



UPDATE

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ADEM Awards \$2.49 Million in Recycling Grants

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management has awarded more than \$2.49 million in grants from the Alabama Recycling Fund to 20 cities, counties, solid waste authorities and other groups across the state to boost recycling efforts.

The grants, which are for fiscal year 2027, were awarded at the Alabama Recycling Coalition's Annual Conference and Expo, at the Embassy Suites in Gulf Shores. The coalition is a statewide nonprofit organization that promotes waste reduction, material reuse, recycling and composting activities.

Totaling \$2,497,602, the grants were made possible by the Solid Wastes and Recyclable Materials Management Act passed by the Alabama Legislature in 2008.

"ADEM is proud to announce the recipients of recycling grants for next year," ADEM Director Edward Poolos said. "They range from small cities, such as Moundville, to one of the largest cities, Birmingham, as well large countywide operations such as the Solid Waste Disposal Authority of Baldwin County.

"What they have in common is they are taking materials that would otherwise go in landfills, or littered along roads, city streets and even our waterways, and making those materials available for productive reuse. That is preserving our land and water and protecting our environment."

This is the 18th year of the recycling grant program. During that time, ADEM has awarded more than \$39 million to bolster recycling efforts in all areas of the state.



ADEM recently awarded more than \$2.49 million in recycling grants

ADEM Hosts 32nd Annual UST Conference



ADEM hosted a UST Conference in August

On August 18, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management hosted the 32nd UST Assessment and Remediation Conference at the Wetumpka Civic Center.

ADEM staff and industry professionals provided information on Underground Storage Tank regulations and various topics of interest to tank owners and environmental companies who perform assessment and remediation activities at UST sites across the state.

Employees from ADEM's UST Corrective Action and UST Compliance sections discussed topics such as obtaining and submitting permits, how to stay within ADEM's rules and regulations, and how the Alabama Environmental Permitting and Compliance System (AEPACS), an online database for submitting required documentation, can help streamline the submittal process so facilities stay in compliance.

ADEM Makes a Mark at Mobile Event

Just a few days before his one-year anniversary on-the-job as ADEM Director, Ed Poolos was a featured speaker at Manufacture Alabama's annual Safety & Environmental Conference in Mobile.

In fact, seven ADEM staff members spoke at the two-day conference on July 27-28 at the Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel.

The event was designed to get business, industrial, and environmental individuals together to share ideas and learn about ways to improve safety factors and environmental compliance for companies and manufacturers across the state.

In his time at the podium, Poolos discussed Alabama's environmental priorities and presented a regulatory outlook for those in attendance. He said that he could promise ADEM would do three main things under his leadership: be transparent, be responsive, and build relationships.

He also talked about his first year of serving as the Director of ADEM. Poolos said he knew ADEM employees were "fantastic," from his previous years at the Department.

"In one year, our staff has confirmed that," said Poolos. "I appreciate the work they do on a daily basis."

ADEM personnel presented compliance assistance training at the conference, and Division Chiefs Jimbo Carlson, Stephen Cobb, and Aubrey White gave updates on water, land, and air related issues, respectively.

Manufacture Alabama is a trade association dedicated to the competitive, regulatory, and operational interests of manufacturers and their business partners. The organization works to promote a positive and competitive environment to enhance the opportunity for growth in the state.



ADEM Director Ed Poolos speaks at conference in Mobile

ADEM Has Input at Wetlands Compliance Workshops



ADEM's Scott Brown instructs at Wetlands Workshop

The Alabama Coastal Foundation held a pair of Wetlands Compliance Workshops in August to continue a program to guide professionals dealing with land-use issues in Mobile and Baldwin counties.

The workshops provide current information on wetlands regulations, permitting, and compliance requirements. The sessions help to support accurate and practical decision-making in regards to environmental issues and the protection of the state's natural resources.

The programs this year were held on August 6 in Fairhope and August 18 in Mobile. The workshops centered on helping participants define and identify wetlands, understand permit

requirements, and to assist them in successfully navigating state regulations and policies. Attendees also reviewed compliance case studies that illustrate how the regulatory process works.

Scott Brown, Chief of ADEM's Coastal Office, participated in the workshops. He was the instructor for state and coastal wetlands regulations, and he explained ADEM's Implementation of Coastal Zone Management. Clarifying the environmental logistics of land development by using real-world examples is essential for realtors, contractors, and developers along the Gulf Coast.

Riverfront Rendezvous Features ADEM



Students learn about the environment at Riverfront Rendezvous

boat rides. This year's event took place on July 7-8, and featured a variety of engaging, river-centric activities for children including scavenger hunts and interactive exhibits.

ADEM has participated in the event for the last four years as an opportunity to teach kids about how to prevent water pollution to safeguard the environment, and to protect aquatic life. ADEM allows the children to work with a 3D model of a miniature community, and use spray bottles to act as rain to watch how water and nonpoint source pollution travels over hills, lawns, and roads. Students also learn ways to prevent the pollution from getting into waterways in the first place.

AEPACS Basics Training Session Held for ADEM Staff

AEPACS - an abbreviation for the Alabama Environmental Permitting and Compliance System - is an online computer system that enables facilities to apply for and maintain permits as well as submit other required applications, registrations, and certifications to ADEM.

Recently, Beth Bielen of ADEM's Information Technology section conducted a training session in Montgomery that was also live-streamed for employees who couldn't attend. In AEPACS, information listed for each regulated facility includes the site's responsible contact person and address information, along with permit issuance and expiration dates, facility master ID number, and any applicable site codes. Users can also download full or partial pages of this information to their own device in various spreadsheet file formats.

The AEPACS site explorer allows users to view a map of the state with a general search system consisting of multiple purple circles that tell the user how many regulated sites are in a specific area. These results can be narrowed down further using the site's advanced filtering system. Once signed in to AEPACS interface, users can filter search results by site name, location, permit or code numbers, or perform more general searches.

Data information from many different programs in air, land, and water are currently in AEPACS. Programs including asbestos certification and gasoline bulk plant programs under the Air Division. In the Land Division, programs such as recycling, scrap tires, and underground storage tanks are in the system, and Water Division programs included are SSO's (sanitary sewer overflows) and facilities covered under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), with more programs to be added in future updates.



A presentation on AEPACS was held at ADEM in June

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 not printed. It is distributed electronically and available online through the publications link on the ADEM website at 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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