

# ADEM *UPDATE*

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## ADEM Promotes Anti-Litter Campaign



ADEM is promoting practices to reduce litter statewide

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management is promoting voluntary, long-term, sustainable practices aimed at reducing pollution to better safeguard the environment.

Through education and outreach, ADEM is encouraging Alabamians in the fight against litter. The Department is working to inspire and empower people of all ages to take actions to prevent litter from reaching the state's waterways.

ADEM is educating the public on the importance of preventing trash from entering waterways. The Department's anti-litter campaign is designed to let people know the impacts each person can have in communities, rural areas, cities, and towns in protecting streams, rivers, and lakes.

The Department is placing signs statewide to inform the public on how important individual

actions are to not litter. ADEM is working with community groups, stakeholders and local governments to reduce littering and increase recycling.

"We are pleased to be working with local governments across the state on this anti-littering campaign," said ADEM Director Lance LeFleur. "This sign installment project is designed to improve water quality and the quality of life for Alabamians. With this project, ADEM has launched a renewed effort to help eliminate litter and to promote trash free waters."

The campaign strives to discourage littering with an emphasis on areas near waterways. Increasing public awareness and encouraging people's efforts to clean up littered areas are being targeted by ADEM through this statewide effort.

## ADEM Attends Black Mayors Conference

ADEM staff recently attended the Alabama Conference of Black Mayors where Director Lance LeFleur spoke to the attendees regarding the work and success of the Department. The conference conducts various seminars throughout the year and delivers information to its members to help bring change to the future of their cities. The 2021 annual conference was held in Montgomery.

LeFleur spoke on a variety of topics including scrap tire and unauthorized dumps, recycling, stormwater management, grants and loans, and environmental justice. The conference also allowed a question and answer session following the director's presentation where he addressed the concerns and issues facing the mayors and their cities. Those in attendance were given information about the ADEM's mission, various programs, and contact information.



Director LeFleur speaks at black mayors conference

## STEAMfest a Big Success

Protecting the state's numerous waterways is a priority at the Alabama Department of Environmental Management. A large component of this strategy is providing education and outreach.

ADEM's Nonpoint Source Unit participated in the 6<sup>th</sup> annual STEAMfest at Montgomery Academy in November to teach children about steps they can take to better safeguard the environment and preserve Alabama's natural resources.

Impressive attendance from the River Region community met at the event to celebrate what STEAM stands for: science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math. Hundreds of

Pre-K through 6th grade students and their parents participated in hands-on activities like building an arcade, programming robots, shooting rockets, and playing instruments.

Visitors to ADEM's exhibit at the festival learned about nonpoint source pollution, macroinvertebrates, and community responsibility for keeping trash out of Alabama's waters for healthy watersheds. The students were able to build and experiment with mock waterways – made from a marble track – and to explore how water velocity affects the movement of pollution.

Alabama spends approximately \$8 million a year on litter clean up. At STEAMfest, cartoon character Finny the Fish was used to educate children on the importance of not littering. The students were asked imagine how they would feel in Finny's two different environments: one tank with pollution and one tank without trash. Every student chose the trash-free tank to live in, and all of those in attendance were reminded to properly dispose of litter so it does not end up in Alabama's waterways.

The students received activity books to take home to provide them with additional education and information on trash-free waters, recycling, and nonpoint source pollution.

## ADEM Awarded \$1 Million for Coastal Project



A litter trap at Montgomery's Genetta Park

In October, Gov. Kay Ivey announced more than \$41 million for projects to be supported by funds from the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) of 2006. The projects focus on sewer infrastructure, water quality, land acquisitions, research and recreational access improvements, which are included in the original intent and authorized use of GOMESA funds. Gov. Ivey made the announcement at a news conference in Spanish Fort in Baldwin County. She said that a total of 17 projects were being funded by GOMESA.

"The projects will beautify this coastal region, provide quality access to our waters and lands, and ensure safety of those who enjoy the rivers and bays of South Alabama," said Ivey.

One of the projects will include a \$1 million award to ADEM for coastal area litter traps.

"On behalf of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, I want to thank Gov. Ivey for including funding to protect our coastal area waterways," said ADEM Director Lance LeFleur. "It is recognition that these waters are critical not only to the state's environment, but to the state's economy as well. One of the most persistent threats to our coastal ecosystems is waterborne trash and litter. This funding will enable ADEM, working in partnership with local governments and community groups, to expand the deployment of permanent litter traps which have proved effective in capturing litter that can harm wildlife and the environment so critical to the area."



STEAMfest offered lots of hands on learning

# Recycling Grants Total \$1.7 Million in 2021

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management awarded \$1.7 million in recycling grants in 2021. The funding is being used by local governments to purchase equipment such as balers, compactors, recycling trailers, recycling bins, collection trucks, and roll-off containers that will make recycling more convenient for Alabamians.

ADEM's 16 recycling grants being provided this year bring the total amount of recycling grants to more than \$21 million to 210 recipients. The funds will not only benefit local communities but will impact Alabama's Solid Waste Reduction Goal of 25-percent, that was set forth in legislation and has been met and maintained for three consecutive years by the Department.

The grant funds will be utilized by the recipients to bolster recycling programs affected by the pandemic, further enhance other flourishing recycling programs, and support education and outreach activities to promote the importance of recycling in Alabama.

The recycling grant funds are made possible through the Solid Wastes & Recyclable Materials Management Act passed by the Alabama Legislature in 2008. The legislation imposed a \$1 per ton fee on all solid wastes disposed of in Alabama landfills. A portion of the proceeds generated by this fee supported the creation of the Alabama Recycling Fund, providing the foundation for ADEM to award recycling grants on an annual basis.

The funds may be utilized to initiate new recycling programs, or enhance existing programs, and can also be used to support education and outreach activities promoting the importance of recycling at the local level.

ADEM has steadily worked to enhance the opportunities for the public to have access to recycling facilities. The ability to recycle and reuse waste materials provides environmental benefits by decreasing the amount of solid waste material sent to landfills, which conserves space and reduces the need to construct new landfills.



ADEM awarded sixteen recycling grants in 2021

City of Huntsville	\$200,000	City of Dothan	\$98,560
Madison County Commission	\$200,000	City of Northport	\$98,147
Scottsboro Solid Waste Dept.	\$172,381	City of Troy	\$84,370
City of Florence	\$171,470	Albertville-Boaz Recycling Authority	\$44,900
West Alabama Recycling Partnership	\$158,844	City of Luverne	\$32,841
Athens-Limestone Recycling	\$144,419	Keep Oxford Beautiful	\$27,000
Shoals Solid Waste Authority	\$120,647	East Alabama Recycling Partnership	\$24,618
City of Madison	\$100,000	Town of Vance	\$21,800

# ADEM UPDATE Available Online

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management publishes the *ADEM UPDATE* quarterly to inform Alabamians on the latest news and activities of the Department. As a cost-savings measure, the *ADEM UPDATE* is no longer printed. It is distributed electronically and available online through the publications link on the ADEM website at [adem.alabama.gov](http://adem.alabama.gov). The ADEM website also has links to videos related to the Department's programs, public hearings, and recent events of interest.



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