

*Helping communities and businesses access compliance, technical  
and financial assistance for their environmental needs*

### Jon Bernstein Named Chief of DEFA

Director Stevenson recently asked Jon Bernstein to serve as the new chief of the Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA) to replace Jerry Rouch who was recently named Deputy Director of Infrastructure Funding.

Jon joined the Agency in 2007 and had been the assistant chief of DEFA's Office of Financial Assistance since 2019. Upon joining the Agency, Jon worked in the Division of Surface Water in the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation NPDES program. In this role, he wrote NPDES permits, performed inspections of large animal feeding operations, and responded to complaints and spills.

Jon transferred to DEFA in 2013 as a project engineer and has also held roles as the Engineering Unit supervisor, loans and grants manager, and as the assistant chief. Jon earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Ohio University in 2007 and has been an Ohio-licensed professional engineer since 2012. He also holds a GIS Certificate from Columbus State Community College. Jon and his wife Dana live in the Glen Echo neighborhood of Columbus with their four cats Bowie, Maynard, Oliver, and Sid Vicious.



### Recording of Infrastructure Funding Overview Webinar is now on YouTube

Ohio EPA recently held an infrastructure funding overview webinar. Ohio EPA invited all interested parties to hear about future water and wastewater infrastructure funding in Ohio, including funds being made available from the recent federal infrastructure bill. An historic amount of state and federal funding is now accessible to Ohio utilities, including funds from the state revolving fund programs, the H2Ohio initiative, and the recently passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. In the webinar, Ohio EPA described the current funding framework, and discussed preliminary information available about the federal infrastructure bill related to water and wastewater infrastructure funding. To watch the recorded webinar, go to our YouTube Channel at <https://youtu.be/livf2HcFbnNs> Questions? Email [InfrastructureFunding@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:InfrastructureFunding@epa.ohio.gov).



### Inside this Issue

#### Funding Assistance

- Infrastructure Funding Overview — 1

#### Compliance Assistance

- Haz Waste Biennial Report Due March 1 — 3
- GIS Mapping for Property Revitalization/VAP — 5
- Environmental Resilience Tools — 6

#### Pollution Prevention Assistance

- E3 Communities Award — 3
- Procter & Gamble is a Safer Choice Partner — 4

#### Features and Other News

- Jon Bernstein Named Chief — 1
- Ohio EPA's New Website — 2
- Industrial Recycling Survey — 4
- Deadlines — 8
- Training Opportunities — 8
- Learn the Lingo — 5
- Meet the Staff — 7

For more information go to  
[epa.ohio.gov/defa](http://epa.ohio.gov/defa)

Articles in this newsletter may be reprinted. As a courtesy, please contact Helen Miller at (614) 644-2817 or [helen.miller@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:helen.miller@epa.ohio.gov).

## Ohio EPA Launches New Web Site

Ohio EPA recently launched a new website. Our new website is designed to make it easier to find what you need to interact with us and to increase the quality of our interaction.

First things first- we have the same Domain. Our main URL domain is still [epa.ohio.gov](http://epa.ohio.gov).

Update your Bookmarks. Everything else after our main domain has changed, so you'll need to spend some time to find your preferred content and update your bookmarks.

Reach out if you need help. The new website is just the beginning of a new dynamic between Ohio EPA and you. If you have problems finding the information you need, please [e-mail](#) us or use our [general contact form](#). If you're reporting a broken link, please include the web address of the page you were on and/or the breadcrumb path as shown below.



