



ILLINOIS EPA *Impact*

IN THIS ISSUE

- Pride Month
- Juneteenth
- Illinois EPA Opposes U.S. EPA's Weakened Lead Standards for Superfund Site Cleanups
- Spring 2026 Legislative Wrap-Up
- Illinois Electric Vehicle Rebate Program Summary
- Clean Ports Program
- Air Team in Chicago and Metro East
- Funding Opportunities
- Accessing Illinois EPA Records
- Pollution Complaints
- Employment Opportunities



[CONTACT US](#)



Message from

DIRECTOR JAMES JENNINGS

June marks not only the official beginning of the summer, but also reflects the celebration of our immensely valuable social and cultural diversity. This June, the Agency fittingly dedicated significant time and resources to achieving meaningful milestones grounded in the equitable administration of our programs. These activities revolved around a pair of related themes: equitable environmental protection and supporting community restoration.

In the last month, the General Assembly passed several bills that the Agency either led or supported which were crafted to ensure environmental standards in Illinois continue to be administered in an equitable and protective manner. Legislative session included passage of several Agency-led or supported bills. These efforts include House Bill 5070, which is designed to ensure that Illinois environmental regulations remain rooted in science and are not exclusively tied to federal standards, which could be weakened. Similarly significant, Senate Bill 3772 enshrines the Agency's Office of Environmental Justice in state law and codified the enhanced evaluation procedures for certain air permitting transactions that could result in increased emissions in Environmental Justice communities. These actions reflect the State and the Illinois EPA's continued commitment to supporting historically disenfranchised communities.

Our staff have also been diligently working to advance community restoration efforts across the state. Some highlights include staunchly advocating for protective lead cleanup standards at Superfund sites, despite U.S. EPA's opposition, surpassing \$1 billion in water infrastructure financing for this Fiscal Year, leading efforts to change state law to make remediating historic petroleum tank spills easier and less expensive for local governments, and securing funding to support brownfields assessment and redevelopment activities over the next year.





PRIDE MONTH

This June, we were happy to celebrate Pride Month here at the Illinois EPA. We live in a nation and a state where people are free to be who they are and love who they love. On our social media pages, we highlighted four different books that discuss queer ecology, exploring the intersections between biology, sexuality, and nature. Consider reading more as we celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community this month.



JUNETEENTH

Happy Juneteenth! 161 years ago, news of the Emancipation Proclamation reached Galveston, Texas, marking the symbolic end of slavery in the United States. Despite the end of slavery, people of color in America feel the effects of racial discrimination to this day. Through racist processes like redlining which resulted in insufficient financial investment in communities of color, many minority groups have found themselves living in areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental health concerns. These communities may face higher levels of pollution, elevated heat levels due to urban heat island effects, and more. Here at the Illinois EPA, we are committed to combating inequity by integrating Environmental Justice principles into our everyday activities, led by our Office of Environmental Justice. While this month we celebrate the end of slavery, we must recognize that the fight for true equality is not over.

ILLINOIS EPA OPPOSES U.S. EPA'S WEAKENED LEAD STANDARDS FOR SUPERFUND SITE CLEANUPS

The U.S. EPA is proposing changes to Superfund site cleanup procedures through an avenue that does not require a public input period. These changes include reducing the maximum depth of soil cleanup from 24 inches to 12 inches, and indicating it may not reevaluate older sites that might fail to meet current cleanup standards at the most contaminated cleanup sites in the nation. The Illinois EPA opposes these proposed changes, urging U.S. EPA to utilize more appropriate cleanup standards that reflect the most recent scientific research on lead exposure. Although the U.S. EPA is the primary authority on Superfund site cleanup and have final say on the approved cleanup standards, the Illinois EPA will continue to advocate for the application of protective, scientifically sound standards. For more information, please [view our webpage](#).





SPRING 2026 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

The Spring 2026 legislative session concluded with five Illinois EPA-initiated bills and two Illinois EPA-supported bills passing both chambers of the Illinois General Assembly and are awaiting the Governor's signature. So, what do these measures accomplish, and why do they matter?

