address the Health Impacts of Climate Change Program](#) **July 15**

[Technical Assistance for Improved Protection of Drinking Water Sources](#) **July 15**

[HUD Community Compass Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Program](#) July 19

[Department of the Interior National Climate Change & Wildlife Science Center Program](#) July 19

[Partners for Places Fall 2016 Grant Cycle](#) July 25

*[Communicating the Connection: Transportation and Public Health](#) July 25

*[Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program](#) July 29

*[Land and Water Conservation Fund State and Local Assistance Program](#) July 29

*[HALS Challenge: Documenting National Register Listed Landscapes](#) July 31

[USDA Rural Development Socially-Disadvantaged Groups Grant](#) August 1

[NEA Our Town Grants](#) August 1

[Long-term Exposure to Air Pollution and Development of Cardiovascular Disease Research Grant](#) August 2

[Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Food Safety Challenge Area](#) August 3

[Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Water for Agriculture Challenge Area](#) August 4

[EPA FY2017 Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant](#) August 10

[NOAA Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency Grants Program](#) August 16

[Tribal Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program](#) August 23

[Vehicle Technologies Multi-Topic Funding Opportunity](#) August 29

[Mid-America Regional Council Solid Waste Management District grant](#) August 31

[EPA National Wetland Condition Assessment Campus Research Challenge](#) September 30

[Asthma Empowerment Collaborations to Reduce Childhood Asthma Disparities Letters of Intent](#): October 16, Applications due: November 16

Ongoing Opportunities

[Tribal Climate Change Funding Guide](#) – Regularly updated grants and programs

[EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Program](#)

[USDA Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#) – Contact Local USDA Service Center

[Apply for a Fruit Tree Planting Foundation Orchard in Your Community](#)

[American Planning Association Community Planning Assistance Teams](#)

[Climate Solutions University Adaptation Plan Assistance](#)

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Meetings, Conferences, & Events

[Missouri Brownfields Conference](#) July 11, Osage Beach, MO

*[Sustainable Transportation Summit](#) July 11-12, Washington, D.C.

[Climate-Smart Conservation with Scenario Planning](#) July 11-15, Shepherdstown, WV

*[Congressional Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency EXPO + Policy Forum](#) July 12, Washington, D.C.

[Local Leaders Council Policy Forum 2016](#) July 18-19, Washington, D.C.

[Climate Strategies Forum - East Coast](#) July 18-20, Arlington, VA

[G-WOW "Hear the Water's Voice"](#) July 18-21, Ashland, WI

[Earth Educators' Rendezvous](#) July 18-22, Madison, WI

[Nebraska Floodplain and Stormwater Managers' Association Conference](#) July 21, Kearney, NE

*[SWCS-71st Annual Conference: Managing Great River Landscapes](#) July 24-27, Louisville, KY

[Arkansas Water Resources Center Annual Water Conference](#) July 26-27, Fayetteville, AR

[Urban Waters National Training Workshop](#) July 26-28, Arlington, VA

[NOAA Climate Stewards Free Regional Climate Education Workshop](#) August 3-4, Charleston, SC

[Kansas Environmental Conference](#) August 9-11, Hutchinson, KS

[North American Symposium on Climate Adaptation](#) August 16-18, New York, NY

[2016 International Open Streets Summit](#) August 18-21, Portland, OR

*[StormCom: The Surface Water Quality Conference and Expo](#) August 22-25, Indianapolis, IN

[US Fish and Wildlife Service: Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment](#) August 23-25, Shepherdstown, WV

[National Nonpoint Source Monitoring Workshop](#) August 23-25, Salt Lake City, UT

*[National Working Summit on Transportation in Rural America](#) September 7-9, Denver, CO

[2016 Missouri Recycling Association \(MORA\) Recycling Conference](#) September 12-14, St. Louis, MO

[Pro Walk/Pro Bike/Pro Place](#) September 12-15, Vancouver, BC

[Institute for Tribal Environmental Partners \(ITEP\) Training: Climate Change Adaptation Planning](#) September 13-15, Nebraska City, NE

[National Reclaiming Vacant Properties Conference](#) September 28-30, Baltimore, MD

[18th Annual Stormwater Conference](#) October 2-6, Oklahoma City, OK

[Green Business Engagement National Network Summit](#) October 19-20, St. Louis, MO

[Toxic Release Inventory \(TRI\) Conference](#) October 19-21, Washington, D.C.