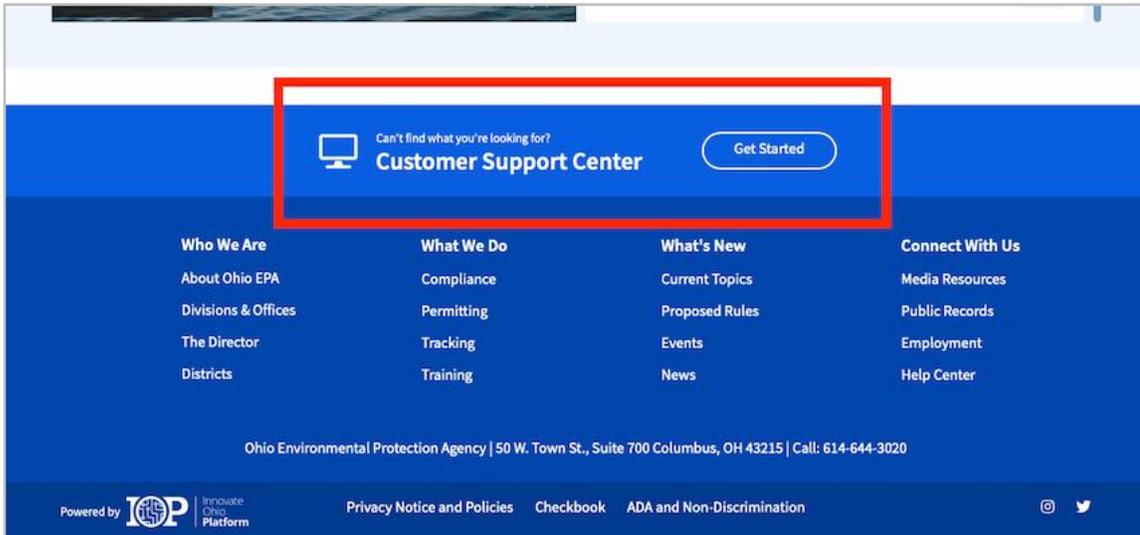
[Ohio EPA](#) / [Divisions & Offices](#) / [Environmental & Financial Assistance](#) / [Announcements](#) / [DEFA Announcements](#)

For technical questions about permits or regulations, please use our [Ask a Question](#) feature through the Customer Support Center. We know digital channels are constantly evolving and improving. Please let us know what you think using our [website feedback form](#).

Here are some of the highlights of what you will find on our new website, our main navigation was redefined to reflect what constituents and organizations expect to do when visiting our website.

- Stay Compliant – I want to be compliant with Ohio EPA regulations, where do I start?
- Make a Difference – I want to help from my own trench, how do I learn more?
- Monitor Pollution – I want to know about our environmental status.
- Get Funding – I want to know how I can get financial aid for a project.
- Find Regulations – I want to find a specific law or rule.

Our Search is available throughout the site and was improved to deliver more accurate results. The Customer Support Center is easily accessible at the bottom footer from any page.



## Seven Ohio Communities Awarded Ohio EPA's First Encouraging Environmental Excellence for Communities Award

Several Ohio communities were highlighted at our September 2021 Virtual Sustainability Conference for receiving the first community environmental stewardship awards from Ohio EPA.

The Encouraging Environmental Excellence for Communities (E3C) program recognizes communities for implementing environmental stewardship initiatives through environmental, economic, and social programs and activities. The program's three levels include Implementation Level, which requires completion of one environmental activity; Stewardship Level, requiring completion of activities in two environmental, one economic, and one social activity; and Sustainable Level, requiring completion of four environmental, two economic, and two social activities.

Ohio EPA Director Laurie A. Stevenson recognized the city of Dublin and Westerville Energy Division at the Stewardship level. Bradford Wastewater, Greater Cincinnati Water Works, Northwestern Water and Sewer District, city of Upper Arlington, Willard Wastewater Treatment Plant were recognized at the Implementation level of the new Encouraging Environmental Excellence for Communities awards. To read details about the winners, go to our [press release](#). Go to our [YouTube Channel](#) to listen to our conference session recognizing the communities.

