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# Your Winter Report

## Victory: We reined in an illegal air polluter

### Historic lawsuit means cleaner air for Pittsburgh

In 2015, PennEnvironment filed litigation under the federal Clean Air Act against the largest steel company in the world, ArcelorMittal. We uncovered hundreds of environmental violations at the company's coal processing facility located just outside of Pittsburgh in the city of Monessen, Pa.

Unfortunately, residents of many surrounding towns have felt the impact of the ArcelorMittal facility's disregard for pollution control. Soot, acidic gases and noxious odors coated these areas since the decades-old facility restarted in April 2014.

"Ever since the Monessen plant reopened, local residents have had their quality of life diminished, have endured ongoing odors and soot, and have feared for their health," said David Masur, executive director of PennEnvironment. "It is not acceptable that the world's largest steel company hasn't found a way to comply with our cornerstone environmental laws."

### Constant and chronic violations

Our lawsuit revealed hard evidence showing the dangers of the facility, including:

- Often operating days and weeks at a time without using a key air pollution control device.
- More than 225 violations of pollution limits meant to minimize emissions of hydrogen sulfide, sulfur dioxide, and hazardous particulate matter.
- Failure to install a key monitoring device required to track the amount of sulfur coming from the facility's flare and smokestacks.



Carmine Bloise

▲ PennEnvironment Executive Director David Masur (left), was joined by local residents to announce the organization's lawsuit against ArcelorMittal, the largest steel company in the world.

Residents felt the effects of the facility regularly. "The quality of air was declining to the point where it became unbearable to be in your own home," said Viktoriya Maroz, a resident of Donora, Pa.

Now, PennEnvironment's lawsuit has garnered the attention of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S.

Department of Justice, and Pennsylvania environmental officials and all three have joined PennEnvironment in settlement negotiations with the company. The goal of the settlement negotiations is to develop solutions to bring the plant into sustained compliance with Clean Air Act emissions standards, and to embody those solutions in a binding legal agreement.



Logan Tilley



### take action now

Support PennEnvironment's efforts to rein in illegal polluters. Donate today at:

**PennEnvironment.org**

◀ PennEnvironment can stand up to illegal polluters like the ArcelorMittal plant (left) with your financial support.

## You make the difference

While Election Day 2016 is many months behind us, if you're like me you're still trying to wrap your head around all the changes facing our environment, health, and the policy initiatives we care about under the new White House and U.S. Congress.

If anything, the election forced us all to do some self-reflecting to solidify our resolve for what we stand for, what we're willing to defend, and how to build a powerful and bigger movement going forward.

This means we'll need more of your activism, engagement and support than ever before. I hope you'll consider reaching out to us to volunteer a bit of your time and energy, and continuing your financial support so that we can remain in this fight for the long haul. We've been through real challenges in the past—and together, we've successfully come out the other side defending and protecting our environment.

Thanks for everything you do,



David Masur, Executive Director

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## Recent action

### Path to carbon-free transportation

Given that America's transportation system is currently the largest source of climate pollution in the United States, PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center released a new study, "50 Steps Toward Carbon-Free Transportation," which can help put the nation on a path toward zero-carbon modes of transit.

The report highlights existing policies—from excessive spending on highway expansion to outdated rules that hamper transportation innovations—that hold America back in the fight against global warming.

It also proposes 50 common-sense policy solutions that can reduce global warming emissions and benefit communities across the country by incentivizing alternatives to driving, supporting the growth of walkable communities, and ensuring that all cars on the road are as clean as possible.

### Solar energy programs under attack

While we all know that solar power is clean and incredibly popular with the public, our solar programs face growing attacks from fossil fuel interests that feel threatened by the growing clean energy sector.

To uncover these threats, PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center released a new report, "Blocking the Sun," which shows how electric utility companies, fossil fuel interests, and powerful industry front-groups funded by the Koch Brothers and others have begun to chip away at the key policies that have put solar energy on the map in the U.S. Attacks include higher surcharges or fees for solar customers, roll-backs of renewable energy laws, or increased regulatory burdens for solar customers.

PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center is calling on elected officials to do more to encourage solar and take advantage of this growing economic sector.



Jael Sims, (left) from the solar company Solar States, gave PennEnvironment Field Director Elwyn Corby (right) a tour of their new rooftop solar installation at the historical Crane Arts Center in Philadelphia.