[National Training Conference on the Toxics Release Inventory and Environmental Conditions in Communities](#) October 19-21, Washington, D.C.

[American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Exposition](#) October 29-November 2, Denver, CO

[CitiesAlive: 14th Annual Green Roof and Wall Conference](#) November 1-4, Washington, D.C.

[New Partners for Smart Growth Conference](#) February 2-4, 2017, St. Louis, MO

*[2017 National Brownfields Training Conference](#) December 5-7, 2017, Pittsburgh, PA

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Webinars and Conference Calls

***Recovery of Utility Fixed Costs: Utility, Consumer, Environmental, and Economist Perspectives July 8, 12-1:30 p.m. CST**

The electric sector in the United States is seeing significant changes in technologies, customer desires, load growth, and federal and state policies and regulations. This webinar, hosted by Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, is one in a series that is highlighting a series of reports on the future of electric utility regulation and business models, and achieving a reliable, affordable power system.

EJSCREEN 2016 Public Release Webinar July 11, 2-3:30 p.m. CST

EJSCREEN has new features, including National Air Toxic Assessment environmental indicators for cancer risk, respiratory, and diesel PM, scalable maps, the ability to save sessions and print maps from the home screen, side-by-side views of maps, the addition of Puerto Rico and more. Register now for one of three webinar previews of the tool's new features, and to share your EJSCREEN experiences with EPA and your EJ colleagues.

***Grading the Walking Movement July 12, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

America Walks, in partnership with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership and YMCA of the USA, recently released 2016 State Report Cards. The report cards provide a snapshot of how supportive each state is of walking, bicycling and physical activity for children and adults. Attendees will learn about the development of the report cards and hear from two YMCAs on how they plan to use the information.

***Just Add Water: Incorporating Water Efficiency to Take Energy Savings to the Next Level July 12, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

Learn how to integrate water into your energy management planning by assessing your facility's water use and calculating a water balance. Find ways to investigate and detect leaks throughout your facility for significant savings. Hear about the tools and resources developed by the EPA's WaterSense program to help tackle your water use.

***Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy in Rural America July 12, 1-2:00 p.m. CST**

The U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Department of Agriculture will host a webinar on their new Rural Energy Savings Program and how to apply.

Biological Indicators of Soil Health: What they are, how they are measured, and what is on the horizon? July 12, 1-2:00 p.m. CST

Participants in this webinar will learn about the biological importance related to soil health management. Advantages and limitations for a variety of biological soil health indicators will be discussed including how they are measured and may be interpreted.

***Bottomland Hardwood Restoration July 12, 2-4:00 p.m. CST**

This webinar from the Association of State Wetland Managers will include presentations on best available science and current practice in bottomland hardwood restoration, and afforested stands now between establishment and maturity but also addresses management options for other important habitat components.

***Teleconference Call on EPA's Partial Settlement with Volkswagen July 13, 12-1 p.m. CST**

EPA will host a briefing for environmental justice stakeholders regarding the agency's partial settlement with Volkswagen, where you will have the opportunity to hear from senior officials about this settlement. Mitigation work that will be done under the settlement is of importance to communities affected by diesel emissions because states and tribes have the option to participate by receiving funding for certain clean air projects.

Participant Dial-in Number: (877) 290-8017

Conference ID#: 46701270

***Association of State Wetland Managers Soils Training Webinar: Basics of Hydric Soils July 13, 2-4:00 p.m. CST**

This first webinar in a monthly four-part series on hydric soils will focus on four initial topics: soil formation, horizonation v. simple processes; soil texture and structure; and describing soil color. This webinar is designed to 1) help wetland managers better understand hydric soils, 2) describe how to fill out the hydric soils data sheet and 3) provide guidance on how to interpret it.

***Final Technical Guidance for Assessing Environmental Justice in Regulatory Analysis July 14, 2-3:00 p.m. CST**

The webinar will be a presentation on the framework laid out in the EJ Technical Guidance, which directs EPA analysts to assess whether environmental justice concerns exist prior to rulemaking, followed by a brief question and answer session.

***CEIP Design Details Proposal - Overview for Community and Environmental Justice Groups July 19, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

During the webinar, EPA will provide a brief overview presentation about the proposed details of the Clean Energy Incentive Program and then will invite participants to ask questions.

