



The mission of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality is to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of present and future generations of Mississippians by conserving and improving our environment and fostering wise economic growth through focused research and responsible regulation.

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Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Environmental News

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MDEQ Promotes a “Green” Holiday Season

MDEQ encourages Mississippians to remember the environment and “green up” this holiday season through waste reduction, reuse, and recycling practices. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the amount of household trash increases by 25 percent, about 1 million extra tons nationally, between Thanksgiving and the New Year. Trimming the holiday waste stream can require less effort than you might think. MDEQ recommends the following “green” practices” for your holiday activities.



Decorating Ideas

- Consider having a potted Christmas tree that can be replanted in the wild, in your yard or kept and re-used the next year as your Christmas tree.
- If you use a real tree, be sure to recycle it if the service is offered in your community. Christmas trees can be used for fish spawning habitats, for mulch for public and private landscaping projects, for boiler fuel, and for lake, river, and beach front stabilization.
- Use trimmed branches from your Christmas tree for wreaths, the hearth, or table decorations rather than discarding them immediately.
- Decorate your home, tree, and centerpiece with holly, cedar, berries, cranberries, popcorn, fruits and nuts—some which can be consumed and all of which can be composted.



Gift Shopping and Wrapping

- ▶ When shopping, bring re-usable canvas tote bags and avoid using plastic bags—particularly for just one item. For those plastic shopping bags that you do collect, recycle these bags at participating retailers. Because these plastic shopping bags are specialty items, please do not place these plastic bags in a residential recycling bin.
- ▶ Consider re-using wrapping or other reusable paper or commonly discarded paper items such as Sunday comics, old posters, maps, discarded sheet music, and wallpaper scraps. If every American family wrapped just three presents in re-used materials, that would save enough paper to cover 45,000 football fields.
- ▶ Have children make their own wrapping paper by designing and coloring brown paper grocery bags, using old homework pages, old Christmas cards, or hand-drawn pictures to wrap gifts in. Grandparents in particular will appreciate the special touch of a grandchild to any gift.
- ▶ Use and re-use gift bags instead of wrapping paper.
- ▶ Avoid using metallic gift wrapping paper because this paper is generally not recyclable.
- ▶ Give gifts in canvas re-usable shopping tote bags rather than gift bags. You can buy these re-usable shopping bags with your favorite sports team's logo.
- ▶ Choose products that use less packaging material when selecting gifts.
- ▶ Look for products with the Energy Star logo. These items have been evaluated and rated for their energy efficiency.
- ▶ Use postcards for greeting cards or send electronic greeting cards. Postcards generate less waste and require less energy to manufacture and mail. Emailed greeting cards can be whimsical and entertaining and generate no wastes that require disposal.

Gift Ideas

- ▶ Look for gifts that have an environmental or health message or theme such as a nature book, a refillable thermos bottle or coffee mug, a canvas tote bag, or items made from recycled content.
- ▶ Give home-baked cookies, bread or jams or a plant or tree that can be planted in the recipient's yard.

Simple, common sense steps can provide an inexpensive and enduring gift to your loved ones and our natural resources as well as leaving more “green” in your wallet.

- ▶ Consider gifts that keep on giving such as a compost bin, battery charger, rechargeable batteries, compact fluorescent light bulbs, a perpetual calendar, or an erasable message board.
- ▶ Give two gifts in one by using baskets, scarves, or pillowcases to wrap gifts.
- ▶ Give gifts that don't create waste such as passes to the zoo or an amusement park, music, tennis, golf, or other lessons, memberships to a community organization, tickets to a concert or movie, dinner at a restaurant, a subscription to an online magazine or newspaper, an IOU to help rake leaves or repair a leaky faucet.
- ▶ Give gifts that get “used up” such as candles, soap, or seeds for the garden.
- ▶ Give durable toys that are made from wood or metal so that they can be passed down to others, even becoming collectible items.
- ▶ If purchasing electronic items such as a computer, television, cell phone or gaming station, find a retailer that will take back and recycle the outdated or obsolete item being replaced.
- ▶ If you cannot find retailers with take-back programs, recycle the obsolete electronic devices through local community recycling programs or donate computers or televisions that have useful life to community groups, local schools, or nonprofit organizations.

After the Holidays

- ▶ Clean out your closets and donate gently-used toys, clothing and household items to charitable organizations.
- ▶ Save wrapping paper, bows, and ribbons to use for the next holiday season. Or, try to recycle as much as possible.
- ▶ Make a New Year's resolution to start a recycling program at home or at work. Call your city, county or MDEQ to find out more information about recycling opportunities in your area.
- ▶ Consider having yourself removed from the mailing lists for Christmas catalogs and other similar mail order circulars.
- ▶ Compost left over holiday food scraps such as fruit and vegetable trimmings.

