



ILLINOIS EPA

Impact

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Message from

DIRECTOR JAMES JENNINGS



The first signs of Fall are evident across Illinois, September offers a good opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made this year and the important work still ahead. Across the Agency, our teams continue to advance projects and programs that protect public health and the environment while improving how we serve communities, businesses, and our other stakeholders throughout the state.

Earlier this month, the Illinois EPA released the state's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). The report follows the previously issued Priority Climate Action Plan and provides a roadmap to meet Illinois' carbon reduction goals. The CCAP goes beyond greenhouse gas reduction measures that are included in Illinois' Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) proposal. That proposal included reductions from multiple sectors including transportation, buildings, industry, and agriculture. To view the CCAP, visit our [CPRG webpage](#).

Throughout the Fall, Illinois residents will have an opportunity to safely dispose of common hazardous materials from their homes free of charge at one of the seven remaining one-day Household Hazardous Waste collections. Cosponsored by a local partner, these events provide an outlet for safe and free handling of many difficult-to-manage household products like lawn chemicals, automotive products, insecticides, and pesticides. One-day collections supplement the network of permanent collection sites, located in Chicago, Naperville, Rockford, Gurnee, and Wood River. Last year was the Agency's largest in the program's history, with more than 1.1 million pounds of hazardous waste collected, and we anticipate an even more robust public response this year.

Finally, I am thrilled to share a trio of additions to the Agency's leadership team. Bonnie Williams has joined the Illinois EPA as our new Human Resources Manager. Bonnie comes with a wide range of HR experience in state government and the armed services. She will help support the Agency's continuing restaffing, building on the 30 percent increase in headcount since Governor Pritzker took office. We are also welcoming two Policy Advisors: Paulina Lopez-Santos and Trejahn Hunter. Paulina has been with the Agency for more than three years, most recently serving in the Office of Environmental Justice as the EJ Policy Administrator. Trejahn will be joining the Agency from the private sector, having most recently worked as Legal Counsel for the Illinois Environmental Regulatory Group. Each will be working closely with Agency leadership on a diverse range of projects intended to continue advancing our institutional growth.



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DISPOSE OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE AT ONE OF OUR FALL COLLECTION EVENTS

Illinois residents can safely dispose of unused or leftover hazardous products at one of our collection events this fall. Household Hazardous Waste Collections began in late August, but several events remain in Champaign, Mattoon, East Moline, Springfield, Decatur, and Lockport. Each one-day event is open to all Illinois residents and will operate on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the day of the event. Items accepted include household chemicals, antifreeze, motor oil, gasoline, kerosene, weed killers, insecticides and pesticides, and other similar household products that can be hazardous. For a complete list of waste that will and will not be accepted, please visit the [Acceptable Wastes](#) page on our website. For a complete listing of events, locations, and the required pre-registration links, please visit our [HHW Collections webpage](#).

COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEM RIGHT-TO-KNOW NOTICES AND PFAS - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Since the Spring of 2025, Illinois EPA has provided notice to 73 community water systems (CWSs) after one or more Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) compounds were detected through groundwater sampling. These notices are required under the 2009 Right-to-Know law, which also requires owners and operators of CWSs to notify their customers when groundwater contamination poses a threat of exposure to the public above the Class I groundwater quality standards. Class 1 groundwater quality standards for six PFAS compounds, which were adopted last year, are the reason for these new Right-to-Know notifications for PFAS. The new standards were established for perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), hexafluoropropylene oxide dimer acid, also known as GenX (HFPO-DA), perfluorohexanesulfonic acid (PFHxS), perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA), and perfluorobutanesulfonic acid (PFBS). In addition, all Illinois CWSs were required to begin sampling for PFAS in April 2026, which is resulting in more frequent Right-to-Know notices.

Until recently, PFAS compounds were considered “unregulated contaminants” by federal and state authorities. These man-made chemicals have been widely used in consumer products and industrial process since the 1940s. Research shows that people are primarily exposed to PFAS through ingestion of food and water, but all residents are at risk of PFAS exposure whether it has been detected in groundwater or not. Residents can reduce exposure by:

- Choosing stainless steel, cast iron, or non-stick cookware that does not contain PFAS.
- Avoiding water repellents on clothing and fabric.
- Avoiding using personal care products with “PTFE” or “Fluoro” ingredients.
- Using water filters designed to remove PFAS (NSF/ANSI53 or 58 standards).

Check out our [PFAS webpage](#) for sources of PFAS, routes of exposure, ways to reduce exposure, health effects, state and federal regulatory actions and more. Private well users with health-related questions or those requiring technical assistance can contact the Illinois Department of Public Health at 217-782-5830 or dph.tox@illinois.gov.





ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL OF STATES FALL MEETING

Director Jennings and Bureau of Land Chief Kyle Rominger represented the Agency at this year's Environmental Council of States (ECOS) Fall Meeting. Director Jennings, who serves as the ECOS Budget & Management Committee Vice Chair, participated in a panel where presentations were made on how AI-powered tools could be used to improve environmental results, streamline operations, and improve services to both the public and regulated entities. Director Jennings was also as a guest on the "Unconventional Times" podcast, hosted by Richard Gordan, where they discussed current challenges for environmental regulators.