***Portfolio Manager 101 July 19, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

Learn about the core functionality of EPA's ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® tool. Attendees will learn how to: navigate Portfolio Manager®; add a property and enter details about it; enter energy and water consumption data; and generate template performance reports to assess progress.

***Portfolio Manager 201 July 20, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

Continue to learn about EPA's ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® tool, with a deeper dive into more advanced functionalities such as: editing property data; correcting and updating property use details; using the data quality checker; and sharing property data.

***EPA: Re-Powering America's Lands July 20, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

The EPA will host a webinar on resources available to help build community solar projects on brownfields.

Investing in People and Place: Building Wealth and Equity to Advance the Equitable Development Agenda July 20, 12:30-2:00 p.m. CST

Tune in for a discussion among leading-edge practitioners about how their programs promote wealth building, job placement and training, job creation, and increase access to financing and supports for small businesses and social enterprises.

***Portfolio Manager 301 July 21, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

With a good background on the basic functionality of EPA's ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® tool, learn about some advanced features including: using spreadsheet upload templates to update property data; setting goals and targets to plan energy improvements for properties; creating custom reports; and using the Sustainable Buildings Checklist.

***Leveraging Resources for Brownfields Revitalization July 26, 12-1:30 p.m. CST**

This webinar will discuss available tools to assist communities in leveraging resources to address community revitalization goals and challenges. It will include a presentation on Dubuque, Iowa's successful efforts to leverage its own resources to attract other federal, state, public and private sources of funding and technical assistance.

***New Template for Developing Water Quality Standards for Wetlands July 26, 1-2:00 p.m. CST**

This webinar will provide information on a new template tool to help states, territories, and authorized tribes develop protective and comprehensive water quality standards for wetlands.

***Project Development for Long-Term Tribal Energy July 27, 12-2:00 p.m. CST**

This webcast will cover how to determine project savings and production potential estimates for tribal renewable energy projects, as well as how to define project options, refine and implement the project, and plan for operations and maintenance.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Capacity Building In Action: Sanitary Surveys July 28, 12-1:00 p.m. CST

The topic of this webinar is to discuss how the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). DWSRF can be used to fund sanitary surveys, and how state programs are collaborating to address capacity concerns at drinking water systems through the use of sanitary surveys.

***Benchmarking Water/Wastewater Treatment Facilities in Portfolio Manager July 28, 12-1:00 p.m. CST**

Attendees will learn how to measure and track energy use and carbon dioxide emission reductions in water and wastewater treatment plants to establish baseline energy use, prioritize investments, set goals, and track improvements over time.

Plastics Recycling Works: Facts and Figures to Support a Thriving Industry August 9, 12-1:00 p.m. CST

This webinar will provide an overview of the environmental benefits of recycling, market trends, brand owner sustainability goals, and future areas of growth in the plastics recycling industry.

Recycling Rigid Plastics Beyond Bottles: Resources to Support MRFs and Municipalities September 6, 12-1:00 p.m. CST

This webinar will provide an overview of the resources, developed by the Association of Plastics Recyclers for MRFs and Municipalities to support the expansion of plastics collected.

2015 PET Container Recycling Rate Report Overview October 18, 12-1:00 p.m. CST

This webinar will serve as an Executive Summary, featuring data and analyses from the *Report on Postconsumer PET Container Recycling Activity in 2015*.

[2015 National Postconsumer Plastics Bottle Recycling Rate Report Overview](#)

November 15, 12-1:00 p.m. CST

This webinar will serve as an Executive Summary, featuring data and analyses from the 2015 National Postconsumer Plastics Bottle Recycling Rate Report.

On-Going and On-Demand Webinars

[EPA Computer Training Helps Water and Wastewater Utilities Build Resilience](#)

The training covers several topics including: identifying and funding potential hazard mitigation projects, developing and updating an Emergency Response Plan (ERP), coordinating mutual aid and assistance during emergencies, conducting damage assessments, and many more.

[EPA Sensible Steps to Healthier School Environments 10-Part Webinar Series](#)

Student Curriculum: Recipes for Healthy Kids, and a Healthy Environment

Each 45-minute lesson empowers kids to take steps in their everyday lives to improve the environment for their communities and reduce their environmental risk.

[LeanPath presents: Five Food Waste Myths to Debunk – Now!](#)

This webinar will explore five myths about food waste and the facts you need to debunk them in your kitchen.

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