HB 5070 (A. Williams/Ellman): Federal Backstop - This bill ensures that Illinois maintains its strong, scientifically-based, environmental protections, even if parallel federal standards are rolled back. It prevents the Illinois Pollution Control Board from being required to automatically adopt weakened federal rules and bars the use of expedited identical-in-substance rulemaking to implement any standards that fall below what Illinois already has in place for our clean air, clean water, safe drinking water, and hazardous waste programs. In short, the bill safeguards the state's existing protections and reinforces Illinois' ability to uphold higher environmental standards. This bill was signed by Governor Pritzker on June 26, 2026.

HB 4829 (Ness/Guzman): Lab Certification Committee Repeal - This bill removes outdated provisions from the Environmental Protection Act by repealing the defunct Environmental Laboratory Certification Committee. An Illinois EPA audit recently recommended this cleanup, noting that the Committee no longer functions. The change streamlines the statute and reflects the Agency's current operational structure.

HB 5317 (Avelar/Feigenholtz): Orphan Underground Storage Tank Cleanup - This bill allows local governments to address orphan petroleum underground storage tanks, ensuring these sites can be safely cleaned up even when no identifiable tank owner is available. It allows municipalities and counties to remove or abandon tanks, conduct site investigations, and carry out corrective actions under the same standards used in the state's Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Program, without requiring the local government to assume the role of an owner, which comes with additional liabilities. The bill also makes these local cleanup costs eligible for reimbursement from the LUST Fund, supporting faster, more effective, and economically viable environmental protection in communities across Illinois.

HB 5541 (Moeller/A. Johnson): Composting - This bill streamlines the way Illinois supports composting and other organic waste recycling efforts. It removes the requirement for smaller organic waste composting operations (50 cubic yards or less) to obtain a solid waste permit from Illinois EPA, helping reduce barriers for community-scale composting. These changes modernize the statute and make it easier for innovative, environmentally friendly, waste diversion projects to move forward.





LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP CONTINUED

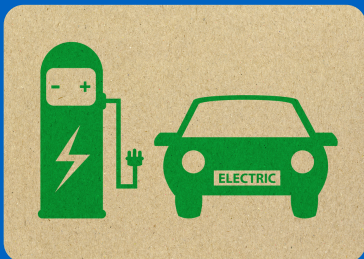
SB 3917 (Fine/Faver Dias): PFAS - This bill updates National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting requirements to ensure consistent monitoring of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) at major facilities across Illinois. It requires both publicly and privately owned treatment works designated as major facilities by Illinois EPA and U.S. EPA to conduct specified periodic sampling. These changes strengthen oversight and help maintain water quality by ensuring that high-impact facilities are monitored to the same standard. To learn more about state and federal actions, visit our [PFAS webpage](#).

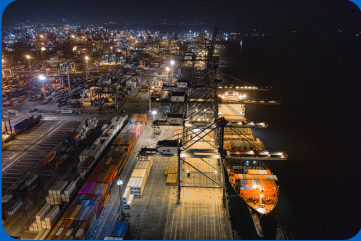
SB 3772 (Villanueva/Jiménez): Environmental Justice - This bill establishes a new statutory Environmental Justice framework within the Environmental Protection Act to ensure stronger oversight of air pollution sources in communities identified as areas of Environmental Justice concern. Beginning January 1, 2027, new facilities and existing facilities seeking to increase emissions, will undergo an EPA review to assess potential Environmental Justice impacts, and applicants may be required to conduct additional testing or adjust their plans. The legislation also directs Illinois EPA to evaluate an owner or operator's past compliance history before issuing a permit. These various changes codify Illinois' commitment to Environmental Justice by ensuring stronger protections, oversight, and accountability for communities that have historically faced disproportionate environmental burdens.

HB 5181 (Davis/Cappel Loughran): Budgeting for Results Cleanup - This bill updates several statutes to eliminate outdated mandates that have led to repeated audit findings across multiple state agencies, including Illinois EPA. For Illinois EPA, the measure repeals the Illinois Cool Cities Act, the Recycled Newsprint Use Act, and certain Solid Waste Management Act provisions related to coordinating recycling programs with other state agencies and universities. These changes streamline requirements and help reduce administrative burdens while aligning the statutes with current practices.

EV REBATE PROGRAM SUMMARY

On May 31, 2026, the Illinois EPA closed applications for this fiscal year's cycle of the Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate Program. As part of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), the rebate program intends to make purchasing an electric vehicle more affordable and provides higher rebates for lower-income applicants. Illinois EPA received a total of 3,486 rebate applications, including 1,885 designated as Low-Income. To date, the Illinois EPA has issued over \$9 million in rebates, with 1,645 rebates being awarded to Low-Income applicants. Be on the lookout for next fiscal year's rebate cycle!





