ADEM UPDATE

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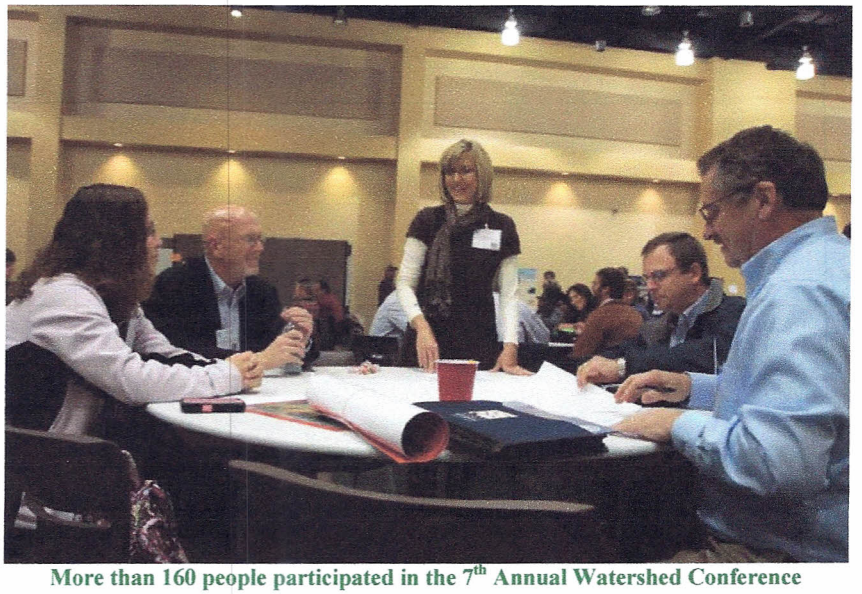
Watershed Conference Highlights Sustainability

On December 7, 2011, ADEM staff participated in the 7th Annual Watershed Conference sponsored by the Alabama Clean Water Partnership. The event took place at the Clanton Conference and Performing Arts Center at Jefferson State Junior College, with the theme "Learning from the Past - Planning for the Future." With various groups, organizations, and state agencies being asked to "do more with less," the one-day conference provided 162 participants with an opportunity to hear and present strategies to promote healthy watersheds and improve water quality in Alabama. The event was designed to help the collaboration efforts between various groups with specific water quality goals for industry, recreation, transportation, and long-term water resource management.



More than 160 people participated in the 7th Annual Watershed Conference

The Alabama Clean Water Partnership provides a neutral forum for a diverse and inclusive coalition of public and private sector individuals/groups to work together to protect and preserve water resources and aquatic ecosystems throughout the state. The conference brought together representatives from watershed groups, municipalities, industry, and resource agencies to share information, express particular interests, and to plan more efficiently and effectively for the future.

Highlights of the conference included a case study of the North River Watershed project in Fayette and Tuscaloosa counties, a presentation on "Alabama in Historic Times" by John C. Hall from the University of West Alabama, and a historical recap of watershed partnering activities. Additional interactive strategic planning sessions provided suggestions to help guide the Partnership in setting goals and helping participants take actions to better protect Alabama's natural resources.

New Pesticide General Permit Enhances Water Quality Protection

ADEM has developed a new Pesticide General Permit which became effective October 31, 2011. The permit is designed to protect water quality from the potential impacts associated with discharges from the application of biological and chemical pesticides.

In 2009, the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Clean Water Act (CWA) permits were required for the application of pesticides in, over, or near waters of the U.S. Due to this ruling, NPDES permits will now be required for these pesticide applications and the Pesticide General Permit is being issued to address this need.

The requirements for compliance under the permit are potentially applicable to a wide-range of entities including individual homeowners, municipalities, foresters, farmers, and private industries that are using biological and chemical pesticides for activities such as mosquito control, animal pest control, weed or algae control, and forestry canopy or other area-wide pest control that occur in water, at water's edge, or over water. Those entities required by the Pesticide General Permit to submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) for permit coverage will not be required to submit an NOI until January 31, 2012.

Recycling Provides Environmental & Economic Benefits

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management helped to celebrate "America Recycles Day" on November 15 by encouraging Alabamians to participate in a local recycling program. The Department issued a news release to remind everyone that recycling is a simple way every Alabamian can help protect the environment and preserve our natural resources.

ADEM supports recycling not only for its environmental benefits, but also for its contribution to our economy. According to a study by the Southeast Recycling Development Council, Alabama is home to 26 major manufacturers that rely on recycled feedstock for their businesses. Recycling in the state is a $6.6 billion industry that employs more than 10,000 people. In fact, if Alabama recycled just 10 percent more than current levels, the economic impact would be the creation of 1,400 new jobs, a $66 million increase in personal income, and an increase of more than $3 million in additional state tax revenue.

