SEEDS May 2026 Newsletter

Sustainable Energy Education & Development Support of NEPA

*Community Energy * Lasting Change*

Good News from the SEEDS Community

Recycling Program Educates and Inspires

To celebrate Earth Day, SEEDS hosted a recycling program featuring Cheryl and Stu Badner, co-founders of Corporate Waste Consultants. They offered a brief history of recycling, shared real examples of common "yes" and "no" items, and guided participants through a hands-on "To recycle or not to recycle" exercise, focusing on:

- Which item(s) could be collected curbside
- Haulers to be used for recyclable items versus non-recyclable items
- Which item(s) could be dropped off at a "Source Separated" location such as the Wayne County Recycling Center

Details were also provided about how to prepare certain materials and items properly for commingled recycling. Recycling rules vary by hauler and location, so it's helpful to review your provider's guidelines—especially for items like plastic clamshells and trays, aluminum foil, and bottle caps.

Recycling facilities across the US, including materials recovery facilities (MRFs)

are opening their doors for tours this May. If interested, see link below to attend a webinar coming up on May 5, 2026.
Recycling in Action - Association of Plastic Recyclers (APR)

Here are some additional resources below*:

Wayne County Recycling Accepted Materials | Wayne County, PA
Casella Waste Management guidelines: Recycle Better™ | Casella
Waste Management guidelines: Recycle Right® - Recycling Guide | WM

Recycling Services | Staples
Electronics and Appliances Recycling at Best Buy

*Neither SEEDS or Corporate Waste Consultants endorses these companies; links are provided for educational purposes only.

* * * * *

NEPA GIVES June 4-5, 2026

Be a part of the Largest Giving Day in NEPA!

This year, on June 4-5, 2026, SEEDS is participating in NEPA Gives, a 24-hour online giving extravaganza for our whole region. Last year, NEPA Gives brought together nearly 250+ organizations to raise nearly $1.4 million, and we are excited to be a part of the movement this year!

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

1. **Get up and give on June 4-5!** Your gift matters! On June 4-5, donate to NEPAGives.org between 7AM - 7PM.

2. **Spread the word!** Tell your friends and loved ones about SEEDS and NEPA Gives! Don't forget to tag #SEEDSofNEPA and #NEPAGives2026 if you're posting online! Encourage your friends and family to get up and give as well! NEPA Gives is even offering a prize for the social media post that's shared the most!

3. **Follow us!** Follow our social media facebook.com/SEEDSofNEPA and facebook.com/NEPAgives to stay up to date on the day of activity! For more information on NEPA Gives, visit NEPAGives.org. For more information on how you can help our organization on NEPA Gives on June 4-5, please reach out to SEEDS Development Director Michele Long at director@seedsgroup.net

Want to learn about SEEDS? We will be hosting an open house on June 5th from 3 - 5PM at our new office in Honesdale at the Stourbridge Tech Hub. This is a great opportunity to meet some of our board members and get to know more about our programs, events and opportunities! We will have some light snacks and refreshments. Reach out to Michele at SEEDS for additional details at director@seedsgroup.net!

* * * * *

Free Home Energy Efficiency Help This Summer

SEEDS is launching a free Home Energy Efficiency Assessment Program to help homeowners lower energy bills and improve comfort this summer. Running May through August, the program offers personalized, one-on-one energy coaching, including help reviewing utility bills, identifying energy waste, and creating a customized list of practical, low-cost energy-saving actions for your home. Optional in-home assessments provide a guided walkthrough and written recommendations, with no obligation to make upgrades. Space is limited, so early sign-up is encouraged. Learn more or sign up at www.seedsgroup.net/energy-efficiency or call 570-241-1256.

Image by Freepik.

Renewable & Sustainability News
Our monthly feature on what's happening here at home and around the world.

Forest Hills Borough Climate Action Plan
*By Patricia M. DeMarco, Mayor, Borough of Forest Hills, PA**

National Energy Policy has followed a discontinuous lurch and jolt trajectory for decades. However, at the local level, policy direction is easier to put in place and sustain in communities with a commitment to address the existential crises of global warming, global pollution and the loss of integrity of the ecosystems that sustain our living Earth.

In January 2018, Forest Hills moved the Administrative Offices, C.C. Mellor Library, Police Department and Community Room from two older buildings into a new borough building that has served as an emblem for our commitment to this

process. The passive solar design municipal building has a geothermal heating and cooling system, 145 kW of solar panels on the roof, and super-insulated construction. All stormwater is captured in bioswales that drain the parking lot and 75-foot -deep wells that capture run-off from the roof. With the evidence of eight years of average annual net-zero electricity bills from the operation of this building, it is clear that properly designed buildings can produce more energy than they use, on an annual net basis, even through the winter months. This accomplishment has stimulated renewed interest in advancing the process of improving the energy profile of the entire community.

The Borough of Forest Hills has adopted a Proclamation of the Borough Council dated April 18, 2018, which includes in relevant part:

It is imperative that the world know that in the U.S., the people that will provide the leadership necessary to meet our Paris Accord commitment are found in city halls, state capitals, borough buildings, colleges and universities, and businesses. Together, we will remain actively engaged with the international community as part of the global effort to hold warming to well below 2 ℃ and to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy that will benefit our security, prosperity, and health.

