



Natural gas plant a clean efficient energy source

As a “peaking” power plant, Lower Mount Bethel Energy plays an important role in the region providing power when electricity use is at its highest.

The plant uses natural gas to generate 600 megawatts of electricity. The gas is burned in two combustion turbines and the excess heat from these turbines is recycled and used to create steam to turn a separate steam turbine. This dual process — or combined cycle — makes the plant very energy-efficient.

“Lower Mount Bethel Energy is one of the cleanest and most efficient natural gas power plants in the country,” said Mike Magnan, who joined PPL in 2002 as plant manager of Lower Mount Bethel Energy. “But we’re always looking for ways to improve.”

The plant places a high priority on safety and will be applying for “Star” certification in the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s Voluntary Protection Program.

“Safety is always on the minds of the employees at Lower Mount Bethel Energy and has been a constant focus since the plant began operation in 2004,” Magnan said.



Companies that qualify for VPP status view OSHA standards as a minimum level of safety and health performance and set their own, more stringent, standards for effective employee protection. VPP participant sites generally experience 60 percent fewer lost-workday injuries than average sites of similar size in their industries.

“My top priorities are protecting the safety of my employees and preserving the environment,” Magnan said. “PPL won’t generate electricity at Lower Mount Bethel if those two things aren’t taken care of first.”

“Lower Mount Bethel Energy is equipped with modern emissions control technology that minimizes our impact on the environment.” “Because we are a combined cycle plant, we have very low emissions, and we work hard to ensure compliance with all state and federal requirements,” Magnan said.

“Safety is always on the minds of the employees at Lower Mount Bethel Energy.”

- Mike Magnan

Ospreys return to Martins Creek

Bird-watchers at Martins Creek celebrated sightings of osprey at all the nests near the plant.

“It’s amazing how their clocks work,” said John Drabic, supervisor of Safety, Health and Environmental Resources at Martins Creek. “Osprey returned to all three nesting sites at Martins Creek on the very same weekend.”

The osprey pairs at Martins Creek nest on a 69,000-volt power line tower, on a metal tower near the coal yard building and on a 230,000-volt power line tower.

“We were excited to see that one of the osprey returned with some bling,” said Drabic, referring to a leg band used to tag and track the birds. “We always band the peregrine falcon chicks before they fly away from the nest, but we haven’t been banding the ospreys since 1995. This is the first year we saw any leg bands on the ospreys.”



Upgrades improve pipeline's spill prevention efforts

When you operate a pipeline, preparing for the unexpected is a big part of the job.

For PPL Interstate Energy Company, which manages an 84-mile underground oil pipeline from a terminal and dispatch center in Lower Mount Bethel Township, being prepared means continuously improving and modifying facilities to improve spill prevention.

"The facilities we are adding to the Martins Creek terminal will greatly reduce the potential for an oil spill to reach the Delaware River," said Drew Cummings, manager of Operations, Safety and Environmental Affairs for PPL Interstate Energy.

PPL Interstate Energy is making upgrades to an existing storm-water drainage

system and building an additional retention basin to ensure nothing contaminated reaches the river.

"We constantly monitor the pipeline so that we can find potential problems," Cummings said. "The basin and drainage system upgrades provide another level of protection."

The upgrades, which are being done in compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Spill Prevention, Control and Countermeasure regulations, are expected to be completed in July.



PPL donates land, pledges money for environmental center

PPL has donated 9 acres of land and pledged \$75,000 to help Lower Mount Bethel Township build an environmental education and community center.

The new environmental center will be an important community resource, and the project complements the 215 acres PPL has set aside in the township for wildlife habitat, land preservation and public recreation.

The land donated by PPL is along the Martins Creek-Belvidere Highway near the township's recreational fields at Riverton — land that PPL also donated to the township. It is also near the north end of the Tekening Trails, a 5-mile network of scenic hiking trails through the woods and along the Delaware River.

