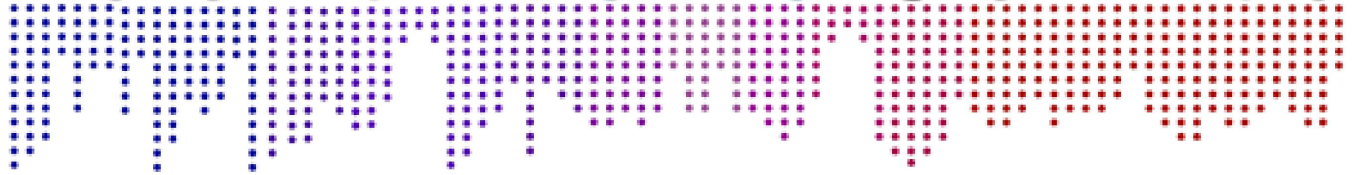




Tuesday, November 30, 2021

# Public News Service



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## PA Becomes 2nd State to Offer Climate-Change Leadership Training



Play



The majority of Pennsylvania's greenhouse-gas emissions are from energy consumption. (Adobe Stock)

 **Emily Scott, Producer**

 **Contact**

 **Why you can trust Public News Service**

**Friday, September 10, 2021** 

HARRISBURG, Pa. -- Pennsylvania is now the second state in the country to launch a program focused on training state and local leaders on tackling the challenges of climate change.

The Pennsylvania [Climate Leadership Academy](#), run by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), wrapped up its first program this week. About 150 people from nonprofits, state agencies, local governments and universities participated in the online courses that discussed the impacts of climate change on communities and policy-driven solutions to mitigate its effects.

Heidi Kunsch, environmental group manager for the Energy Programs Office at the DEP, said civic engagement is key to addressing environmental concerns.

"It's not about doom and gloom," Kunsch explained. "It's about taking action and all hands on deck. All of us, down to the homeowner, making changes in our own homes with the way we use energy and with the way we commute. It starts with each of us. Every one of us has a role to play."

Maryland was the first state in the U.S. to launch a Climate Leadership Academy. The next part of the training,

called the Certified Climate Change Professional Program, starts in October and will offer courses on topics including climate science, greenhouse-gas emission inventories and vulnerability assessments.

Kate Semmens, science director at the Nurture Nature Center in Easton, which helps that community learn about environmental risks, is a participant in the Climate Leadership Academy. She helped develop a vulnerability assessment and Climate Action Plan for Easton, which is at the confluence of the Delaware and Lehigh rivers and at risk of flooding.

Semmens said the academy is important for municipality leaders because climate-change risks will have a direct impact on residents.

"A lot of the actions that these decision-makers can take related to climate change have co-benefits," Semmens contended. "They're gonna help with air and water quality. They're gonna help with human health. Having that understanding that you can make these changes that are going to have multiple beneficial impacts is really important going forward."

Pennsylvania's average temperature has risen nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit since 1900. [According to DEP data](#), the temperature will rise another 5.9 degrees by 2050 unless greenhouse-gas emissions are cut.

References: [Climate Leadership Academy Pa. Dept. of Environmental Protection 2021](#)  
[Climate impact assessment Pa. Dept. of Environmental Protection May 2021](#)

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