

# ADEM UPDATE

The official newsletter of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management

January 7, 2016

Volume IX, Number 1

## EPA Turns Over Control of Capital City Plume



(L-R seated) David Byrne, Todd Strange, Heather McTeer Toney, & Lance LeFleur along with members of the team providing oversight to the Capital City Plume

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management and a coalition of city and state agencies officially have control of the Capital City Plume.

On September 30, Montgomery Mayor Todd Strange, representing the Downtown Alliance, signed a cooperative agreement with ADEM and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency deferring oversight of the remaining investigation and potential remediation of the Capital City Plume site from EPA to ADEM.

The Downtown Alliance voluntarily formed in 2012 to offer EPA an alternative to formally placing Downtown Montgomery on the National Priorities Superfund List. The Alliance is comprised of the City of Montgomery, Montgomery County, Montgomery Water Works and

Sanitary Sewer Board, the State of Alabama and the Montgomery Advertiser.

The agreement was signed at a ceremony at ADEM's main offices by EPA Region 4 Administrator Heather McTeer Toney, ADEM Director Lance LeFleur, and Mayor Strange. The agreement requires the Alliance pay \$2.6 million over three years to EPA for past costs incurred for work EPA performed at the site.

Discovered in 1993, the Capital City Plume is an area of groundwater contaminated by chemicals associated with cleaning solvents and petroleum products common in urban environments. The groundwater does not affect citizens since public water supply wells in the area have been closed by the Water and Sewer Board for nearly a decade. In 2003, the City imposed an ordinance prohibiting the drilling of any new wells downtown.

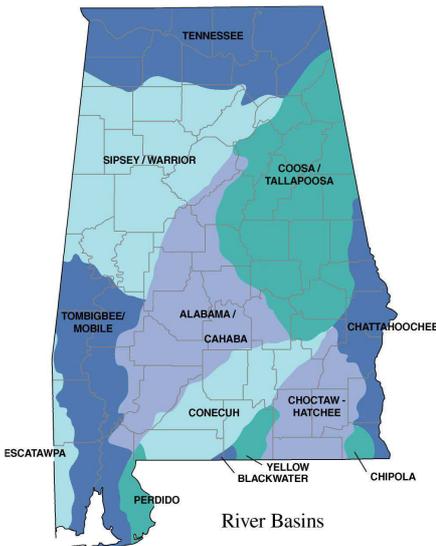
Following a public comment period, the Alliance can begin preparing and implementing its community involvement plan. The plan includes creating the Capital City Plume Community Outreach Group, which will be comprised of volunteers who live, work, or own property downtown, and want to learn more about the plume. Additional information on the plume and its outreach group can be found at [www.capitalcityplume.org](http://www.capitalcityplume.org). In addition, the website provides updates for the public on the project's progress.

## ADEM Employees Complete Public Manager Training

In October, ADEM Director Lance LeFleur recognized 14 employees who have recently completed "important developmental milestones." Nine of these ADEM employees finished the rigorous study, training and testing to earn the designation of Certified Public Managers. These employees (Emily Anderson, Shelane Bergquist, Eric Cleckler, Kelley Hartley, Lisa Edwards, Heather Jones, Catherine McNeill, Chris Sasser, and Shawn Sibley) finished the two-year program at AUM that involved more than 250 hours of classroom work and numerous out-of-class activities.

Five additional employees (Donald Barron, Bonnie Coleman, Susan Dingman, Jerome Hand, and Kimberly Minton) successfully completed the first year of Certified Public Manager training at AUM in November, and are scheduled to continue CPM training later this month.

## ADEM Basin Teams Work to Protect Water Quality



ADEM staff members from several different divisions, sections, and branches have joined together in river Basin Teams to better ensure coordination of water quality protection throughout Alabama.

The Basin Teams were developed to improve communication among project managers, field staff, and ADEM management within the Field Operations Division, the Water Quality Branch, and the Nonpoint Source Unit. The teams are comprised of basin coordinators, project managers, and staff from each field office conducting monitoring within that basin.

From 1996 to 2014, ADEM's overall strategy was implemented on a five-year rotation by basin and incorporated a combination of targeted, problematic, and long-term monitoring stations to meet monitoring goals and objectives.

