

pennsylvania green and growing

STATE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Sustaining Pennsylvania's fine quality of life and steady economy goes hand in hand with environmental stewardship. The commonwealth's initiatives on energy, environmental cleanup, and green growth testify to the belief that an investment in the environment is an investment in the future.

Pennsylvania is adopting programs that implement energy independence and conservation, green building practices, and environmental cleanup—smart strategies that not only reduce the impact on fields and forests but on homes and businesses as well, making the region more competitive, saving millions in energy and regulatory-compliance costs, and attracting and keeping the best employees. Virtually every sector of the economy—from transportation and energy to manufacturing and agriculture to education and health care—benefits from this vital effort.

Through such initiatives as Governor Edward G. Rendell's agenda for energy independence, Pennsylvania is taking concrete steps toward lowering energy costs, attracting business capital, creating jobs, and eliminating dependence on foreign sources of energy. The savings may seem small at first, but they will grow rapidly. Residential customers, for instance, will save about \$73 a year, commercial customers will save about \$425 a year, and industrial customers will save about \$10,500 a year—which works out to a savings of \$10 billion over the next decade. The state has already gathered hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment, with an expected \$3.5 billion still to come, and created thousands of jobs in the alternative energies sector. As the state's energy production and technology sectors expand, they will attract even more capital and create even more jobs. And, of course, the more energy we collect, harness, pump, mine, and grow here at home, the less of it we need to ship in from elsewhere. Pennsylvania's recent commitment to derive a fifth of its energy from wind and solar, meanwhile, makes it the biggest buyer of green energy among the states.

Keeping the environment clean and green doesn't mean a sacrifice in comfort and profits. On the contrary, improved environmental protections not only lead to an improved quality of human life, they also lead to improved efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness in business. Pennsylvania is remediating mines and abandoned industrial sites, reducing emissions from its fleet of government cars and trucks, cleaning up its rivers and streams, and preserving natural areas and open space. Employing green building techniques leads to increased property values, enhanced recreational and tourism opportunities, cleaner air and water, and lower utility costs—all combining to make Pennsylvania ever more attractive as a place to live and work. Through balanced development, both the business and residential communities will continue to thrive.

Pennsylvania is no newcomer to the green bandwagon. Its "Clean and Green" Act of 1974 provides real estate tax benefits to landowners who use their acreage for crops, woodlots, or public outdoor recreation, and Benjamin Franklin—perhaps the commonwealth's most famous resident—extolled the virtues of clean living and social responsibility nearly three centuries ago in *Poor Richard's Almanack*. Brownfield development, preservation and reuse of historic properties, and revitalization of the commonwealth's commercial and business districts offer further means of enhancing Pennsylvania's reputation as a great place to live, work, and play.

In these and many other ways, residents and businesses alike are joining with the government to make Pennsylvania a model of environmental stewardship.