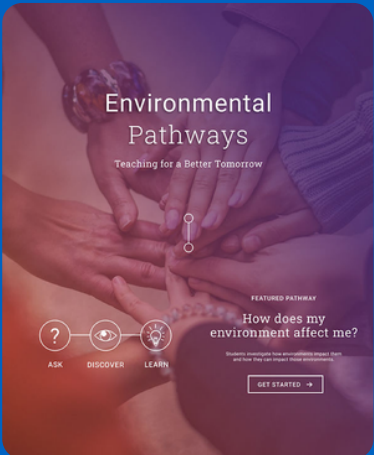
The Fall Meeting included discussions on PFAS, including a PFAS-related resolution currently being developed, and an update on the Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS), which relayed the U.S. EPA research priorities. States will reconvene for the ECOS Spring Meeting in March 2027 in Washington, D.C. For more information on ECOS, visit <https://www.ecos.org/>.

IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL TIME! CHECK OUT OUR FREE ONLINE CURRICULUM

Now that students have returned to the classroom, Illinois EPA is highlighting the Environmental Education Curricula that is offered for free to teachers and families. Illinois EPA partnered with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Office for Mathematics, Science, and Technology Education (MSTE) to create the curricula units, which are aligned to Next Generation Science Standards for formal classroom use. Units include:

- *How Does My Environment Affect me?* focusing on environmental justice.
- *What Should I Do With This Trash?* focusing on waste management problems and solutions.
- *How Does A Bulb Light?* focusing on energy, electricity use, and power sources and how they relate to climate change.
- *Where Does My Food Go?* focusing on food waste reduction and landfill diversion.
- *Why is the Pond Green?* focusing on surface water and algae.

These and other educational resources are available on our [Environmental Pathways](#) webpage.





PUBLIC NOTICE

SIGN-UP TO RECEIVE PUBLIC NOTICES

Illinois EPA issues public notices for a variety of permitting transactions, meetings and general notifications. A public notice is issued to inform the public about proposed Illinois EPA actions, permits, or decisions that may affect communities or the environment. If you would like to sign up to be notified of a public notice in your area or for a certain facility, you can sign up through our [Public Notification Alert Signup](#).

Notices may be issued for any of the following:

- General Public Notices include those that do not fall under one of the categories listed below.
- Bureau of Air Public Notices include notices of public comment for various Bureau of Air draft permits, notices of Bureau of Air hearings and meetings, and other general Bureau of Air notifications.
- Bureau of Water Public Notices include notices for public comment for various Bureau of Water draft permits, water quality certifications, notices of Bureau of Water hearings and meetings.
- Bureau of Land Public Notices include notices for public comment for various Bureau of Land draft permits, and notices of Bureau of Land hearings and meetings.

FUNDING FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY UPGRADES AT PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Illinois EPA has issued a new Notice of Funding Opportunity for Energy Efficiency Projects at Public Buildings. A total of \$766,600 is available for projects that include energy efficiency upgrades identified in an energy efficiency assessment or audit conducted within the last five years. Eligible projects include building envelope insulation, window replacement, lighting upgrades, programmable thermostats and occupancy sensors, heating and cooling system retrofits, and high efficiency appliances. Applications will be accepted through September 30, 2026. Additional information and a link to the funding opportunity is available on the [Office of Energy webpage](#). A complete listing and links to all Illinois EPA programs that provide financial assistance is available on our [Grants and Loans](#) webpage.

STATE FAIR RECAP

Illinois EPA hosted countless visitors at our family-friendly exhibit at the 2026 Illinois State Fair and DuQuoin State Fair, highlighting how everyone can contribute to protecting our water resources. With interactive children's activities and educational signage throughout the exhibits, Illinois EPA offered something for everyone. Visitors also had the chance to mark a map identifying the watershed where they live. We look forward to continuing to participate in the annual event in future years. Check out our [Facebook post](#) for a photo recap.





ACCESSING ILLINOIS EPA DOCUMENTS

The Illinois EPA receives thousands of requests for records each year. Our online Document Explorer tool was developed to provide access to frequently requested Agency records, making certain documents, including final permits, site remediation technical documents, leaking underground storage tank technical documents, and final Compliance Commitment Agreements, available for viewing and downloading. If you are seeking documents that are not available through Document Explorer, please submit an electronic [Freedom of Information Request](#).



POLLUTION COMPLAINTS

Do you need to submit a pollution complaint? Illinois EPA is committed to responding to complaints as quickly as possible, and 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.

Our pollution complaint system is undergoing a major upgrade and will soon implement a central complaint database with an automatic emailing system. Through this upgrade, we hope to increase the amount of resolved complaints we work on across all Bureaus. We hope to be of even better service to you in responding to and investigating your pollution complaints.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Are you looking for a rewarding position at an Agency where you can be a long-term, career employee? The Illinois EPA continues to post a variety of job opportunities, including senior level positions. As a regulatory agency, 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. Postings are frequently updated on our [Employment webpage](#), so be sure to check back often. You can also follow us on our social media and [LinkedIn page](#).

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