Gov. Ridge Announces Resignation Of DEP Secretary Seif

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Gov. Tom Ridge has announced the resignation of James M. Seif, Secretary of Environmental Protection, effective March 31. Seif will become vice president of Corporate Services for PPL Corp., headquartered in Allentown, Lehigh County.

Gov. Ridge said he expects to announce his nominee to replace Seif prior to his March 31 departure. That nominee will serve as acting secretary pending his or her Senate confirmation.

"Jim Seif was my clear choice for Secretary of Environmental Resources when I began my Administration in 1995, and his work during the last six years demonstrates I was right," Gov. Ridge said. "Three of my administration's greatest accomplishments — Land Recycling, Growing Greener and Growing Smarter - would not have been possible without his advocacy and guidance.

"Under his extraordinary leadership, DEP has made great strides working with many partners to protect and restore our watersheds, to prevent pollution before it occurs, and to share information with communities and ask for their input.

"Jim drove home the message that environmental protection and economic prosperity are intertwined. He has helped to forge Pennsylvania's environmental vision for the 21st century. I wish Jim well as he embarks on his new endeavor, and I thank him for his service and commitment to Pennsylvania's environment — and to the many Pennsylvanians, now and in the future, who will benefit from the cleaner, greener environment he helped to make."

Seif guided the Department of Environmental Resources through a split into the departments of Environmental Protection (DEP), and Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). In 1995, Gov. Ridge signed into law legislation reorganizing the state's environmental agencies for the first time in 25 years - to focus more attention on the needs of state parks and forests in a new DCNR, and to enable a new DEP to concentrate on its mission to protect the environment.

In 1998, Seif co-chaired the Governor's 21st Century Environment Commission to identify environmental priorities for the new century. The commission's report led to the creation of the nearly \$650 million Growing Greener initiative, signed into law by Gov. Ridge in December 1999, making the single-largest environmental investment in Pennsylvania's history. Growing Greener, in its second year now, is preserving open space and farmland, reclaiming abandoned mines, restoring watersheds, maintaining state parks and forests, and upgrading water and sewer systems.

Seif's work on the commission also led to the development of the Growing Smarter initiative to give communities new tools to manage growth, while protecting private property rights; to allow communities to plan jointly; and to require state agencies to consider local landuse plans and ordinances in making permit and grant decisions.

Pennsylvania's awardwinning Land Recycling Program, created under the Ridge Administration, has resulted in the cleanup of more than 800 sites, with 25,000 people at work

on former industrial properties. Other initiatives include the Money Back Permit Guarantee that provides timely decisions on permit applications; creation of the first online Environmental Compliance Tracking System (eFACTS) in the nation to give the public for the first time access to compliance information on individual facilities. by program and by geographic area; and the creation of the Office of Pollution Prevention and Compliance Assistance to help businesses, local governments and the public understand, comply with and go beyond environmental regulations to achieve a goal of zero pollution.

Prior to his appointment by Gov. Ridge, Secretary Seif was Counsel to the Philadelphia law firm of Dechert Price Rhoads, which he joined in January 1989.



Seif began his legal career in 1971 in Pittsburgh with the U.S. Department of Justice as an assistant U.S. attorney, where he handled some of the nation's earliest environmental cases. He also served as administrative assistant to Gov. Dick Thorn-

burgh, and as a regional administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

A native of Pittsburgh, Seif attended Yale University and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. Seif lives in Blue Bell, Montgomery County, with his wife, Patricia, and two daughters.

For more information on environmental issues, visit DEP through the PA PowerPort at http://www.state.pa.us or directly at http://www.dep. state.pa.us.



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