



# EPA Region 7 Communities Information Digest

December 27, 2016

## Welcome to the latest EPA Region 7 Digest!

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

An \* indicates a new item.

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### December is Winter Holiday Safety Month



#### Did you know?

Nearly half of holiday decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

It's fun to decorate for the winter holidays, but holiday decorations can increase your risk for a home fire. As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.

-Water your Christmas tree every day. A dry tree is dangerous because it can catch on fire easily.

-Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look, smell and feel like real candles.

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/holiday.html>

## Headlines

### *National*

#### \*[EPA Launches Clean Water Act Jurisdictional Determination Website](#)

EPA has launched an interactive website to gather, display, and map Clean Water Act jurisdictional determinations finalized since August 28, 2015. The website demonstrates the commitment to increase transparency on Clean Water Act jurisdiction, and displays jurisdictional determinations that were issued under the Clean Water Rule and under the prior regulations in effect while the implementation of the Clean Water Rule has been temporarily stayed by the courts.

**[\\*EPA Finalizes Clean Water Act Methods to Measure Pollutants in Wastewater](#)**

EPA has issued a final rule approving additional analytical methods or test procedures to be used to measure pollutants in wastewater. Regulated and regulatory entities use these methods to determine compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits or other Clean Water Act monitoring requirements.

**[\\*EPA Prohibits 72 Inert Ingredients from Use in Pesticides](#)**

Manufacturers wishing to use these ingredients in the future will have to provide EPA with studies or information to demonstrate their safety. EPA will then consider whether to allow their use. EPA is taking this action in response to petitions by the Center for Environmental Health, Beyond Pesticides, Physicians for Social Responsibility and others. These groups asked the agency to issue a rule requiring disclosure of 371 inert ingredients found in pesticide products. Instead, EPA will evaluate potential risks of inert ingredients and reduce risks, as appropriate.

**[\\*EPA Releases Updated Federal Interagency Report on Freshwater Resources in a Changing Climate](#)**

An updated report addressing ways to build resilience to climate change for water resources has been released by the federal Water Resources and Climate Change Workgroup. "Looking Forward: Priorities for Managing Freshwater Resources in a Changing Climate" updates a 2011 National Action Plan.

**[\\*Energy Department Announces \\$18 Million Investment to Accelerate the Development Plug-In Electric Vehicles and Use of Other Alternative Fuels](#)**

The Energy Department recently announced \$18 million in support of five projects for research, development, and demonstration of innovative plug-in electric vehicle and direct injection propane engine technologies, as well as community-based projects to accelerate the adoption of light, medium and heavy duty vehicles that operate on fuels such as biodiesel, electricity, E85, hydrogen, natural gas, and propane.

**[\\*EPA Publishes State of the Science on the Toxic Effects of Plastics in Water on Wildlife](#)**

The amount of plastic debris, such as plastic bags and microbeads, entering marine and freshwater environments has increased significantly since the mass-production of plastics began in the 1940s and 1950s. The effect of plastic on aquatic organisms is not well understood beyond the obvious physical impacts. EPA has published a white paper to identify a state of the science on the toxicological effects of plastics and their associated chemicals on aquatic-dependent wildlife and aquatic life.

**[\\*Energy Department Announces Funding to Support Breakthrough Technologies for Advanced Manufacturing](#)**

The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) recently announced up to \$35 million in available funding to support early-stage, innovative technologies and solutions in advanced manufacturing that are not significantly represented in EERE's current portfolio. EERE's Advanced Manufacturing Office (AMO) works with universities, national laboratories, and for-profit and nonprofit partners to identify and solve technology challenges in manufacturing.

**[\\*USDA Commits \\$32 Million to Protect Natural Resources through Joint Chiefs' Partnership](#)**

USDA recently announced a new investment to improve the health and resiliency of forest ecosystems where public forests and grasslands connect to privately-owned lands. USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the U.S. Forest Service will invest the new funds in fiscal year 2017 to add ten new projects and support 26 partnership projects already underway. Federal, state, and local partners will bring an additional \$30 million through financial and in-kind contributions over three years to implement the newly added projects.

**[\\*EPA Improves its Risk Management Program for Chemical Facilities](#)**

EPA finalized a rule amending its Risk Management Program regulations to reduce the likelihood of accidental releases at chemical facilities and improve emergency response activities. This rule is the latest that the federal government has taken in consultation with industry, local and state governments, and other stakeholders to improve chemical process safety, assist local emergency authorities in planning for, and responding to, accidents, and improve public awareness of chemical hazards at regulated sources.

