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SEPTA Renews Commitment to Sustainable Future on Earth Day 2021

PHILADELPHIA (April 21, 2021) – As a cornerstone of Southeastern Pennsylvania’s regional sustainability, SEPTA is proud to observe Earth Day 2021 by highlighting its environmental initiatives over the past year. Since 2012 and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, SEPTA has remained committed to a comprehensive triple-bottom-line approach to environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

“SEPTA is proud to be an industry leader in efforts to make public transportation more sustainable,” said SEPTA General Manager Leslie S. Richards. “As an organization, we are committed to staying on the cutting-edge by utilizing new technologies and innovative practices.”

Highlights of SEPTA’s sustainability achievements over the last year include:

- Beginning operations at SEPTA’s first offsite solar farm in February 2021. Elk Hill 2 will generate an estimated 27,377 MWh of clean, renewable electricity each year, nearly 10% of SEPTA’s total demand.
- Generating more than 2,000 MWh of clean, renewable electricity through rooftop solar installations at Callowhill and Wyoming facilities since January 2020.
- Progress developing a Battery-Electric Bus (BEB) master plan. The results of the BEB master plan will inform a strategic approach to widen adoption of zero-emission vehicles throughout SEPTA’s service area.
- Implementing an enterprise-wide sustainability data management system, EMSYS, to facilitate tracking and analysis of SEPTA’s electricity, natural gas, vehicle fuel, water, waste, and recycling data.
- Progress on a whole-building energy efficiency retrofit of SEPTA’s headquarters, including LED lighting with automated controls, a new Building Automation System geared towards reduced peak-time energy use, a new natural gas boiler plant to replace an inefficient and costly steam heating system, and water conservation measures geared to reduce both water use and waste water return.
- Maintaining certification of two maintenance facilities under the rigorous and globally recognized ISO 14001 standard for environmental management.

SEPTA is currently in the process of updating its sustainability program, which will be a key part of the Authority’s new strategic plan, “SEPTA Forward.” To learn more about the strategic plan, please visit planning.septa.org.

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