



# NEWS

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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### Montgomery County to Continue Climate Action Efforts

#### Statement of Valerie Arkoosh, Chair, and Kenneth Lawrence, Jr, Vice Chair, Montgomery County Board of Commissioners

**Norristown, PA (June 7, 2017)** – Valerie A. Arkoosh, MD, MPH, Chair, and Kenneth E. Lawrence, Jr., Vice Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners are providing a statement on joining local governments and organizations working to combat climate change. The statement is as follows:

“Montgomery County, PA is joining hundreds of mayors and county officials who are committed to reducing their carbon footprint. Climate change is a scientific fact, and we must work together to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The health and wellbeing of Montgomery County residents is at stake and that is a responsibility I take very seriously.

Over the last 10 years, as part of our efforts to curb greenhouse emissions, a total of 136,502 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent has been avoided in buildings and facilities owned or operated by Montgomery County, PA. By focusing on reduction of energy consumption, environmentally friendly transportation purchases, recycling, and open space preservation we can continue to build on these efforts.

Among the county-based initiatives over the last 10 years:

- Within county buildings, lighting and HVAC upgrades have meant a reduction in energy consumption and a cost savings over time.
- Beginning in 2014, \$2.4 million in water and energy conservation measures have been implemented at the Montgomery County Courthouse. The conservation measures provide approximately \$4.2 million in cost savings through the county’s 20-year energy performance contract with Constellation.
- Ten vehicles have been purchased under the alternative vehicles purchase project for Assets and Infrastructure and other departments. This includes: the Ford Fusion Energi PHEV (plug-in hybrid electric vehicle), the Ford Super Duty F-350 and F-550, the Chevrolet City Express Cargo Van, and the Ford Transit Wagon. These vehicles represent electric, Bi-fuel (gasoline and CNG), Propane Fuel, and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel types.

- An electric vehicle charging station was added in the Courthouse garage.
- More than 90 miles of trails have been constructed to promote commuting by bicycle and pedestrians, and to encourage healthy lifestyles. Over 10 additional miles of trails are either in design or under construction.
- The county has continuously participated in several Federal grant programs: Sunshot 1, Sunshot2, and Solsmart. These are three phases of a US Department of Energy grant program with the goal of reducing the soft costs of implementing solar projects (soft costs refers to the permitting, zoning, acquiring and educating customers, financing – essentially everything other than the panels and wiring).
- We have increased county parkland in greenway corridors and worked with local municipalities to preserve their greenways. The county's greenways, which are primarily along its streams and rivers, connect the county's natural environment, providing important habitat preservation, wildlife corridors, and floodwater storage. Last fall more than 1,100 trees were planted on mainly county park land along the Perkiomen Creek through a partnership with the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy.
- We have approved a five year \$15 million dollar plan developed by our Open Space and Parks Boards to conserve more than 400 high priority acres of open space and natural areas around our parks and trails.
- In partnership with the state, we have tripled the amount of farmland preservation funding available which has enabled us to add to the more than 9,000 acres of already preserved farmland in the county.
- In partnership with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), we have promoted the use of LED lighting in streetlights and traffic signals in sustainability plans for municipalities under contract and assisted them in receiving grants to fund LED lighting. The DVRPC says in addition to \$1.4 million in annual savings, the new LED lights will also see an annual reduction of 5,500 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the region.

The county will continue with these efforts and in finding new ways to reduce our carbon footprint to protect the county, the region, and the world from the negative impact of climate change.”