**[\\*USDA Provides New Cost Share Opportunities for Organic Producers and Handlers](#)**

USDA recently announced that starting March 20, 2017, organic producers and handlers will be able to visit over 2,100 USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices around the country to apply for federal reimbursement to assist with the cost of receiving and maintaining organic or transitional certification.

**[\\*USDA Invests \\$225 Million in Innovative Conservation Partnerships](#)**

USDA recently announced that 88 high-impact projects across the country will receive \$225 million in federal funding as part of the USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). In addition, partners have proposed to contribute up to an additional \$500 million to improve the nation's water quality, combat drought, enhance soil health, support wildlife habitat and protect agricultural viability.

**[\\*EPA Launches New Website to Assist Tribes Developing CWA Water Quality Standards](#)**

EPA has launched a new website to provide tools to tribes that want to participate in the water quality standards (WQS) program. Currently, fewer than 50 of over 300 tribes with reservation lands have WQS effective under the Clean Water Act (CWA). The newly developed tools are another step toward EPA's ongoing goal of closing this longstanding gap in CWA protection.

**[\\*EPA Announces Availability of Final Guidance for Conducting Fish Consumption Surveys](#)**

This guidance revises and replaces EPA's 1998 Guidance on Conducting Fish and Wildlife Surveys and has benefitted greatly from thoughtful comments provided during peer review, state and tribal advisory and water program reviews, tribal consultation, and public comment. The information provided in the guidance will assist states, tribes, local governments and others with the design, conduct, and analysis of surveys for estimating consumption rates of finfish and shellfish.

**[\\*U.S. Transportation Announces Membership of Working Group on Improving Air Service to Small Communities](#)**

U.S. Department of Transportation recently announced the members of the new Working Group on Improving Air Service to Small Communities (Working Group). The Working Group will consist of 25 stakeholders involved in air transportation to small

communities. The group will advise Congress on current and emerging priorities, issues, and funding needs related to providing air service to small communities.

**[\\*EPA Releases Final Report on Impacts from Hydraulic Fracturing Activities on Drinking Water Resources](#)**

EPA is releasing its scientific report on the impacts from hydraulic fracturing activities on drinking water resources, which provides states and others the scientific foundation to better protect drinking water resources in areas where hydraulic fracturing is occurring or being considered. The report, done at the request of Congress, provides scientific evidence that hydraulic fracturing activities can impact drinking water resources in the United States under some circumstances.

**[\\*EDRA Great Places Award Program](#) Applications due January 31**

The Environmental Design Research Association, in partnership with Project for Public Spaces, presents the 19th Annual Great Places Awards. Great Places Awards recognize work that combines expertise in design, research and practice; and contributes to the creation of dynamic, humane places that engage our attention and imagination.

**[\\*EPA Invites Public Comments on Candidates for Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals](#)**

**Comments due by January 8**

The EPA is establishing the Science Advisory Committee on Chemicals (SACC) to provide independent advice and expert consultation on the scientific and technical aspects of risk assessments, methodologies, and pollution prevention measures or approaches. EPA has completed its initial screening of nominees for the SACC and is inviting public comments on 29 candidates.

**[\\*USDA Awards \\$6.7M for Research to Support Healthy Agroecosystems](#)**

USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced 18 grants totaling more than \$6.7 million for research to discover how components of the agroecosystem, from soil, water, and sun to plants, animals, and people, interact with and affect food production.

**[\\*USDA Announces Farmer Fair Practices Rules](#)**

USDA's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) recently announced updated regulations to protect the rights of farmers. The Farmer Fair Practices Rules target the most harmful practices hurting farmers and clearly outlines common sense protections to restore fairness and reduce the burden for farmers seeking justice under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

**[EPA Seeks Input on the Gap of Water Quality Standards Coverage in Indian Reservation Waters](#) Comments due by December 28**

On September 19, 2016, Administrator McCarthy signed an advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) requesting public comment on the establishment of federal baseline water quality standards (WQS) under the Clean Water Act (CWA) for Indian reservation waters that currently do not have EPA-approved WQS to protect water quality.