Now, therefore be it resolved, *that I, Frank Porco, Mayor of the Borough of Forest Hills, in collaboration with the Forest Hills Borough Council are joining forces for the first time to declare that we will continue to support climate action in our community and declare "We Are Still In" the Paris Accord.*

Climate Action goals were included in the two-year process of updating and adopting a Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Forest Hills, including four community input sessions attended by over 120 people, a communitywide survey for feedback on the proposals, and public hearings before the Borough Council.

Climate Vulnerabilities

The most critical climate hazards and vulnerabilities arise from extreme weather conditions and storm damage. These include power outages from downed wires, and drought stress on mature trees. Forest Hills has a 50% land coverage with a mature tree canopy. As a U.S. Tree City since 1976, protecting and preserving this

attribute is an important community value. Mature trees (25 years or older) also biologically sequester carbon and serve a significant function in the emissions control process.

A second serious vulnerability comes from landslide hazards. Forest Hills has 40% of its area vulnerable to landslides due to the steep terrain, undermined areas from prior coal mining, and past building on filled land. Four significant landslides with house destruction and road collapse have occurred within the last three years. This issue is receiving consideration and analysis with the assistance of the Council engineering firm, Glenn Engineering, and Public Works staff.

Vulnerability from storm and weather extremes include drought, which has implications for both the tree canopy and the water supply if prolonged over time. There are also significant and escalating concerns with storm surge events. Many of the conditions resulting from surges of storm water require collaboration with neighboring communities that share the watershed. Mitigation measures are in the planning stages through ALCOSAN and MS4 Consent Decree as well as through collaborative efforts of CONNECT (the Congress of Neighboring Communities) who work together on this issue.

Climate Plans and Actions

Forest Hills participated in a grant from the ICLEI Climate Action Project with high hopes for achieving a Climate Action Plan to guide continuing efforts of the Borough of Forest Hills to address this global existential crisis of our time. The COVID-19 virus response put an abrupt halt to our efforts in mid-March, but efforts resumed in 2020.

The Emissions profile shows the heavy contributions of residential sector to the climate emissions profile. The Borough of Forest Hills has a population of 6,322 people, with the largest cohort, 23% of the population, aged 65 or older. Two thirds of the 3,486 residential housing units are owner-occupied, and half of those have no mortgage, indicating older residents. Strategies for improving energy efficiency and eventual conversion to electric heating with or without solar PV from the dominant fuel of natural gas will require considerable consumer education as well as likely need for financial assistance.

The Commercial Sector is characterized by several strip-mall type of buildings, a scattering of businesses in single buildings, and two high rise office buildings. Three commercial multi-family apartment buildings are included in the commercial sector. For this sector, the Comprehensive Plan includes the objective of forming an Eco-District overlay for the zoned business areas as a mechanism to improve the emissions profile of this sector. This will be pursued with collaboration from building owners and the businesses that occupy these buildings.

The Transportation sector was addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, and a grant application has been submitted (WalkWorks) to address an Active Transportation Plan to improve pedestrian, bicycle and public transit mobility. In addition, the Forest Hills Police Department has initiated the process of migrating to an electric vehicle fleet as vehicles are replaced. The Borough Building has connectivity in place to support the eventual addition of a solar PV canopy for parking and electric vehicle re-charge stations.

Water and Stormwater Management and Waste Management strategies, including recycling programs, are being pursued with neighboring communities, as part of wider regional efforts.

Net Zero Energy by 2050

As part of the implementation process for the Climate Action Plan, Forest Hills Borough Council adopted a goal of Net Zero Emissions by 2050, with benchmarks to be established at five years, ten years and thirty years. This process is underway with forecasting tools, and a rough guide of overall 5% reduction in emissions per year. Oversight of the Climate Action Plan development was remanded to the Environmental Advisory Council where the community outreach functions are planned and executed. The Borough of Forest Hills adopted the Climate Action Plan in December 2020.

Based on the performance of the new municipal building, the Borough of Forest Hills entered a Guaranteed Energy savings Program through the State of PA to improve the energy efficiency of all eight Borough buildings. Solar photovoltaic units have been added to five additional buildings, and efficiency improvements continue to be added. Plans to convert the vehicle fleet to electric vehicles with

charging stations on location are underway, though more slowly as federal support and funding options have been restricted.

**Note from SEEDS editor: Forest Hills is a borough in Allegheny County, PA, outside of Pittsburgh*.

Upcoming Events

Back to Basics Series:
Backyard Composting with Chelsea Kelley

SEEDS has joined up with Farm Arts Collective to announce an upcoming workshop, “Backyard Composting with Chelsea,” taking place on **Saturday, May 9, 2026**, from 10AM to 12 PM at 38 Hickory Lane, Damascus, PA, 18415.

Led by environmental educator Chelsea Kelley, this hands-on workshop will dive into the science behind composting, offering practical tips for improving soil and plant health while reducing household waste. Attendees will learn what compost is and why it matters through engaging demonstrations and discussions designed for both beginners and seasoned gardeners.