For more information on waste reduction, re-use and recycling programs or ideas, contact MDEQ, your local solid waste department, or a Keep Mississippi Beautiful affiliate.

Irrigation Summit Held December 13

The 2016 Mississippi Delta Irrigation Summit was held on December 13 at the MSU Delta Research and Extension Center Capps Building in Stoneville.



The event included presentations from MDEQ, Mississippi State University, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Corps of Engineers, USDA Agricultural Research Service, and the Yazoo Mississippi Delta Joint Water Management District on Water Use Efficiency, Monitoring and Modeling, and Alternative Water Supplies.

The event was hosted by the Delta Sustainable Water Resources Task Force.

MDEQ's Chris Hawkins discussing water use permitting and acceptable irrigation efficiency practices.





MSU ASCE Chapter Designs “Green Tailgate” Experience

The Mississippi State University chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) recently sponsored a “Green Tailgate” event at the University’s home football game on November 19 against Arkansas. The MSU ASCE chapter issued a challenge to its student members to design and build a football tailgating experience entirely powered by alternative energy sources. Chapter Vice-President Jeffrey Steinwinder indicated the goals of the event were to promote increased student knowledge and interest in alternative energy opportunities and to help spur creative ideas to implement alternative energy based design into the main concentrations of Civil Engineering: structures, environmental, transportation, geotech and materials.

The student chapter team responded to the alternative energy design challenge by developing a “Green Tailgate” experience that offset the electrical and gas powered energy consumption and carbon emissions of the typical tailgating activity at a college football game. The successful student design involved a station powered by both wind turbine and solar energy sources that was used to charge 30 phones for over 10 hours, power a radio for six hours, and provide lighting for four hours.

ASCE Chapter Design Team members pictured from left: Jeff Steinwinder, Sheila McLeod, Justin Gilliland, David Warden (son of former MDEQ employee Billy Warden), and Mariette Wientjes, all students in the Department of Civil Engineering. Other notable members included Allen Dilley, Abigail Breazeale, Geneva Catlett, Lucero Solis, and Morgan Cowles.



Photos:

Top: Team member Justin Gilliland, checking wire connections from solar panel to battery bank.

Bottom: Wind turbine at the tailgate.

The students were excited that the event met both the alternative energy design goals as well as the goal of providing information on alternative energy sources for Mississippi State University and the Starkville community. The chapter also expressed their appreciation for the sponsors of the “Green Tailgate” event that included The Southern Company, Neel-Schaffer Engineering, and the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, as well as their faculty advisor, Dr. Seamus Freyne.





MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Registration for the Beach Outfalls Challenge opens JANUARY 9!

Online registration for the Beach Outfalls Challenge opens on January 9, 2017! Registration will be open until March 15, and all design submissions are due by March 31. For more information about online registration, visit www.beachoutfallschallenge.org.

The Beach Outfalls Challenge is a public prize challenge sponsored by MDEQ which aims to improve water quality in the Mississippi Sound. This project is funded through a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund.

The goal of the Beach Outfalls Challenge is to enhance Mississippi's ability to restore and maintain ecological integrity of the Mississippi Sound by providing measurable improvements to water quality and reducing significant sources of degradation.





#FossilFriday

Since National Fossil Day on October 12, MDEQ and its Office of Geology have been posting a Mississippi fossil every Friday on Facebook and Twitter with the hashtag #FossilFriday. The agency recently launched an Instagram account and will post the same fossil photos there. The hashtag is used across social media to highlight interesting fossils.

The State of Mississippi, from border to border, contains intriguing and significant fossils that draw researchers from around the country and the world.

Follow along each Friday on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#)!



Ice age Mastodon (*Mammuth americanum*) from the ancestral Mississippi River Pre-loess terrace gravels near Bovina in Warren County. This photo was posted on November 11 for #FossilFriday.

Region 4 Small Business Environmental Assistance Program Meeting

In November, staff from MDEQ's Office of Community Engagement Small Business Environmental Assistance Program coordinated and attended the EPA Region 4 Small Business Environmental Assistance Program (SBEAP) meeting. This annual meeting allows regional



SBEAPs an opportunity to collaborate and strategize with programs from other states within the region. The meeting was held at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division Office in Atlanta with representatives from Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

The group discussed a wide range of topics including: Increasing Federal and State Interaction, Stewardship and Compliance, Air Permitting, and Strategic Tools. Representatives from EPA Region 4, the Georgia Compliance Advisory Panel, and the Director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division also presented information to the group. The 2017 meeting will be hosted by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation in Nashville.