The Encouraging Environmental Excellence for Communities (E3C) recognizes a community's exceptional achievements in environmental stewardship. Any local government of Ohio can be recognized for its commitment to environmental excellence. Applications are evaluated using environmental stewardship and related activities developed by Ohio EPA. The goal of environmental stewardship is to reduce the impact of business or organizational activities on the environment beyond measures required by any permit or rule, producing a better environment, conserving natural resources, and resulting in long-term economic benefits. Applicants must be in compliance with environmental laws and regulations. Applications use a checklist and narrative format and are accepted at any time. Once a community has met the requirements for a level of recognition, they can submit the information for review. E3C awardees at each level receive a plaque, an E3C decal and a flag commemorating their achievements. More information about the E3C program is available [online](#) or by calling Ohio EPA's Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention at 1-800-329-7518.



*“Local projects can have the greatest impacts on protecting and improving our environment,” Director Stevenson said. “These communities deserve recognition for going beyond what regulations require and setting a standard for other communities to follow.”*

## Hazardous Waste Biennial Report Due March 1, 2022

The 2021 hazardous waste biennial report is due on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. Filing is easy, using Ohio EPA's eBusiness Center service called eDRUMS. Due to adoption of new rules on 10/5/2020, more types of facilities must file than just large quantity generators and permitted treatment, storage, or disposal facilities. Reverse distributors of hazardous waste pharmaceuticals and certain types of recyclers must also submit a report. For questions, please contact Alexandra Pappas at [alexandra.pappas@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:alexandra.pappas@epa.ohio.gov) or Paula Canter at [paula.canter@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:paula.canter@epa.ohio.gov).

Go to our [Hazardous Waste Reporting web page](#) for more information on:

- Who must file;
- Quick reference documents;
- Information on how to file electronically, along with a link to a video on our YouTube Channel; and
- Links to paper forms and documents.

## Procter & Gamble is Recognized as a Safer Choice Partner of the Year by U.S. EPA

U.S. EPA recognized Procter & Gamble Company (P&G), Cincinnati, Ohio as an outstanding Safer Choice Formulator-Product Manufacturer in 2021. P&G has been a Safer Choice partner since 2019. In 2020, they added 12 products to their Safer Choice-certified line and updated two formulations. P&G designed, formulated, and manufactured their first complete Safer Choice-certified brand portfolio that is a collection of fabric and home care products. These products were designed specially to address cleaning issues in the many hard water regions of the United States. The product line contains nine ingredients that are identified by commonly recognized names for ease of understanding by consumers. Safer Choice commends P&G for their commitment to developing products that are safer for consumers and for the environment.



*The Safer Choice* program helps consumers and purchasers for facilities, such as schools and office buildings, find products that perform and are safer for human health and the environment. This year's awardees have all shown a commitment to pollution prevention by reducing, eliminating, or preventing pollution at its source prior to recycling, treatment, or disposal. The 2021 Partner of the Year award winners represent a wide variety of leadership organizations from each of the 10 EPA regions. These include businesses, comprising small- and medium-sized companies and women-owned companies; state and local governments; non-governmental organizations; associations; and others.

More than 2,000 products currently qualify to carry the Safer Choice label. Safer Choice products are available **for your home at retail stores** and **for use in facilities like schools, hotels, offices, and sports venues**.

## Ohio EPA's Division of Materials and Waste Management (DMWM) Industrial Recycling Survey

Ohio EPA wants to hear from you! We are asking businesses like yours to complete a short survey to tell us about your recycling needs. We want to know what recycling assistance you wish was available and would find useful. We value your input and know your time is precious. That is why we made sure this survey will take just a few minutes. Even if you already have a successful recycling program, your insight is helpful. Just answer the questions as if you were starting a new recycling program.

We will not contact you unless you indicate you want us to. If you want to be contacted, then please complete the last three questions of the survey which ask for contact information.

Ohio's 88 counties are organized into 52 solid waste management districts. One of their roles is to provide technical assistance to help businesses start and improve recycling programs. We will share what you tell us with the solid waste management districts. Your answers will help the solid waste management districts develop programs to address your needs. If you are not familiar with solid waste management districts, you can refer to our fact sheet [Solid Waste Management Districts](#).