CLEAN PORTS PROGRAM

The U.S. EPA's Clean Ports Program was created under the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, which provided \$3 billion to 26 U.S. states and territories to fund the planning and purchase of zero-emission port equipment. Decarbonizing ports is one of the most effective ways to spur economic growth and improve sustainability and resilience in local communities. The Illinois EPA is hosting a series of informational meetings with stakeholder and near-port communities to being the planning process to decarbonize ports in the state.

- Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 7:00 p.m. – Illinois Waterways Ports Commission, Distillery Labs, 201 SW Adams Street, Peoria
- Tuesday, June 30, 2026 7:00 p.m. – Mid-America Intermodal Authority Port District, Quincy Business and Technology Center, 301 Oak Street, Quincy.
- Wednesday, July 29, 2026, 7:00 p.m. – Upper Mississippi River International Port District, Savanna Museum & Cultural Center, 406 Main Street, Savanna.
- July 2026 - Virtual Public Meeting, Details and Registration Coming Soon

To register, visit <https://www.illinoiscleanports.org/planning-projects/>.

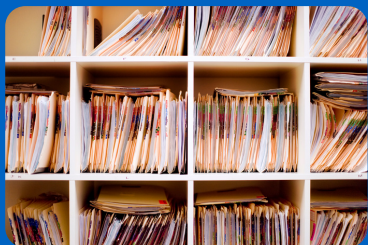
AIR TEAM IN CHICAGO AND METRO-EAST

The Illinois Air Team aims to reduce vehicle emissions in the state's two most urban areas: Chicago and the Metro-East St. Louis Area. The Illinois Air Team [website](#) includes information on vehicle eligibility, when to test your vehicle, testing site locators, waivers, exemptions, signing up for [electronic test notices](#), and more. [Three self-service kiosks](#) are located in Chicago to allow easier, more flexible vehicle emissions testing. [Two mobile testing units \(MTUs\)](#) are also available that travel around Chicagoland. To request for an MTU event in your community (Chicagoland or the Metro-East St. Louis), please send the proposed site address, your name, title, email address, phone number to: mtu@illinoisairteam.net.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

While there are no new funding opportunities this month, that doesn't mean that the Illinois EPA doesn't have any available. The Illinois EPA routinely has a variety of funding opportunities available to groups ranging from nonprofits to local governments to assist in carrying out a diverse range of environmental projects. Some of these are first-come, first-serve grants, such as the Unsewered Communities Planning Grant Program and Energy Efficiency Trust Fund Grant Program, both of which are currently accepting applications. Be sure to check our website for the chance to apply soon. All current funding opportunities can be viewed on our [Grants and Loans webpage](#).





ACCESSING ILLINOIS EPA RECORDS

Illinois EPA receives thousands of requests for records each year. In an effort to provide access to highly sought Agency records, we offer the online [Document Explorer](#) tool making certain documents available for viewing and downloading. For documents that are not available through the online tool, individuals may submit a [Freedom of Information Request](#).



POLLUTION COMPLAINTS

Illinois EPA is committed to responding to complaints as quickly as possible. The quickest and easiest way to submit a complaint to Illinois EPA is through the [online complaint form](#). Individuals can also contact the closest [Illinois EPA Regional Office](#). To report an environmental emergency, please contact the Illinois Emergency Management Agency at 800-782-7860.

Currently, we are also working to improve our pollution complaint system! By implementing a central complaint database and an automatic emailing system, we hope to increase the amount of resolved complaints we work on across all Bureaus. Be on the lookout for this new system!

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As we welcome our summer interns in Springfield, Chicago, and Regional Offices all over the state, we are reminded of how lucky we are to recruit such exceptional talent. Illinois EPA has a variety of technical and professional staff positions, including specialists, geologists, engineers, biologists, chemists, as well as positions involved with legal and administrative services. Make sure to check back often, as current postings are always available [online](#) and posted on all of our social media pages. We would love for you to join the team!



CLICK HERE TO
VISIT OUR WEBSITE



CONNECT WITH US



ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

2520 West Iles Avenue • P.O. Box 19276 • Springfield, Illinois • 62794-9276 • 217-782-3397