PPL's pledge to support construction of the environmental center will be paid in three annual installments of \$25,000 to the Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association, a private nonprofit organization.

For several years, PPL has conducted educational programs on energy, nature and the environment both outdoors and at the Martins Creek power plant. PPL intends to use the environmental center for these programs in the future. The availability of a public building gives PPL an opportunity to increase the number of programs it offers.

In addition, PPL announced that it has granted Lower Mount Bethel the rights to use company property between DePues Ferry Road and Del Haven Road for a 2.5-mile hiking trail, supporting a township recreation initiative.



Photo courtesy of Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association

With nearly 50 people serving as a human conveyor belt, PPL volunteers were able to clear a logjam from Martins Creek in less than three hours during a project in honor of Earth Day on April 22.



Falcon family welcomes new additions

A pair of nesting falcons that reside at the Martins Creek power plant added three members to the family in May.

PPL employees checking the nest, which sits 350 feet up a 600-foot chimney stack at the plant, spotted the head of the first baby falcon snuggled underneath its parent.

“We then had to wait for Mom to shift a little and give us a split-second view of the chick and a chance to take its picture,” said Jack Hahn. “It was very young and may have hatched shortly before our arrival.”

On later visits to the nest, Hahn

was able to identify two more hatchlings. This is the third year that the falcon couple have raised a family at the Martins Creek plant.

PPL, working with the Pennsylvania Game Commission and other groups of naturalists, has been helping to restore falcons in Pennsylvania since the mid-1990s.

Falcons also are nesting at PPL’s headquarters building in Allentown and PPL’s Montour power plant in north central Pennsylvania. In 2006, there were only 16 known peregrine falcon nests in Pennsylvania.

Natural area dedicated

On Earth Day, PPL and the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources conducted a dedication ceremony for the Foul Rift Natural Area.

In addition to its beautiful collection of native plants, the Foul Rift Natural Area at PPL’s Martins Creek Environmental Preserve is noted for its mature and diverse forest, unusual rock formations and incredible views of the Delaware River.

The dedication was followed by a wildflower walk and invasive species removal project, coordinated by the local chapter of the Sierra Club. Volunteers pulled invasive garlic mustard in sensitive areas where it is threatening columbine and other native plants.

PPL Martins Creek
6605 Foul Rift Road
Bangor, PA 18013-4857

Learning center offers summer programs

With five miles of hiking trails and scenic views of the Delaware River, the Martins Creek Environmental Preserve has plenty to offer nature enthusiasts. The preserve also serves as a learning center, offering programs throughout the summer.

Here's a sampling:

- **Winged Wildlife: PPL's Nesting Birds of Prey:** Get a firsthand look at the many species of birds – including raptors, ospreys, peregrine falcons and American kestrels – that make their homes at the preserve; 9:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, June 9.
- **Grasslands from the Ground Up – Grassland Birds:** Grasslands in the Northeast provide home and sanctuary

to birds such as bobolinks and eastern meadowlarks, which are suffering from habitat loss. Join environmental educator Rick Wiltraut as he talks about grassland birds and what you can do to help them; 9-10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 7.

- **Willy the Worm:** Young and old become part of a living compost pile during this fun and interactive program for kids that teaches them about decomposition and putting trash in its proper place; 1:30-3 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 12.
- **What Once Was:** Pennsylvania still has many special natural areas; however, the history of what once was may surprise you. Join Van Wagner, a musician and teacher, for a program about Pennsylvania's virgin wildlife and ecosystems; Saturday, Sept. 22.

All programs are free and will be held at the Cedars Pavilion on Foul Rift Road. Registration is required.

For more information about the programs PPL is offering this summer and to register, contact us at 570-251-6196 or pplpreserves@pplweb.com.

PPL provides these programs as part of PPL Project Earth, an initiative through which the company educates the public about energy resources and the environment. For more information, visit www.pplprojectearth.com.