Here is the link to the survey: [https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=xPz4UNiUB0-E6zbtV8flohDcWsX-fVCurroZ\\_PLIyZUNVUyOTNFSTcxQkhDRzhMMERWREIINk9RMi4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=xPz4UNiUB0-E6zbtV8flohDcWsX-fVCurroZ_PLIyZUNVUyOTNFSTcxQkhDRzhMMERWREIINk9RMi4u)



Thank you for investing your time in our research. For questions, please contact [Ernest.stall@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:Ernest.stall@epa.ohio.gov).

# Ohio EPA Launches GIS Mapping Tool for Property Revitalization/Voluntary Action Program

## Learn the Lingo

**Voluntary Action Program (VAP):** This program was created by Ohio EPA to give companies a way to investigate possible environmental contamination, clean it up if necessary and receive a legal release from the State of Ohio that no more cleanup is needed.

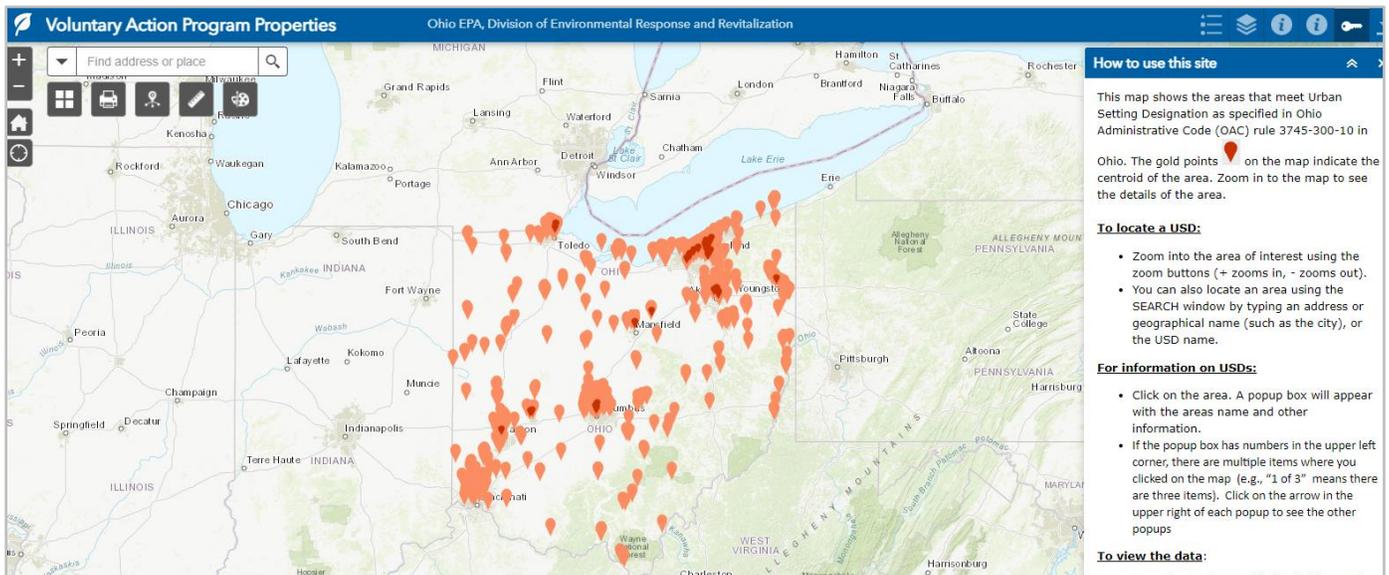
Ohio EPA has launched an **online GIS mapping tool** the public can use to track and research properties that have completed investigation/remediation work under Ohio EPA's **Voluntary Action Program (VAP)**. The sites detailed on this **GIS application** have been granted a Covenant Not to Sue (CNS) by the Agency, which protects the property owner or operator and future owners from legal responsibility to the State of Ohio for further environmental investigation and remediation relating to known releases.