**[EPA Calls for Nominations for 2017 Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards](#)**

The EPA announced its call for nominations for the 2017 Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Awards for companies or institutions that have developed a new process or product helping to protect public health and the environment. Nominations for innovative

technologies featuring greener chemicals and products, are due to the agency by [December 31, 2016](#).

### [Solar in Your Community Challenge Launches](#) [Early Applications are due January 6, 2017](#)

SunShot is accepting applications for its newest prize competition, the Solar in Your Community Challenge, which aims to expand solar electricity access to all Americans, especially underserved segments such as low- and moderate-income households. Offering \$5 million in cash prizes and technical assistance over 18 months, the challenge supports teams across the country to develop projects or programs that expand solar access, while proving that these business models can be widely replicated and adopted.

### [EPA Presidential Environmental Education Awards for Teachers and Students Applications](#) [Due on March 1, 2017](#)

The award recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers who employ innovative approaches to environmental education and use the environment as a context for learning. Award winners receive up to \$2,500 to continue their professional development in environmental education. Additionally, the teacher's local education agency will receive up to \$2,500 to fund environmental educational activities and programs. Youth can receive the Presidential Environmental Youth Award (PEYA).

## ***Regional***

### [\\*EPA Will Help Randolph, Neb., Meet Environmental Goals, Foster Development](#)

The EPA recently announced that Randolph, NE, is one of 25 communities that will receive technical assistance to pursue development strategies that advance clean air, clean water, economic development and other local goals. EPA selected the communities from among 76 applicants to the Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities program. In 2017, EPA staff and national experts will conduct one to two-day workshops to help the community address development-oriented issues.

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## Funding & Technical Assistance Opportunities

[SunShot Technology to Market 3](#) [December 30](#)

[Solar Forecasting 2](#) [December 30](#)

[USDA Solid Waste Management Grants](#) [December 31](#)

[Freshwater Harmful Algal Blooms – Request for Applications](#) [January 4](#)

[FY 2018 Environmental Research and Development Program \(SERDP\)](#) [January 5](#)

[\\*EPA Non-Construction Approaches to Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Energy Efficient Products and Practices Program](#) [January 5](#)

[\\*Small-Scale Manufacturing and Place-Based Economic Development Technical Assistance](#) **January 6**

[HHS Environmental Regulatory Enhancement Program for Tribal Governments](#)  
**January 9**

[USDA National Conservation Innovation Grants](#) **January 9**

[2017 Kinship Conservation Fellows](#) **January 16**

[AmeriCorps State and National Grants, Corporation for National and Community Service](#) **January 17**

[National Forest Foundation Matching Awards Program](#) **January 17**

[Center of Excellence for Chemical Alternatives Assessment](#) **January 17**

[Corporation for National and Community Service \(CNCS\) 2017 AmeriCorps State and National Grants](#) **January 18**

[Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative](#) **January 19**

[Partners for Places Round 10 Grant Cycle](#) **January 30**

[Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Grants](#) **January 31**

[EPA Environmental Justice Small Grants](#) **January 31**

[USDA Rural Energy for America Program](#) **January 31**

[Environmental Education Grants, Captain Planet Foundation](#) **January 31**

[NOAA Educational Partnership Program Undergraduate Scholarship](#) **January 31**

[NOAA Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship](#) **January 31**

[Endowment for Forestry and Communities Healthy Watersheds Consortium Grant \(HWCG\) Program](#) **February 1**

[\\*Groundwork USA Program Funding and Technical Assistance](#) **February 1**

[\\*Cliff Bar Foundation Small Grants](#) **February 1**

[\\*Complete Streets Consortium Series Technical Assistance](#) **February 2**

[Center of Excellence for Chemical Alternatives Assessment](#) **February 3**

[\\*EPA's People, Prosperity and the Planet Award Program](#) **February 3**

[DOE Deployment of Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency Projects on Indian Lands Program](#) **February 7**

[Anticipating the Environmental Impacts and Behavioral Drivers of Deep Decarbonization](#) **February 10**

**\*[DOE Scaling Up the Next Generation of Building Efficiency Packages Program](#)**  
**February 10**

[Drought Response Program: Drought Contingency Planning Grants](#) **February 14**

[Drought Resiliency Projects](#) **February 14**

[Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer](#) **February 17**

**\*[FTA Zero Emission Research Opportunity \(ZERO\) Program](#)** **February 21**

[EPA Presidential Environmental Education Awards for Teachers and Students](#)  
**March 1**