ADEM has provided in excess of $5 million in the past three years for the start-up, or expansion, of local recycling programs. This has resulted in recycling being made available to residents who previously did not have these opportunities.

In addition, the Department has supported the beneficial end use of scrap tires which has removed over 100,000 scrap tires from the waste stream for utilization in playgrounds, walking trails, and sidewalks.

Industry Representatives Receive Compliance Updates

In October, ADEM hosted more than 300 industry representatives and environmental consultants at the semi-annual Air Regulatory Update, held at the Embassy Suites in Montgomery. The event is a compliance assistance effort to update interested parties on recent changes in ADEM and EPA air regulations along with highlighting pressing issues in the field of air quality. The ADEM Air Division strives to make sure regulated facilities understand the conditions of their permits, which enhances compliance with federal and state air regulations.

ADEM officials provided presentations and met with attendees individually to exchange information and discuss important issues. ADEM staff also answered questions related to compliance issues and highlighted how ADEM administers its various air programs.

Attendees were presented information on topics such as the impact of new federal regulations on major and minor sources of air emissions, general issues associated with air permits, air permit fees, air quality monitoring, air quality standards, and air quality modeling. The event was co-sponsored by ADEM and the Alabama Chapter of the Air & Waste Management Association.

17 Year Veteran Continues Chairman Duties

At the October meeting of the Alabama Environmental Management Commission, long-time commissioner John Lester was unanimously elected as the new chairman of the EMC, and Lanier Brown was selected as vice-chair. "This is my 17th year on the board," said Lester, who praised the work of ADEM Director Lance LeFleur and the entire departmental staff. "Lance, you've done an outstanding job. All of our Department heads have done everything that's expected of them. All of our individual workers in the ADEM family have done their job."

The Commission also voted to adopt proposed amendments to the ADEM administrative code (Division 335-1), which will increase permit fees by 19 percent across-the-board with a few exceptions. The move was necessary due to recent budget cuts.

Providing Safe Drinking Water Focus of Workshop

ADEM held its 14th Annual Surface Water Meeting on October 17-18 at AUM

Approximately 250 public water system operators, engineers, and consultants recently conferred to discuss drinking water treatment, safety, operator certification, and security at the 14th Annual ADEM Surface Water Meeting.

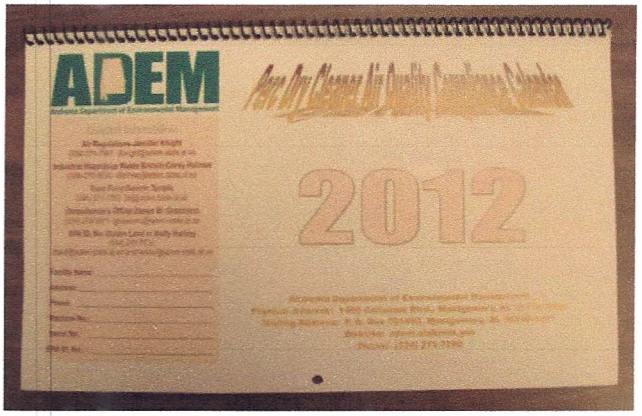
The Department hosted the two-day event in October at Auburn University Montgomery's Taylor Center. ADEM staff and other presenters discussed important topics including the disinfection by-products rule for public drinking water systems and enhanced drinking water treatment.

The meeting helped demonstrate how the ADEM drinking water regulations meet federal requirements and how the Department partners with public drinking water systems to ensure compliance, lessen environmental impacts, and safeguard public health.

Participants at the meeting were presented with the latest information on sampling and testing techniques, proposed revisions to the Total Coliform Rule, operator certification, turbidity regulations, and new drinking water security measures.

Compliance Calendars Assist Small Business Owners

For the 12th consecutive year, ADEM has provided free compliance calendars to dry cleaners that use perchloroethylene (PERC) as their primary cleaning solvent. The 2012 calendars contain logs for documenting the storage and use of dry cleaning chemicals and also feature monthly tips to explain compliance requirements.



ADEM provided 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 2012 calendars feature information on refrigeration system pressure, carbon adsorbers, along with leak detection and repair logs.

These calendars serve as 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. The calendars contain contact information that dry cleaner owners can use to get answers to 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 emailed and available online through the publications link on the ADEM website at adem.alabama.gov.

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