The announcement coincided with the VAP's 27th anniversary. Since the program's launch, records for CNS's have been housed at county recorder's offices, as well as within Ohio EPA's older document storage facilities and applications. With this new online mapping tool, information about properties that have gone through the VAP will be easier to navigate, allowing organizations to better visualize redevelopment opportunities in Ohio communities.

Ohio EPA recognizes the need to remove the environmental and legal barriers that can stall redevelopment and reuse of potentially contaminated and contaminated properties. Through the voluntary efforts of the property owners and associated certified professionals, each of these properties has met the respective environmental standards for safe reuse and redevelopment.

The covenant not to sue protections apply only when the property is used and maintained according to the specified terms and conditions. Since the Voluntary Action Program was created in 1994, more than 15,700 acres of contaminated land on 670 sites in 71 counties have been investigated and/or remediated, and subsequently received covenants not to sue.

*"As Ohio works to open opportunities for economic redevelopment throughout the state, technology like this can make it easier to market Ohio to potential investors," said Governor Mike DeWine. "Properties that once may have been written off as low-value brownfields are now certified as environmentally ready for commercial or industrial use."*



## U.S. EPA's Environmental Resilience Tools Wizard

The **Environmental Resilience Tools Wizard (ERTW)** contains tools produced by U.S. EPA that address environmental concerns in disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. It is an online wizard that helps you find the right resource to meet your needs.

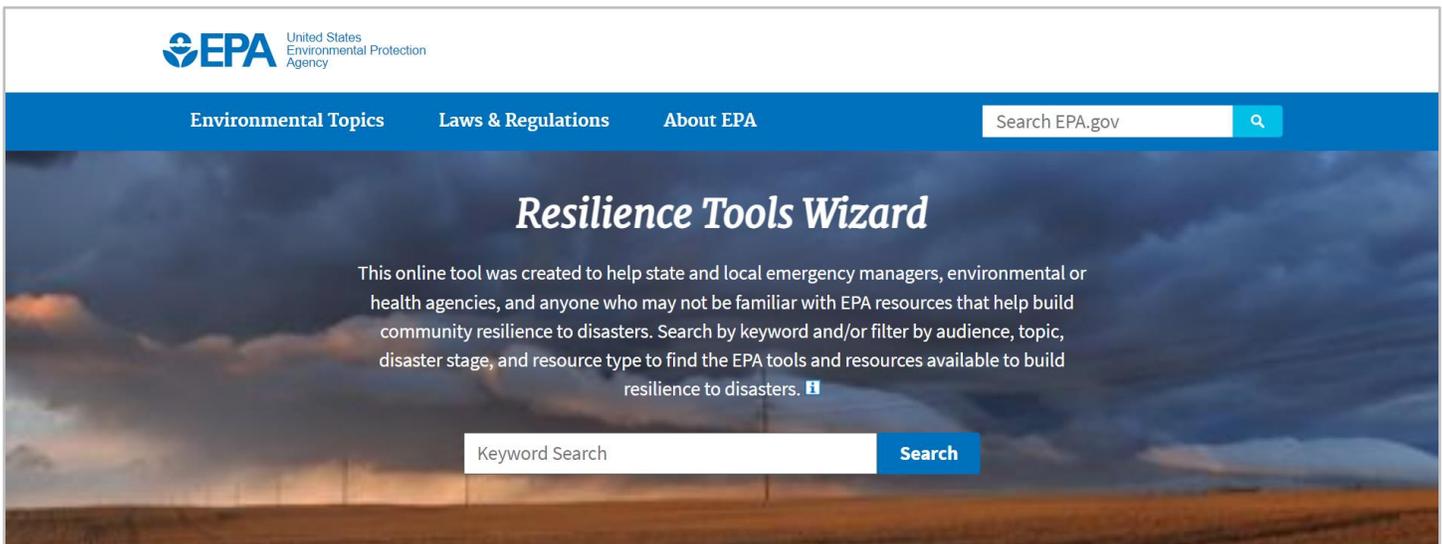
The ERTW is intended for use by state, local, and emergency managers who need to address disaster environmental concerns. It may also be of interest to cities and counties implementing hazard mitigation plans, researchers, drinking water and wastewater utilities, and community or environmental organizations.

