

# ADEM UPDATE

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## Commission Approves New Strategic Plan

The Alabama Environmental Management Commission voted unanimously to approve a new Unified Strategic Plan at its last regular meeting in February. As part of the Department's regulations, ADEM is required to develop/update its strategic plan every five years, with the previous plan being approved in 2009. The revised Unified Strategic Plan, written in conjunction with the Department, lays out a challenging vision and direction for ADEM over the next several years.

ADEM Director Lance LeFleur had already submitted the draft Unified Strategic Plan to the EMC Strategic Planning Ad Hoc Committee at a meeting in January. The Unified Strategic Plan contains four key goals that include an effective and responsive Commission, a high performing work environment at ADEM, credible relationships between the Department and external stakeholders, and efficient/effective Departmental operations.

"The new strategic plan links the strategy for the Commission and the Department," said Director LeFleur. "It is a unified, multi-year guide to help us accomplish significant goals in fulfillment of our mission."

In other action, the ADEM Office of External Affairs staff was recognized by Director LeFleur and the EMC for their work, and their success, related to the recent Nonpoint Source Conference in Montgomery. The Commission also heard a detailed report from Director LeFleur and voted to adopt three proposed amendments to the ADEM Administrative Code related to air, water quality, and NPDES regulations.



The EMC approved a new Unified Strategic Plan at its February meeting

## Website Training Provided to Uniontown Residents



Residents in Uniontown attended a website training event on February 25

In February, ADEM provided an opportunity for the residents of Uniontown to receive training on how to access environmental information from the Department's website. The event focused on the Department's new electronic complaint system (e-Complaint), the electronic filing system (e-File), and the What's Happening in Your County feature.

Ten residents took advantage of the training opportunity, which was held at the local library, and received hands-on training on these website features. The residents learned how to file an environmental complaint electronically and how to track a complaint that has already been filed through its resolution. Attendees also learned how to navigate in the e-File system and obtain access to the over 1.5 million documents such as inspection

reports, permits, correspondence, and discharge monitoring reports that are stored in e-File.

Similar training events have been held in Mobile, Montgomery, Huntsville, Auburn, and Tuscaloosa. These training events and website features allow citizens to become more engaged in the Department's decision making processes and also ensure transparency in the Department's day-to-day operations.

## Millions Being Provided for Energy Efficiency Upgrades



**ADEM's Ed Poolos (center) presents check to officials with the City of Albertville**

energy savings of approximately \$46,000 per year. Once installed, the energy efficient equipment is expected to reduce energy consumption at the plants by an estimated 545,000 kilowatt hours per year. The projects are scheduled to be implemented in Albertville, Florence, and Holly Pond.

ADEM's Decatur Branch Chief Ed Poolos made three check presentations earlier this year at the sites and noted the projects are great for the environment and the citizens of North Alabama. "When a utility is trying to take steps to provide cleaner and safer drinking water, or improved wastewater treatment, that's something we're glad to support," said Poolos. "Any time we can preserve natural resources and hold down rates for the local citizens, it is a win-win situation."

This marks the second consecutive year that ADEM has provided settlement funds to local municipalities in the Tennessee Valley area. The ability to conserve energy and allow these municipalities to operate wastewater treatment plants and drinking water treatment plants more efficiently provides environmental benefits and economic benefits for their citizens.

The ADEM Clean Water State Revolving Fund provides financial assistance for local communities to ensure the proper collection and treatment of wastewater while the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund allows local communities to provide clean, safe drinking water to their citizens.

## ADEM Hosts RCRA Training

The ADEM Land Division recently hosted a RCRA Financial Assurance Training session at the central offices in Montgomery. The training event, which focused on covering mechanisms and associated cost accounting, was specifically designed for Subtitle C and D managers as well as staff from other EPA Region 4 states.

The training was originally scheduled for three days, but was cut short by the inclement weather and travel conditions in Alabama on January 29-30. However, during the one day of training a number of subjects were covered including an overview of financial assurance for RCRA hazardous waste facilities. More than 40 participants learned about closure and post-closure financial assurance, third party liability, and corrective action. Subtitle C of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act establishes financial assurance requirements for owners or operators of hazardous waste treatment, storage, or disposal facilities. Federal regulations require those seeking a permit for managing hazardous waste to prepare an estimate of the costs required to close the facility along with the expense of performing post-closure care.

Representatives from EPA Region 4 and EPA Headquarters were on hand for the training which utilizes CostPro software. The procedures in CostPro are intended primarily for the use of EPA and state personnel in evaluating the adequacy of current cost estimates for closure and post-closure care.



**More than 40 people attended the RCRA training hosted by ADEM**

## Nonpoint Source Conference Held in Montgomery



More than 280 attended the NPS Conference

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management held its 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Nonpoint Source Conference in January at the Renaissance Hotel in downtown Montgomery. The event was attended by more than 280 environmental engineers, biologists, geologists, municipal leaders, and water quality specialists.

The conference was entitled “Nonpoint Source Pollution - Here, There, & Everywhere,” and included an overview of the state’s Nonpoint Source Program, which has been in place since 1989. The conference also included 15 exhibitors with displays and handouts.

The numerous sessions offered attendees updates on efforts to improve water quality in local watersheds. These updates included presentations on the importance of cooperative partnerships, the need to leverage resources, the installation of best management practices, education/outreach, and the implementation of watershed management plans designed to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Eric Gobert, Director of the ALGIX, LLC, algae harvesting and processing facility in Dallas County, served as the keynote

luncheon speaker. His “green industry” presentation focused on the conversion of algal biomass to renewable bioplastic resin products used for packaging, agriculture, horticulture, and industrial applications.

ADEM Director Lance LeFleur opened the conference and ADEM staff presented updates on various initiatives, including municipal stormwater requirements for construction and post-construction activities as well as using science-based data to assess the quality of Alabama’s surface waters.

A number of organizations and agencies participated in the conference including the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, The Nature Conservancy, the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, the Alabama Clean Water Partnership, and Auburn University.

## Johnson Receives Award

ADEM’s Curt Johnson recently received well deserved recognition at the 24<sup>th</sup> National Tanks Conference & Expo in Denver. Since 1993, he has served as the chair of the National Workgroup on Leak Detection Evaluations.

He is a founding member of the organization and continues to contribute to this technical workgroup comprised of state and EPA officials who have extensive knowledge regarding leak detection methods used at underground storage sites.

Carolyn Hoskinson, Director of the EPA Office of Underground Storage Tanks, presented Curt with a unique memento (see photo) documenting his involvement with the workgroup.

The workgroup was founded to aid state regulatory programs in examining and validating third-party tests of leak detection equipment, to avoid duplication of efforts, to create a list of validated leak detection equipment, and to recommend changes to improve EPA’s standard test procedures. The workgroup’s efforts have been recognized both nationally and internationally.

Some of Curt’s original notes outlining his commitment to the workgroup were part of the presentation at the National Tanks Conference. For 20 years, his efforts have been vital to the understanding and proper use of leak detection equipment at underground storage tank sites across the country.



Curt Johnson & Carolyn Hoskinson

# 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).



Alabama Department of Environmental Management  
(334) 271-7700



**Alabama Department of Environmental Management**  
**P.O. Box 301463**  
**Montgomery, AL 36130-1463**  
**[www.adem.alabama.gov](http://www.adem.alabama.gov)**