

# ADEM UPDATE

The official newsletter of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management

July 6, 2016

Volume IX, Number 3

## ADEM Celebrates Earth Day

*Department Hosts 150 Middle and High School Students*



Students get an up-close look at soil testing and a GeoProbe

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management hosted a special Earth Day event in April with 150 middle and high school students visiting the Central Offices on Coliseum Boulevard. The celebration enabled the students to visit ADEM and learn about the environmental programs implemented on a daily basis to protect and preserve Alabama's natural resources.

The students received guided tours and learned about a wide-range of environmental programs including fish tissue monitoring, water quality sampling, air monitoring, recycling, hazardous waste disposal, and efforts to ensure that Alabamians are provided with clean, safe drinking water.

ADEM employees provided support and worked hard to make the effort a tremendous success. The Department's staff gave the students opportunities to learn about careers at ADEM, and encouraged the students to pursue careers in the science-related fields.

The following schools were represented this year: Brantley High School, Crenshaw Christian Academy, and Pike County High School. The Earth Day event lasted from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

The first organized "Earth Day" was held in 1970, with more than 20 million Americans demonstrating in various cities. It is now an annual event in which activities are held worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental awareness. While many people celebrate Earth Day one day each year, every day is Earth Day at ADEM as the staff works to protect and preserve Alabama's air, land, and water resources.

Also on April 19-20, ADEM employees participated in an Earth Day Safari at the Montgomery Zoo along with the Alabama Forestry Commission, the Montgomery Clean City Commission, and the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts. People visiting the zoo on those two days were able to learn about various aspects of water treatment, recycling, plant and animal conservation, and air quality protection.



Stormwater runoff is demonstrated on small scale model giving students a better understanding of how their actions can affect the environment

## Annual UST Conference Held in Montgomery



More than 170 people attended ADEM's UST Conference

ADEM's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Underground Storage Tank Assessment and Remediation Conference was held on April 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> in Montgomery at the Gordon Persons Building. The two-day conference offered valuable information to over 170 environmental contractors, consultants and petroleum tank owners. The Department works closely with these specialists to investigate, assess and remediate petroleum releases or potential problems. The event gave ADEM staff the opportunity to update participants on current UST regulations.

ADEM staff presented a variety of topics at the conference regarding storage tank sites including rules compliance, permitting requirements, development of corrective action plans, monitoring and tank closure procedures. Participants also received guidance on procedures for accessing the Alabama Tank Trust Fund to help finance the clean-up of sites.

The Department currently oversees more than 900 Trust Fund-eligible releases statewide. ADEM reviews technical plans regarding assessment, risk evaluation and remediation of releases and evaluates cost proposals for work under the fund. ADEM project managers are assigned specific cases and are responsible for overseeing site activities to ensure regulatory compliance. Seven invited speakers presented information relative to the conference and of interest to attendees. Topics included available technologies to minimize costs and vapor intrusion risks, mobile enhanced multiphase extraction, and the use of total oxidant demand treatability testing.

## Pike County High School Wins Recycling Challenge

For the fourth year in a row, the ADEM's School Recycling Challenge was a big success.

In an effort to raise awareness and provide an educational experience for the merits of recycling, ADEM invited four schools: Charles Henderson High School, Brantley High School, Luverne High School, and Pike County High School, to participate in the "School Recycling Challenge."

The event was designed to motivate students to do their part to increase recycling in Alabama. The program had three steps: sign up to earn cash for your school; challenge each student, teacher, and neighborhood to join your cause; and report on your total recycling effort.

ADEM's recycling trailer was parked outside each school for two weeks. The children gathered materials that were taken to a local processing center. A total of more than 10,000 pounds of materials were recycled during this year's challenge.

Pike County High School won the recycling challenge with more than 6,900 pounds of material collected. On April 19, during ADEM's Earth Day event, Director Lance LeFleur presented school officials and students with a check for \$887.63. The other schools that participated in the event also received checks in the amounts of \$459 (Luverne), \$367.22 (Brantley), and \$113.98 (Charles Henderson).



Pike County High School students were thrilled to win the Recycling Challenge

## Fairview Environmental Park Receives EPA Award



**The Fairview Environmental Park Project earned the City of Montgomery a regional Rain Catcher Award from EPA**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has recognized the City of Montgomery with the regional 2016 EPA Rain Catcher Award in the Municipal Category for the Fairview Environmental Park Project. The award was presented in May at a ceremony during the EPA Region 4 - International Erosion Control Association Municipal Wet Weather Stormwater Conference in Nashville.

The Fairview Environmental Park Project consisted of the mitigation of a brownfield site, daylighting of an urban stream, treatment of a significant amount of urban runoff, demonstration of a wide range of green infrastructure technologies and the revitalization of the neighborhood through the

creation of a new urban park. ADEM and the City of Montgomery completed the joint project on the west side of the city last summer. Previously known as Genetta Park, the Department and EPA worked together to fund the project with a \$1.6 million grant from ADEM and \$1.9 million from EPA.

The project started in 2011 and is located on the corner of West Fairview Avenue and Interstate 65. The project was designed to improve the quality of stormwater runoff from Genetta stream before it goes into nearby Catoma Creek, which flows into the Alabama River.

The park serves as a constructed wetland allowing water to flow through without the use of concrete ditches. It removes pollutants from the water by acting like both a filter and a sponge. Stormwater is treated through the use of a rain garden, permeable pavers and innovative designs.

The EPA Region 4 Rain Catcher Award recognizes excellence in the implementation of stormwater green infrastructure (GI) practices using natural systems and engineered systems, to mimic natural processes to more effectively manage stormwater and reduce receiving water impacts.

EPA and ADEM promote the use of GI as part of a comprehensive approach to achieving healthier waters. GI reduces the volume of stormwater discharges by managing rainwater close to where it falls and removes many of the pollutants making it an effective strategy for addressing pollution and improving water quality.

## ADEM Goes Gray for Asthma Awareness Month

On May 13, ADEM employees participated in the Department's first campaign to wear gray apparel in support of asthma awareness. Asthma is a chronic condition that is characterized by swollen and inflamed airways.

The goal of Asthma Awareness Month is to educate people on triggers that can cause the onset of an attack. There are several environmental triggers that could launch the onset of an attack. Some of these include environmental allergens, pollen, dust mites, weather, pet dander, chemicals, and many more. Education and awareness combined with proper medical treatment can allow people to live healthy, active lives despite a diagnosis of asthma.

In addition to ADEM's Go Gray Day, health professionals exhibited at the annual Earth Day event and presented a Break to Educate program featuring asthma. Also, an asthma display including informational handouts was available in the ADEM lobby throughout the month of May to bring attention to this cause.



**ADEM's Wear Gray Day helped raise awareness for Asthma**

# 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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