You do not need to download any software. Once in the wizard, you can find tools using keyword search and the filter. The tools are listed on information cards in the center of the wizard. Each card provides a web link to the tool and describes how to use it to build community resilience to disasters. You can export results as a pdf or csv file. It works best with Chrome or Firefox browsers.

The ERTW contains publicly available tools produced by U.S. EPA, including scientific models, guidance documents, case studies, checklists, datasets, fact sheets, and technical support. They address environmental concerns that may arise in disasters, including air quality, water quality, environmental justice, ecosystems, sustainability, and waste. They may be used for different types of disasters, including oil spills, wildfires, flooding, hurricanes, disease outbreaks, tornados, earthquakes, and chemical or radiological accidents. The ERTW categorizes incidents as: environmental and health emergencies, geophysical disasters, and extreme weather. They may be used during different stages of disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

The ERTW was developed by U.S. EPA's Office of Research and Development. To learn more about the research that went into it, check out the resilience tools inventory report at:

[https://cfpub.epa.gov/sils/public\\_record\\_report.cfm?Lab=NHSRC&dirEntryId=311248](https://cfpub.epa.gov/sils/public_record_report.cfm?Lab=NHSRC&dirEntryId=311248). If you have questions about the ERTW, email [toolswizard@epa.gov](mailto:toolswizard@epa.gov).



The screenshot shows the EPA website's navigation bar with links for Environmental Topics, Laws & Regulations, and About EPA. A search bar is present in the top right. The main content area features the title "Resilience Tools Wizard" and a descriptive paragraph: "This online tool was created to help state and local emergency managers, environmental or health agencies, and anyone who may not be familiar with EPA resources that help build community resilience to disasters. Search by keyword and/or filter by audience, topic, disaster stage, and resource type to find the EPA tools and resources available to build resilience to disasters." Below the text is a search input field labeled "Keyword Search" and a blue "Search" button.

## Meet the Staff

### Kerri Chung

Kerri joined DEFA in the summer of 2021 in the environmental engineering unit. She graduated from the Ohio State University with a bachelor's degree in ecological engineering.

#### How long have you worked for Ohio EPA?

I was an intern in the Division of Air Pollution Control DAPC in 2016. I returned to Ohio EPA in July 2021 after working in both the Environmental Services and Civil Engineering groups at a consulting firm.

#### What excites you the most about the work that you do or your field of study?

The impact we can make on not only the environment but people's quality of life and their outlook on protecting the environment.

#### Favorite memory or accomplishment with the Agency or related to your field?

I have a lot of little victories I've appreciated since entering the workforce, but one of my favorites was producing my first stormwater master plan for an industrial park. The company I had recently joined won one of their largest industrial design projects, so I had to hit the ground running. After weeks spent staring at contour lines, soils maps, and HydroCAD outputs, I finally had one 22"x34" plan sheet with 20+ basins (and functioning outlet structures!) over a nearly 1,000-acre property that would become the basis of design for all the individual parcels.

#### What are your favorite things to do outside of work?

Trying new restaurants and breweries around Columbus and going to Ohio State football games. I also love just hanging out on the couch with our three dogs after a day of work.

#### Who inspires you?

My mom and my high school biology teacher. My mom has degrees in biology, chemistry, and science education. I had the privilege of growing up doing science experiments at home and listening to explanations of things like how frogs have three-chambered hearts. I've always been grateful to have such a strong female role model in the STEM field. My biology teacher was my first introduction to environmental science and taught me what it really means to think global, act local. He has always been great at showing people how special their "backyard" is and motivating them to protect their local resources via education.