# After Flint, protecting PA from lead in drinking water

Peter Dutton via Flickr, CC BY 2.0

## PA needs to “get the lead out”

Over the past year, the nation watched in horror as the tragedy in Flint, Mich., unfolded, uncovering the fact that an entire community’s drinking water was contaminated with lead.

But as we quickly learned, the problem extends well beyond Flint—media stories showed that communities across Pennsylvania and the nation are facing many of the same threats found in Flint.

Even though many Americans believed that the threat of lead in our drinking water was something addressed decades ago, new data showed that nearly 2,000 communities found in every state across the country have confirmed lead in the water coming out of residents’ taps.

In response, PennEnvironment has launched a campaign to finally “get the lead out” and protect our families and communities in Pennsylvania from the threat of lead in our drinking water.

Our efforts started with protecting the most vulnerable Pennsylvanians—our children. And given that the medical community says that lead at any level is unsafe for our kids, PennEnvironment started pressing the state’s largest school district—the School District of Philadelphia (SDP)—to make comprehensive changes to how they test and remediate for lead in our schools’ drinking fountains and faucets.

## The right steps to lead-free water

The first step must be that Philadelphia’s schools should regularly, swiftly and properly test all water outlets used for drinking or cooking—and immediately remove from service those where the water contains lead above health-based standards. And SDP must provide the public with easy access to specific testing data and the status of remediation plans.

PennEnvironment also called on the school district to become a national leader on

reducing the threat of lead in drinking water, by advocating that they set new, lower standards for lead and make them some of the strongest in the country.

Already, thanks to supporters like you, we’re seeing success for our efforts: SDP recently announced that they are going to roll out comprehensive testing for lead in drinking water at all the city’s schools—and they’ve agreed to dramatically speed up the rate at which they originally proposed finishing all the testing.

On the heels of this announcement, the Philadelphia City Council unanimously passed new legislation requiring the school district to share all testing data with the public, require re-testing every 5 years, and lower the threshold for taking contaminated faucets off-line by 33 percent.

“We know that after Flint, the general public wants action. PennEnvironment plans to take the success of our efforts in Philadelphia to other cities across the Commonwealth,” said PennEnvironment Executive Director David Masur.



Staff

▲ PennEnvironment Executive Director David Masur meets with Philadelphia City Councilwoman Helen Gym, the sponsor of the recently-passed legislation to help address the threat of lead in drinking water for the city’s public schools.

Read more about this campaign at:  
[PennEnvironment.org](http://PennEnvironment.org)

The Philadelphia City Council just passed much-needed policies to help reduce the threat of lead in the drinking water of the city’s public schools.

Here are some of the highlights:



Requiring the School District of Philadelphia to **test and re-test drinking fountains and faucets for lead every 5 years**



Requiring the school district to **share the testing results** with the public within 15 days of getting the data back



Reducing lead standards for school drinking fountains and faucets from the previously-used level of 15 parts per billion (ppb) to 10 ppb

1429 Walnut St., Ste. 1100  
Philadelphia, PA 19102  
(215) 732-5897

# PennEnvironment

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## Your Winter Report

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**PennEnvironment**

**Our mission**

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind PennEnvironment. We focus exclusively on protecting Pennsylvania's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

## You can go the extra mile for the monarchs

Monarch butterflies are the only butterfly known to make a two-way migration like birds, and last fall, monarchs made their incredible 3,000-mile winter migration across the United States to Mexico. To make sure this migration won't be one of their last, we need to go the extra mile for these beautiful creatures. In recent years, monarch populations have decreased by 90 percent since their peak in the mid-90s. One cause of this decline is the destruction of milkweed—the monarchs' habitat and main food source—due to increases in the use of toxic herbicides like Roundup.

PennEnvironment is calling on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list the monarch butterfly as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act—a strategy that has a 99 percent success rate. So far, more than 30,000 people have signed our online petition and we've reached more than 400,000 people on Facebook—and we've only just begun. If we build enough public support, we can give the monarchs a fighting chance.



Staff

 **Support our efforts**

**Join the million monarch migration:**  
[www.savethemonarch.org](http://www.savethemonarch.org)

**Donate online at:**  
[www.PennEnvironment.org](http://www.PennEnvironment.org)

◀ *Help us spread the word about the monarch's decline so we can give this beautiful creature a fighting chance.*