

PERC NEWSLETTER

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HIGHER EDUCATION CONNECTING,
COLLABORATING, AND TAKING ACTION

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DICKINSON:
RENEWABLE
ENERGY FROM
CAMPUS WASTE

Brightside Report!



EU WASTE REGULATIONS

For 2030, the EU enacted legally binding waste reduction targets for manufacturing (10%) and retail, restaurants, and homes (30%).



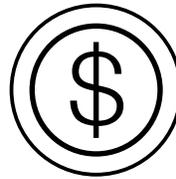
BEAVER COUNTY AIR QUALITY TRACKING

Tracking PM 2.5, ozone, and NO₂, the Marcellus Awareness Community tool, *Eyes on the Air*, is live for residents to learn about their air quality.



AOTEAROA (NEW ZEALAND) MOUNTAIN'S PERSONHOOD

Government officials in Aotearoa now legally recognize Taranaki Maunga as a person, thus ensuring its protection and acknowledging its role as a Māori ancestor.



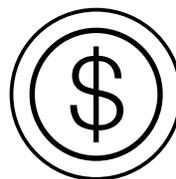
GLOBAL CLEAN ENERGY INVESTMENT RECORD

In 2024, BloombergNEF found that over \$2 trillion was invested globally in clean energy technology and implementation- a new record!



HAWAIIAN FUNGI "EATS" PLASTIC WASTE

Researchers at the University of Hawai'i discovered fungi capable of "eating" and breaking down ocean plastic pollution.



SEAWEED DECREASES COW METHANE OUTPUT

With no impacts on age or health, researchers found that incorporating seaweed pellets into cattle feed can decrease methane emissions.



2ND STATE DECLARES FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY'S LIABILITY

New York State passed legislation that orders key fossil fuel corporations to provide compensation for climate change damages.

DICKINSON COLLEGE

RENEWABLE ENERGY FROM CAMPUS WASTE

Stepping onto Dickinson's College Farm, one may not be surprised to see 50 types of fruits and vegetables, livestock, and even the yurts. Yet, what you may not anticipate seeing is a 115,000-gallon tank on the property. Full of what, you may ask? The future of clean campus energy!

Since 2020, Dickinson's farm has been home to a biodigester—an anaerobic digestion tool that converts waste into clean, renewable energy without the presence of oxygen. The project was built on the back of the college's farm compost project that began in 2008. In partnership with Triple L Farm, Dickinson's Farm received \$1.3 million for the project's creation. Daily, Dickinson's biodigester handles the manure from 150 on-site cows and two tons of campus food waste. With an added 1,000 pounds of spent grain per week added to the mix, Dickinson's biodigester produces between 200 and 300,000 kilowatt hours per year of electricity.

Now, what does that equate to in everyday life? The produced amount of electricity covers the farm's operational power needs and meets the demand of approximately

thirty local homes via an electricity buy-back program, thus serving as a net exporter. Furthermore, this project is the only one based at a Northeastern institution that has reached the status of a net exporter. Yet, the produced renewable energy is not the only benefit of the biodigester, as the project also helps to eliminate farm-based runoff and avoid methane emissions.

Since its implementation, the farm's biodigester has won the Leadership award from Energy Vision, received a \$250,000 award for upgrades, and hosted prominent Pennsylvania leaders to showcase the project's success. As the benefits of biodigesters continue gaining visibility through projects like Dickinson's, biodigesters will hopefully become a commonplace method for universities to contribute to the clean energy movement.



CONSTRUCTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL BIODIGESTER

Policy Radar



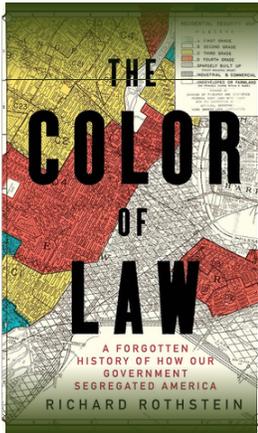
As the federal policy space continues to rapidly unfold, this section provides a brief non-partisan introduction of current key policies, their implementation date, and their implications.