Key topics include identifying compostable materials (browns vs. greens), best practices for composting in the kitchen, and an overview of backyard composting devices. Chelsea will also demonstrate how to make compost and apply it to plants, helping participants choose the method that best fits their needs for ultimate soil and plant health.

A question and answer session will follow, giving attendees the opportunity to ask questions and gain personalized advice on composting at home. Join us for an informative morning aimed at building more sustainable communities, one backyard at a time.

Date: Saturday, May 9, 2026

Time: 10AM - 2PM

Where: 38 Hickory Lane, Damascus, PA, 18415

For more information or to register for this event, visit Farm Arts Collective’s website www.farmartscollective.org/workshops.

* * * * *

YOU'RE INVITED!

SEEDS Open House to Celebrate NEPA Gives!
Date: Friday, June 5, 2026
Time: 3 - 5PM
Where: 646 Park Street, Honesdale, PA 18431

Meet some of our board members and volunteers to learn about SEEDS programs and how you can get involved!

Image by Vecteezy.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

This month's tip is: Keep Spring Moisture Away from Your Home!

As we move into a wetter spring season, it is important to think about how moisture interacts with your home. Rain, melting snow, and rising humidity can all find their way into small gaps around foundations and exterior walls. When moist air enters a home and meets cooler surfaces, it can lead to condensation, damp materials, and reduced comfort and efficiency.

A few simple spring steps can make a big difference. Make sure the ground around your home slopes away from the foundation so water drains properly. Keep mulch,

soil, and plants from piling up against exterior walls to allow airflow and reduce trapped moisture. Checking that gutters and downspouts are clear and directing water away from the home also helps prevent water from collecting near the structure. These easy maintenance habits support a healthier home, reduce the risk of moisture problems, and help your space stay comfortable as the seasons change.

Read more at: U.S. Department of Energy – Moisture Control

SEEDS Reads!
Looking for your next read? Check out the book recommendations below from our Volunteers. These titles support curious minds and sustainable futures.

CHILDREN'S PICK

Pie in the Sky by Lois Ehlert

What can come from a cherry tree? In this colorful, collage-illustrated book, a father and his child observe a cherry tree throughout the seasons, learning about the tree itself and the creatures that visit it. When it's finally time for the cherry harvest, their bounty becomes a delicious pie for the whole family.

ADULT PICK

The Overstory by Richard Powers

The novel focuses on nine individuals with unique livelihoods, but each with an interest in trees, and how that common interest drives them to a common goal: to stop the destruction of forests. Addressing themes of environmental activism and the vital human connection to the natural world, the Overstory won the 2019 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the 2020 William Dean Howells Medal.

Message Board Info

Subscribe to the SEEDS new online message board to ask questions, share expertise, and get alerts on upcoming learning opportunities! Have a specific question about solar, energy efficiency, or clean tech? Want to promote an upcoming event or resource? SEEDS is building an online forum to serve as a center of knowledge on all things clean energy!

Visit https://groups.io/g/NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency or send an email to NEPA-solar-and-energy-efficiency+subscribe@groups.io to subscribe!

Planned Giving

Your gift now can make a big impact on the sustainability of SEEDS. When you include SEEDS in your estate plan, your generosity touches the lives of our community. Your support ensures that SEEDS remains strong in the future. SEEDS has developed some simple guidelines to assist in your decision-making process. Please contact the SEEDS Development Director at director@seedsgroup.net to take the next step.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

Home Energy Efficiency Assessments - Volunteers will learn about home energy efficiency by accompanying our other volunteer adult supervisor/assessors on home energy assessments. Volunteers will also be helping non-profit facilities improve energy efficiency. Additionally, volunteers will generate reports and gather data from homeowners who have had their homes assessed in the past. Training will be provided. This program received a 2016 PA Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence.

Pictured above: Chair Maria Cohen and Vice Chair Mark Moore at the PEEC Earth Day event representing SEEDS! If you are interested in working with the SEEDS team sharing our educational materials and meeting community members reach out!

There are a number of activities in May so keep an eye out for announcements!

Contact Development Director Michele Long if you are interested in any volunteer opportunities at director@seedsgroup.net

Donate to support SEEDS!

SEEDS
Sustainable Energy Education & Development Support

Our Sponsors

Buselli Solutions

Brookfield Renewable

grimm construction inc
1975 50 2025

Turano Insurance
We're People People

Citizens Savings Bank

Pioneer Construction Company, Inc.
"Working for Your Environment"

Platform Industries
Custom Screen Printing
•PLATFORMINDUSTRIES.COM•

Dirlam Bros Lumber Co

RE/MAX Wayne

The Dime Bank
Member FDIC

Woodloch
Est. 1958
A Tradition of Excellence & Hospitality

Grantors

Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau

The Wayne County Community Foundation
Investing in Our Future

ppl

Community Foundation for the Alleghenies
Serving Bedford, Cambria, Somerset, and Indiana Counties

SEEDS IS SUPPORTED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES, BUREAU OF RECREATION AND CONSERVATION, THROUGH A GRANT FUNDED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP FUND.