[Using a Total Environment Framework \(Built, Natural, Social Environments\) to Assess Life-long Health Effects of Chemical Exposures](#) **March 2**

**\*[HHS Impacts of Climate Change on Oceans and Great Lakes Program](#)** **March 7**

### ***Ongoing Opportunities***

[USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program Grants](#)

[River Network National Rain Barrel Program](#) **Through June 2017**

[POWER \(Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization\) Grants](#) **Applications accepted on a rolling basis**

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

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

[USDA Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#) **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

[Sustainable Foods Summit](#) January 18-20, San Francisco, CA

\*[Solar in Your Community Challenge Regional Workshop](#) January 18, Chicago, IL

\*[Solar in Your Community Challenge Regional Workshop](#) January 19, Madison, MI

[AGU Chapman Conference on Extreme Climate Event Impacts on Aquatic Biogeochemical Cycles and Fluxes](#) January 22-27, San Juan, Puerto Rico

[Kansas City Urban Stormwater Conference](#) January 23-24, Kansas City, MO

\*[California Climate Change Symposium](#) January 25-26, Sacramento, CA

[Kansas Natural Resources Conference](#) January 26-27, Wichita, KS

\*[Healthy Soils for Healthy Waters](#) February 1, Denver, CO

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

[2017 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference](#) February 5-8, Lincoln, NE

\*[2017 Collegiate Sports Sustainability Summit](#) February 15-18, Gainesville, FL

\*[USDA 2017 Agricultural Outlook Forum](#) February 23–24, Arlington, VI

[Climate Leadership Conference](#) March 1-3, Chicago, IL

[National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program](#) March 8-10, Washington, D.C.

[11th Annual Iowa Water Conference](#) March 22-23, Ames, IA

[Children's Environmental Health Network Translational Research Conference: New Challenges](#) April 5-7, Arlington, VA

[ASFPM National Conference](#) April 30-May 5, Kansas City, MO

\*[15th Annual Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop \(CPASW\)](#) May 2-4, Anchorage, AK

\*[National Adaptation Forum](#) May 9-11, St Paul, MN

[California Resource Recovery Association \(CRRRA\) 2017 Conference](#) August 20-23, San Diego, CA

\*[Soil and Water Conservation Society Annual Conference](#) August 30, 2017, Madison, WI

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

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# Webinars and Conference Calls

## **[\\*Access & Awareness Webinar Series from the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice January 12, 12-1:30 pm CST](#)**

This webinar will discuss the nondiscrimination requirements of federally-assisted programs and activities related to emergency and disaster management as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and subsequent events, the Federal government learned many critical lessons about how recipients of federal financial assistance engaged in emergency management activities can more effectively ensure that all members of the community receive access to information and services.

## **[\\*Writing and Monitoring Grazing Plans: Available tools, site specific planning and the economics of southern forage management January 17, 1-3:00 p.m. CST](#)**

Participants in this webinar will learn what content should be identifiable within the grazing plan, monitoring plan, and other economic considerations of forage management.

## **[\\*Sustainability With Trees: Community Canopy Project January 19, 12:00 p.m. CST](#)**

This webinar will explore how distributing trees through a community canopy project can fit with your sustainability efforts, help maximize energy efficiency and engage homeowners within your community. Presenters will discuss how a tree distribution program for homeowners offers the ability to positively engage with your community, educate on strategic tree planting, and promote green infrastructure.

## **[FY2017 EJ Small Grants Request for Proposals Pre-application Assistance Calls](#)**

Planning on applying to the FY2017 EJ Small Grants RFP? Have questions? Call-in to the pre-application assistance calls for the EJ Small Grants RFP. Dial conference call number: 1-866-299-3188. Then input conference code: 202-564-0152# to join the call. All potential applicants nationwide are welcome to call in. See a schedule of the remaining pre-application calls below:

- Thursday, January 12, 2017: 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 24, 2017: 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

## ***On-Going and On-Demand Webinars***

### **[Communicating Climate Change Scenarios With Decision Makers](#)**

Research hydrologist Dr. Holly Hartmann discusses approaches for communicating with decision-makers on climate change, water management and planning.

### **[Leveraging Resources for Brownfields Revitalization Webinar](#)**

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

### **[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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