



Environmental

Advocates

NY

2022 Action Agenda

In 2021, New Yorkers spoke clearly about what's important to them – breathing clean air, drinking clean water and living in a healthy environment. The strong vote in favor (70%) of adding environmental rights to the State Constitution is a demonstration of what people expect from state leaders in 2022.

To live these values, we expect bold funding and innovative policies this legislative session to protect our communities from the deadly consequences of the climate crisis, contaminated drinking water supplies, and the impacts of solid waste and recycling failures. It is also critical that environmental policies and funding center equity and justice to ensure disadvantaged communities who suffer the worst health, economic, and environmental impacts are prioritized.

Key SFY 2022 Budget Priorities

We specifically call on the state to adopt a budget that is aggressive and prioritizes spending in disadvantaged communities. The 2022 budget must:

- Ensure \$15 billion is allocated to implement the state's climate law that ensures a just and equitable transition to a renewable energy economy;
- Commit \$500M to the Environmental Protection Fund;
- Ensure all clean energy funds generated from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative are spent for climate purposes and that 40% of the funds are invested in disadvantaged communities; and
- Maintain a \$1 billion annual appropriation for clean water infrastructure funds, including new funding for private well testing and treatment.

Key Action Priorities for 2022

Healthy Communities for All – Ensuring Clean and Vibrant Communities

- **Holistically address the solid waste crisis** – We urge the Legislature to look holistically at policy solutions to the solid waste crisis, including extended producer responsibility programs that ensure waste reduction, reuse, and revenue for municipal recycling programs; modernize and reform the container deposits law to include non-carbonated beverages, wine bottles, spirits, and hard cider, while increasing the redeemable deposit to 10 cents; adopt standards for post-consumer content for products and packaging; reduce single-use plastics; and support more comprehensive composting programs and solutions.
- **Reduce exposure to toxic chemicals** – The cumulative load of chemicals and toxics in our environment is staggering, from toxic air pollutants to toxics in our food to toxics in personal care products. We call on the Legislature to continue its progress banning pesticides such as glyphosate and to pass legislation to eliminate PFAS from common household products.
- **Secure the Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act** – Work with the Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs campaign to secure voter approval in 2022 of a \$4 billion environmental bond act.

Climate Security for All – Accelerating a Fossil-fuel Free Future

- **Fully electrify the transportation sector** – We call for passage of a comprehensive package of bills that define an electrified transportation sector blueprint, starting with the electrification of school buses, public transit buses, and all state fleets; increased rebates for EVs funded through a fee on the sale of new gasoline and diesel-powered vehicles; additional policies to increase sales and access to EVs; and funding for EV charging infrastructure.
- **Electrify buildings and household appliances** – Pass legislation to jumpstart transitioning the building sector and household products off fossil fuels through adopting efficiency standards for appliances and building codes (S.7176/A.8143); mandating new building construction be all-electric (S.6843-A / A.8431); banning fossil fuel-powered machinery such as lawn care equipment; and increasing rebates and other mechanisms to facilitate the transition.
- **Reduce systematic fossil fuel reliance** – Pass legislation to remove systematic fossil fuel support and reliance, including ending fossil fuel subsidies and expenditures; prohibit repowering retired fossil fuel facilities for any purpose; and ban construction of new pipelines and hookups.
- **Promote an aggressive Climate Action Council and scoping plan** – Ensure the public is engaged and informed of the Climate Action Council's scoping plan process to ensure the strongest plan is adopted and implemented by all agencies and state authorities.
- **Urge equity mandates in the RGGI Regional Review** – Use New York climate and equity mandates to uplift regional partnerships like the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) and set a higher equity standard for the program that fellow RGGI states can adopt.

Clean Water for All – Protecting from Source to Tap

- **Fill the gap in water testing** – Potentially millions of New Yorkers don't know what is in their drinking water because they are not served by public water systems. Therefore, we call for the passage of legislation (S.48) to require the testing of private wells during home sales and by landlords. The state budget should also include funding for testing and treatment of private wells so that clean water is guaranteed for low-income New Yorkers.
- **Replace lead pipes** – With an estimated 360,000 lead service lines across the state, lead in drinking water continues to threaten the health of too many New Yorkers. New York must achieve 100% lead pipe replacement. This will require sufficient grant funding to local governments and legislation requiring water utilities to identify the dangerous pipes and accelerate pipe replacement that prioritize the most at-risk communities.
- **Set class-based PFAS standard** – In 2020, New York established important drinking water standards for the toxic chemicals PFOA, PFOS, and 1,4-dioxane. However, New Yorkers remain unprotected from other harmful PFAS chemicals in their drinking water. We call on New York to adopt Maximum Contaminant Levels for all of these “forever chemicals” that is consistent with the latest science and is most protective of human health.
- **Protect source water** – To prevent pollutants from entering our drinking water sources, New York must adopt legislation to ban toxic neonic pesticides (S.699-B/A.7429) and protect over a million acres of vital wetlands (S.5116-C/A.7850).
- **Ensure affordable clean drinking water** – During the pandemic, New York's utility shut-off moratorium ensured vital services, like water, remained on. New York must enact permanent, statewide policies to ensure struggling New Yorkers can afford clean drinking water. We call for legislation that would require utilities to publicly report affordability data (S.5451-A), funding for a water assistance program to eliminate insurmountable debt, and for protections against predatory collection practices like liens and shut-offs.