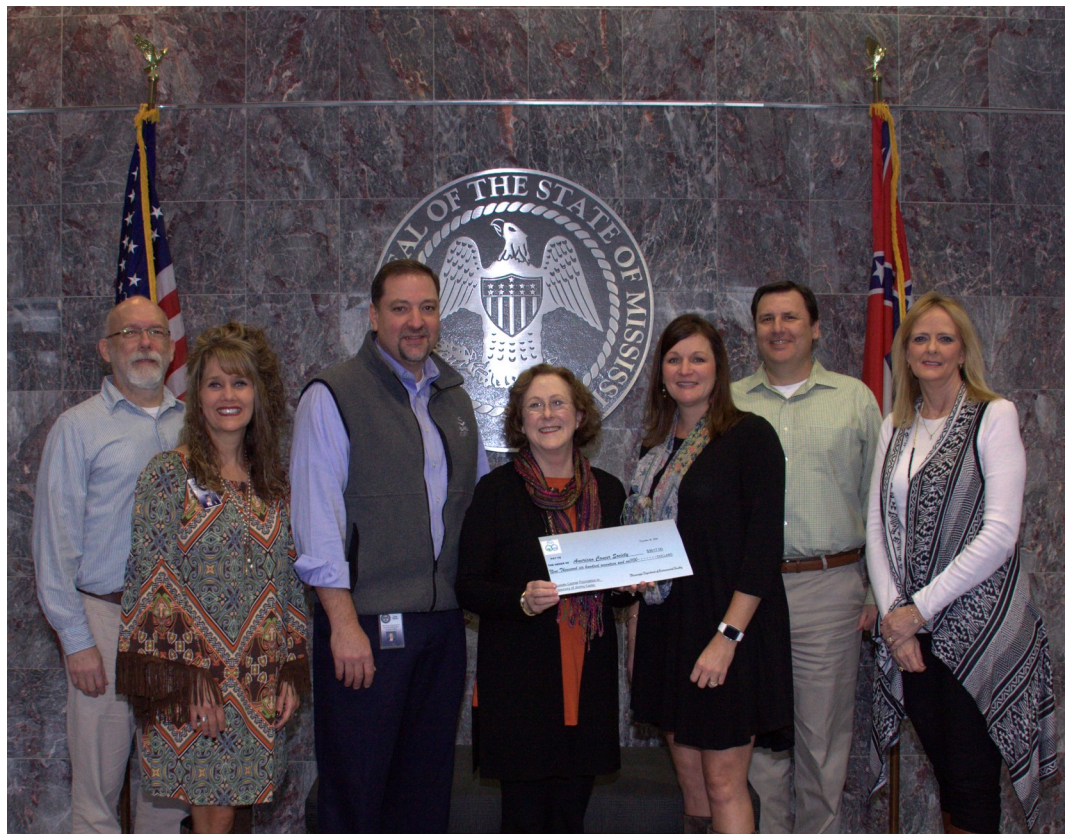




MDEQ Raises \$9,617 for Prostate Cancer Foundation

As in several of the past few years, the agency fundraised in November for prostate cancer research. This year the money was raised in memory of MDEQ employee Jimmy Carter who passed away recently.

A wild game lunch and a raffle produced \$9,617 that was donated to the Prostate Cancer Foundation through the American Cancer Society.



Members of the Prostate Cancer Fundraising Committee and MDEQ Executive Director Gary Rikard presented the funds raised to Amanda Crawford of the American Cancer Society. L-R: Jay Barkley, Jill Bailey, Gary Rikard, Robin Carter, Amanda Crawford, Robbie Wilbur, and Sherry Pyron.



MDEQ Environmental Action Links

- Draft permits currently at public notice, <http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/publicnotice.aspx>
- Environmental Permits Division Scheduled Public Hearings, <http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/publichearingheader.aspx>
- Geology Permit Application Public Notice, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/geology_public_notice.aspx
- Permits and certificates issued in the last 90 days, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_permits.aspx
- General permit coverages issued in the last 90 days, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_gnp_issued.aspx
- Notices of Intent for coverage under a Statewide General permit received by the Environmental Permits Division, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_gnp_notice.aspx
- List of the 401 Water Quality Certifications currently at public notice, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_wqc_public_notice.aspx
- List of the compliance inspections recently conducted, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_eced_tasks.aspx
- Orders issued by the Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality, http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/report_orders.aspx

Connect with MDEQ



MDEQ Social Media



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Picture of the Month

Deer Island

Taken by Trent Jones, Sol-
id Waste Division