Policy or Action	Effective	Implication	Source
Executive Order (no number): Improving Education Outcomes by Empowering Parents, States, and Communities	3/20/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretary of Education will work towards closing the Department of Education and return “main functions” back to the states, including financial, special needs, and food programs and processes. • Complete closure of the department is illegal unless voted into law by Congress, which has not occurred. 	1, 2, 3
EPA Deregulatory Actions (31 total, please check EPA’s website for all)	1/20/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unleashing American Energy (under reconsideration for deregulation): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Power Plant Regulations ◦ Oil and Gas Industry Regulations ◦ Mercury and Air Toxics Standards ◦ Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program ^{5 6} ◦ Steam Electric Power Generating Industry ◦ Oil and Gas Wastewater regulations ◦ Risk Management Program rule ⁷ • Lowering the Cost of Living for American Families (under reconsideration for deregulation): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Vehicle regulations ◦ Technology Transition Rule ⁸ ◦ PM 2.5 National Ambient Air Quality Standards ◦ National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants ◦ Regional Haze Program ^{9 10} ◦ Overhaul the “Social Cost of Carbon” ◦ Termination of Environmental Justice and DEI arms of the EPA • Advancing Cooperative Federalism (under reconsideration for deregulation): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Ending the “Good Neighbor Plan” ^{11 12} ◦ Changing the Science Advisory Board and Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee ◦ Prioritizing coal ash program permit reviews and changing regulations 	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

Media Roundup

THIS WEEK'S SUSTAINABILITY MEDIA RECOMMENDATIONS!

BOOK



The Color of Law by Richard Rothstein

Dive into the history of racial segregation in the United States, as it relates to housing, environmental justice, and more. Expand your personal understanding of how policies from less than 200 years ago influence countless American realities today.

FILM



A Guerilla Gardener in South Central LA by Ron Finley

To combat the growing impact of food deserts in his local neighborhood, Ron Finley began “guerilla gardening,” but what does that entail? Watch Ron’s viral TED talk to find out!

PODCAST



“Community Investment is the missing piece of Climate Action” by TED Climate

The founder of Elemental Excelsior, Dawn Lippert, discusses the benefits of investing in communities when looking to rebalance the current “investment equation.” Learn about the existing investment gap between in climate tech and in frontline communities, and Lippert’s proposed new equation.



UPCOMING EVENTS

PERC EVENTS

- *Under Increasing Uncertainty* Webinar Series (RSVP)
 - Federal Funding Shifts -- 3/27
 - Continuing Institutional Sustainability Work -- 4/3
 - Navigating Sustainability Jobs -- 4/10
- 2025 Campus Sustainability Champions Celebration
 - April 24th, 7 PM on Zoom
 - Must RSVP!

OTHER EVENTS

- Sustainable Energy Fund's EnergyPath Conference
 - July 16, 2025
 - DeSales University
 - Speaker proposals are open!

MEMBER SCHOOL EVENTS

- Bucknell's 12th Sustainability Symposium: Change Makers and Community Builders
 - April 3rd from 12:00-5:30 pm
 - Bucknell University
 - Must RSVP!
- Dickinson College's 2025 Valley & Ridge Faculty Development Workshop
 - May 20th-22nd
 - Dickinson College
 - Must RSVP by March 28th!

HAVE AN EVENT?

EMAIL OLIVIADIPRINZIO@GMAIL.COM

Resources



<u>Reference Number</u>	<u>Link</u>
<u>1</u>	https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/03/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-empowers-parents-states-and-communities-to-improve-education-outcomes/
<u>2</u>	https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/statement-president-trumps-executive-order-return-power-over-education-states-and-local-communities
<u>3</u>	https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-launches-biggest-deregulatory-action-us-history
<u>4</u>	https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-launches-biggest-deregulatory-action-us-history
<u>5</u>	https://www.epa.gov/ghgreporting/learn-about-greenhouse-gas-reporting-program-ghgrp
<u>6</u>	https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2025-03/fact-sheet-reconsideration-of-the-greenhouse-gas-reporting-rule-general.pdf
<u>7</u>	https://www.epa.gov/rmp/risk-management-program-rmp-rule-overview
<u>8</u>	https://www.epa.gov/climate-hfcs-reduction/technology-transitions
<u>9</u>	https://www.epa.gov/visibility/regional-haze-program
<u>10</u>	https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2025-03/fact-sheet-reconsideration-of-the-regional-haze-program.pdf
<u>11</u>	https://www.epa.gov/Cross-State-Air-Pollution/good-neighbor-plan-2015-ozone-naaqs
<u>12</u>	https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2025-03/good-neighbor-plan_powering-the-great-american-comeback_fact-sheet.pdf