Progress made during the last decade, as well as changes to EPA's program priorities, now allow ADEM to conduct targeted monitoring within each basin each year (while continuing to meet the Department's monitoring goals). This change enables ADEM to provide frequent, intensive monitoring within each basin in order to measure trends and improvements in water quality after implementation of restoration efforts, to respond to data needs more quickly, and to minimize the impact of weather-related events on data collected within a given basin.

A prioritization framework was also developed by ADEM to monitor watersheds to meet program priorities within each basin group. Priorities identified by the Department include monitoring impaired, unimpaired, and un-assessed waters, evaluating the effectiveness of restoration efforts, and collaborating with partner agencies and stakeholders when possible. The monitoring conducted within each basin group is planned and coordinated annually by ADEM's basin teams.

All of the basin teams met as a group on October 1, and plan to hold their next meeting in January or February of 2016.

## Surface Water Meeting Held at Embassy Suites

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management hosted its 18<sup>th</sup> annual Surface Water Meeting at Embassy Suites in Downtown Montgomery on October 28-29. Public water system operators, consultants, and engineers conferred on a number of surface water issues and topics at the two-day event.

ADEM staff and other presenters discussed important topics, presented updates on various regulations for drinking water systems, and provided updates on operator certification. The meeting helped demonstrate how the Alabama's drinking water regulations meet federal requirements and how the Department partners with public drinking water systems to ensure compliance and safeguard public health. Participants at the meeting were presented with the latest information on water conservation, water treatment plant issues, and drinking water security. Presentations were also given at the meeting by representatives from the state's Office of Water Resources, the Alabama Department of Public Health, and Auburn University.

An update on the Department's Area Wide Optimization Program and AWOP awards were also presented at the meeting. AWOP is a voluntary program that helps surface water treatment plants perform at peak efficiency and exceed federal drinking water standards for health and safety. The optimization process helps water systems maximize public health protection against a vast range of health risks.



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## RCRA Training Held in Alabama



ADEM hosted other state agencies in RCRA training in December.

For three days in December, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management hosted a RCRA Permit Writers' training class attended by environmental officials from across the Southeast.

The Region 4 workshop held from December 8-10, at ADEM's central office in Montgomery had more than 45 students representing environmental management agencies in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also had a number of officials in attendance. EPA staff from the Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery in Washington, D.C. were present, along with personnel from EPA's Region 4 RCRA Division.

The intensive training course is designed to explain the RCRA permit processing process and the tools necessary for implementation. It assists workers at the state level learn how to evaluate facility specific units, operations, and designs, and then to draft and issue enforceable, facility-specific permit conditions.

Four managers from ADEM's Hazardous Waste Program served as instructors along with EPA Region 4 senior staff and selected contractors. There were 29 additional ADEM employees who took part in the training as students.

RCRA - the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act - creates the framework for the proper management of hazardous and non-hazardous solid waste. The law describes the waste management program mandated by Congress that gives EPA and States authority to develop and implement the program. RCRA establishes the framework for a national system of solid waste control.

States play the lead role in implementing the Act, under regulations developed by EPA, to set minimum national technical standards for how treatment, storage, and disposal facilities should be designed and operated. States also issue permits to ensure compliance with EPA and state regulations.

The regulated community is typically comprised of a large, diverse group that must understand and comply with RCRA regulations. These groups can include hazardous waste generators, government agencies and small businesses.

## Compliance Calendars Assist Dry Cleaners

For the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, ADEM is providing free compliance calendars to dry cleaners that use perchloroethylene (PERC) as their primary cleaning solvent.

The 2016 calendars provide logs for documenting the storage and use of dry cleaning chemicals and also feature monthly tips to explain compliance requirements.

ADEM will provide this compliance assistance tool to more than 70 dry cleaners whose use of perchloroethylene requires compliance with specific record-keeping guidelines. In the past, the calendars have proven to be a valuable asset in tracking the use of dry cleaner chemicals, and in meeting regulatory obligations.

The calendars are a compliance tool to help small businesses and can be utilized to enhance compliance efforts, which is a tremendous benefit for small businesses. The calendars also address additional requirements for PERC usage established by EPA, and contain contact information that dry cleaner owners can use to answer questions they may have regarding environmental regulations, record-keeping, or adding new machines.

# ***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).



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