



**Ken  
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*Owner of Slate  
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*Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times*

## Hybrid Water Heaters

The least efficient thing to do with electricity is to turn it into heat. Most of the electricity in this country is made from heat to begin with and it takes a lot of energy to spin a turbine with superheated steam. There is waste all along the way too. Over 50% of the energy in the fossil fuel is lost at the generating plant and then at least another 5% is lost in transmission lines to the Joule effect. That makes it obvious to someone who really crunches the numbers that it's better to use a fossil fuel to heat their home than it is to use electricity. Electric water heaters are just a cost that must be dealt with for the convenience. There is little or no maintenance ever done on them and you just throw them away when they leak. You will pay at least \$50 per month to operate one these days. Now you can also buy a heat pump water heater or hybrid. It is an electric water heater with a heat pump on top that adds \$1000 or so to the cost.

You still have to throw it away when it leaks but it can save you \$25 or more each month on your electric bill. After 3 or 4 years it has paid for the difference in cost over an electric water heater. It's not really free heat though for your hot water. It steals that heat from the air in your basement but who cares? Your furnace cares and if you go to the basement, you care because it's cold there. But the water heater doesn't get blamed for that. Your heating system for your home always tries to keep an even temperature in the house. Now the basement seems like the outside of the house because of the temperature so the furnace and the rest of the house share the heat with the basement probably adding \$20 to the cost of your heating bill for the month all winter long. This basically just shifts the cost and the blame from one utility to another. On the bright side those units act like an air conditioner and a dehumidifier in summer months.

Personally I like to decide what I want to pay a premium for and what I want to be a cheap-skate about. I don't buy batteries or bread at a convenience store because I'll be paying a premium for that convenience. I also don't use electricity for things that can be done more economically with another fuel. I do heat my chicken coop with electricity so I'm not perfect. It's just a convenient way to guarantee a supply of eggs.

Ken Field is the owner of Slate Belt Energy and Field's Service, Inc. As a certified energy rater and contractor, he is qualified to assess every aspect of energy usage and prescribe solutions to save energy. He can be reached at 610-759-6306 or email Ken@FieldsService.com

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## PSTA Commends Gov. Shapiro, General Assembly For Increasing Pa State Police Trooper By 100 Troopers

By David La Torre

HARRISBURG – Pennsylvania State Troopers Association (PSTA) President David Kennedy issued the following statement on Gov. Josh Shapiro and the Pennsylvania General Assembly's efforts to pass and sign House Bill 1300 into law, which provides for a 100 trooper increase in the commonwealth's complement – the first increase in the Pennsylvania State Police complement since 2001.

"Gov. Shapiro and the leaders in the House and Senate recognize the first duty of government is the safety of its citizens. The Pennsylvania State Police serves as the primary law enforcement agency for 85% of Pennsylvania and serves residents in all communities. More troopers are desperately needed to fulfill our mission. We would like to thank Gov. Shapiro, legislative leaders and the members from both parties who supported this legislation."



## PHMC Grants Awarded in the 137th District and Northampton County

By Rep. Joe Emrick

BETHLEHEM - I'm happy to announce the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission awarded the following funds to local historical societies and a museum in our area:

National Museum of Industrial History: \$11,538.

Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society: \$7,962.

Moravian Historical Society: \$4,000.

This funding has been awarded through PHMC's Cultural and Historical Grant Program. The program provides general operating support to Pennsylvania museums and historical societies not directly supported by other state programs.

Grants were awarded using a formula based on a percentage of each organization's annual operating budget. Grants were awarded to 158 organizations across 58 of the Commonwealth's 67 counties.

## License Your Dog in 2024

By Rep. Joe Emrick

BETHLEHEM -The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is reminding dog owners to license their pets for 2024.

All dogs three months of age and older are required to be licensed by Jan. 1 of each year. Dog owners may choose to purchase single year licenses or a lifetime license, if their dog has some form of permanent identification, such as a microchip or tattoo. Single year licenses cost \$6.70 for altered animals and \$8.70 for unaltered animals. Lifetime licenses cost \$31.70 for altered animals and \$51.70 for an unaltered animal.

Please note that license fees will be increasing effective Feb. 1. Licenses are available for purchase through county treasurers. A list of treasurers and their contact information is available here <http://links.pahousenews.com>.