### Samira Deeb

Samira received a bachelor's degree in public health, specializing in environmental health, from The Ohio State University, and a master's in public health from Kent State University.

#### How long have you worked for Ohio EPA?

I joined the Agency unofficially in the winter of 2015 as a public health student working and learning alongside toxicologists in the air toxics unit. I officially joined the Agency as a summer air pollution intern and following my internship, joined the air monitoring unit as an environmental specialist (ES) I. In August 2016, I transitioned to an ES II with Central District Office as an air pollution inspector and permit writer. I joined the Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention (OCAPP) team in September 2021, and I am delighted to be part of an enthusiastic and dynamic team!

#### What excites you the most about the work that you do or your field of study?

My academic training is in public health and environmental health – and I am drawn to the field's holistic approach to solving complex problems. During my time at the Agency, I have immersed myself in learning all aspects of air pollution – and I take pride in using my air knowledge to assist the regulated community in understanding complex air regulations and adopting pollution prevention measures when possible – that ultimately ensure public health and the environment are protected.



## Favorite memory or accomplishment with the Agency or related to your field?

My favorite (and most challenging but rewarding) experience at the agency was working alongside the City of Columbus on a large-scale co-gen sustainability project. The project aimed to use the methane-rich biogas produced by one of Columbus' sewage treatment plants to fuel generators and produce electric power and heat. Instead of flaring the biogas and releasing pollutants into ambient air - the diverted gas is to be used as fuel and sustain the plant operations. The air permitting was complex, but we worked diligently together – and I was able to produce an air permit that met all the project's goals and clearly identified all applicable rules.

## What are your favorite things to do outside of work?

In the spring and summer – it is very likely that you will find me in my backyard digging, planting, and pruning (while listening to music and podcasts way too loudly) – as I aspire to transform the yard into a peaceful and green space to enjoy with friends and family. I have planted lots of native plants and culinary herbs – but my pride and joy are the hardy fig trees! I enjoy traveling and exploring new countries and cultures. On my trip to Columbia, I spent time in the coffee region, learning about coffee farming, and spent time in Medellin, experiencing how creative urban transportation can economically transform rural and urban communities.

## Who inspires you?

I am inspired daily in my interactions with colleagues, friends, and family!

---

## Deadlines

- March 1, 2022, **Hazardous Waste Biennial Report** due.
- March 4, 2022, **Water Supply Revolving Loan Account** project nominations due for program year 2023.

---

## Training Opportunities

### Ohio EPA Training Opportunities

- Feb. 24, 2022 - **Preparing a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP Tips)**
- March 16, 2022 - **Grant Writing Workshops 2022**. Registration is required for this FREE **workshop**, email [dennis.clement@epa.ohio.gov](mailto:dennis.clement@epa.ohio.gov) to register.

### Other Training Opportunities

- March 9-10, 2022 - **Ohio Safety Congress & Expo**, virtual booth sales are open, Ohio Bureau of Worker's Compensation.
- March 8, 2022 - Environmental Sessions Day:
  - **NPDES Construction Stormwater 102**
  - **Decoding RCRA: Navigating the Basics of Hazardous**
  - **Ohio EPA's Air Pollution Permit Requirements**
  - **What to expect during an Ohio EPA Virtual Inspection**

Go to our new **Events Calendar** to see upcoming Ohio EPA training opportunities.

**Sign up** to receive electronic notifications about upcoming webinars, trainings, and conferences in our Customer Support Center.

Did you miss an Ohio EPA webinar? You can view recorded webinars on our **YouTube Channel**.

---

### Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA)

Helping communities and businesses access technical and financial assistance for their environmental needs.

---

**Contact Us**  
(614) 644-2798  
[epa.ohio.gov/defa/](http://epa.ohio.gov/defa/)

---

Compliance Assistance Hotline  
(800) 329-7518  
50 W. Town St., Suite 700  
Columbus, OH 43215

---