

Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)
Pennsylvania Cancer Coalition (PCC)
Environmental Health Workgroup (EHWG)

Meeting Notes

Date: May 20, 2025

Attendees: 8

Participants: Fern Gilkerson (Co-chair)

- Andre Green
- Ned Ketyer
- Michelle Botyrius
- Amy Whittaker
- Jennifer King
- Lisa Lorence
- Nate Burden

Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesdays of the month from 1:00pm-2:00pm. Any new and interested members referred to this workgroup must initially use the online form found on the [PCC website](#). They must also specifically request to join the [Environmental Health Workgroup](#). Click for the [PA Cancer Coalition website](#) and click for the [PA Cancer Control Plan](#).

[Past meeting notes can be found here.](#)

The EHWG Action Plan Document is on the [PCC Environmental Health Workgroup page](#).

During the meeting, members shared updates and resources and welcomed new members. The Education and Policy Subcommittees are seeking volunteers to lead, with interested members encouraged to contact Dani and Fern. The possible symposium day was discussed.

Symposium Discussion

Members decided to begin with a webinar series to build up momentum before holding a full symposium.

The group agreed that addressing PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) should be a priority.

University of Pittsburgh and Temple U Fox Chase Cancer Center can both assist with space if needed in the future.

There was also an agreement that the group needs to develop a more defined identity moving forward.

Education Subcommittee

The Education Subcommittee may collaborate with the Center for Environmental and Social Network of Southwestern Pennsylvania (CENSWPA) to plan a co-sponsored educational series. Proposed topics include radon, air quality, and general environmental health. Presentations should be stored in a shared folder and adapted to include a cancer-related perspective. Dani plans to distribute a survey to EHWG members to assess interest in specific topics and identify individuals or organizations to lead or co-lead each session.

Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee identified three of five key focus topics: environmental and health issues affecting firefighters, PFAS, and radon in schools. Two additional topics will be determined. Webinars and presentations may be designed to hold ‘Town Hall-style’ meetings for the public about relevant legislation, environmental health data, and cancer-related issues, empowering individuals to take informed action. The group hopes to involve state Representatives when possible and provide the public with advocacy tools, including pre-formatted letters and other materials for civic engagement.

Policy Subcommittee members are asked to create draft vision and mission statements for the Policy Subcommittee, a unifying statement for use with the Education Subcommittee, and updates on environmental health legislation moving through the Pennsylvania House and Senate. Additionally, members should share any legislative email lists they follow, opportunities for meetings with legislators, names of lawmakers working on related issues, relevant legislation for group advocacy, and a map of House and Senate committees that focus on environmental health.