



KEEP PENNSYLVANIA BEAUTIFUL - NISOURCE FINAL REPORT (FEB-DEC 2024)

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful partnered with Columbia Gas - Nisource Charitable Foundation to:



- Offer Young Ambassadors of PA a webinar focused on sustainability, led by the company's Environmental Department. Two to four students will have two opportunities to apply to participate in a job shadowing experience in the spring of 2024 in Pennsylvania. Selected participants will accompany Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania employees in the field to learn day-to-day responsibilities.



- Provide mini grants to four to six counties for the purpose of community greening and beautification. Grants totaling \$7,840 supported four community projects in Allegheny, Elk, Fayette and Venango counties.

Pennsylvania's Young Ambassadors Engage in Job Shadowing Experience



One of the best things about this program was the job shadowing opportunity at Columbia Gas! ~ KPB Young Ambassador

The Young Ambassador program builds community stewards and civic leaders by inspiring, engaging and empowering young Pennsylvanians to keep their communities beautiful. In celebration of Earth Day, three Young Ambassadors participated in job shadowing in the Columbia Gas Bridgeville and York facilities to experience a day in the life of a Columbia Gas Environmental Coordinator. The students' day began with a brief overview of what Environmental Coordinators do and how they fit into the Columbia Gas ecosystem. Later, students met with engineers to discuss projects and how the Environmental Department is involved. After receiving appropriate safety gear, the students visited active work sites to see how and why environmental permitting, specific procedures and compliance measures are needed before excavation and stream crossing.

Allegheny CleanWays (ACW) Highlights the Critical Role of Clean Storm Drains

GrateKeepers improves ecosystem health by keeping storm drains clear, preventing flooding, and stopping trash from entering watersheds. It also educates the public on clean runoff practices, such as picking up after pets, avoiding lawn chemicals, properly disposing harmful substances, using biodegradable car wash products and composting leaves and clippings.

ACW implemented a GrateKeepers cleanup event with the Environmental Charter School of Pittsburgh to bring families together and build community. Nine families attended removing 45 pounds of trash from sidewalks and storm drains. Students learned about the function of storm drains and the importance of protecting waterways from litter pollution. Students applied Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA) medallions at nearly 20 storm drains. As a result, multiple families expressed interest in becoming GrateKeepers in their own neighborhoods and have attended subsequent ACW volunteer events. ACW partnered with the PWSA to locate storm drains in the area.



PA CleanWays of Elk County Hosts Workshop and Cleanup

The Elk County Conservation District completed a backyard conservation workshop and a Clarion River cleanup. The workshop taught homeowners to reduce their environmental impact by implementing practices in their own backyard. Participants learned how to reduce their carbon footprint by composting and growing vegetables. They learned how installing rain barrels on their property reduces nonpoint source pollution. Ten participants received a compost bin, rain barrel or raised garden bed to help them start reducing their environmental impact.

During the Clarion River cleanup, an annual event for nearly 30 years, 24 students and three chaperones from St. Mary's High School paddled their canoes and collected an impressive 800 pounds of trash. The PA Game Commission collected and transported the waste to the landfill. Landfill space was donated by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Pick Up Pennsylvania program. Key partners in this effort included the PA Game Commission, Elk County CleanWays and the Elk County Solid Waste Authority.



Keep Fayette County Green Hosts Hard to Recycle Events

Keep Fayette County Green organized the Mountain Area Series Hard to Recycle Events in Stewart, Springfield, and Wharton Townships for residents to clean up their roadways, creeks and shared community spaces. The events provided recycling and disposal services for hard-to-recycle items preventing them from ending up over the hillside. Key partners included the adult probation office, the sheriff's department and the participating townships.

MOUNTAIN AREA HARD-TO-RECYCLE SERIES

RESULTS

- Over 300 residents attending
- 200 volunteers
- 33,340 pounds of tires
- 12,000 pounds of metal
- 16,380 pounds of electronics and televisions
- 7,500 pounds of mattresses and furniture
- 3,000 pounds traditional recyclables

PA CleanWays of Venango County Enhances Demonstration Garden

The Venango Conservation District (VCD) completed construction of a natives and pollinator garden in 2023. Building on that, the VCD utilized the help of Makayla Kapp, a senior student at Cranberry High School, to plan and coordinate the enhancement of the demonstration garden including planning the space, choosing what plants to purchase and creating an educational presentation for volunteer participants. On September 9, 2024, Makayla, along with other VCD staff made educational presentations to two groups of student volunteers from the Venango Technology Center. Afterward, the students cleared sod and planted native species. A total of 52 students worked 104 hrs.



Utilizing these funds to create opportunities to partner with student volunteers was a great benefit and enhancement for our demonstration garden.

*~ Lisette C Lane
District Manager*

