

GEORGIA

Solid Waste Trust Fund



Report for Fiscal Year 2009

A publication of the Environmental Protection Division,
Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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Georgia Solid Waste Trust Fund

Report for Fiscal Year 2009: Executive Summary



The Solid Waste Trust Fund (SWTF) was established in 1990 as part of the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act. The Act requires that EPD produce an annual report on the activities funded by the SWTF; this report fulfills that requirement.

An amendment to the Act in 1992 established a primary source of funding for the SWTF in the form of a \$1 fee for every new tire sold in the state. This amendment received strong support from Georgia's tire retailers.

Each year, fees collected the previous year are available for appropriation by the Legislature, through the state budget process, to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), whose director is authorized by the Act to serve as trustee for the fund. The trust fund may be used for:

- scrap tire management and cleanup
- emergency, preventative and corrective action at solid waste facilities
- closure of abandoned landfills
- solid waste reduction and recycling
- litter prevention and abatement
- administrative costs associated with managing the fund

When available, EPD also disperses money from the SWTF to other state agencies and divisions within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). These

include the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC), and the the Wildlife Resources (WRD) and Sustainability (formerly the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division) divisions of DNR.

These state agencies provide technical assistance to local governments and businesses and fund recycling infrastructure and public education on solid waste reduction, recycling and other solid waste issues. In FY 09, the Legislature appropriated \$2.09 million from the tire fees collected in 2008 to the Solid Waste Trust Fund. This money was used to:

- manage and clean up scrap tires
- implement three statewide waste reduction and recycling initiatives
- carry out litter prevention and abatement activities

More information on the activities carried out in FY 09 is presented in the remainder of this report.

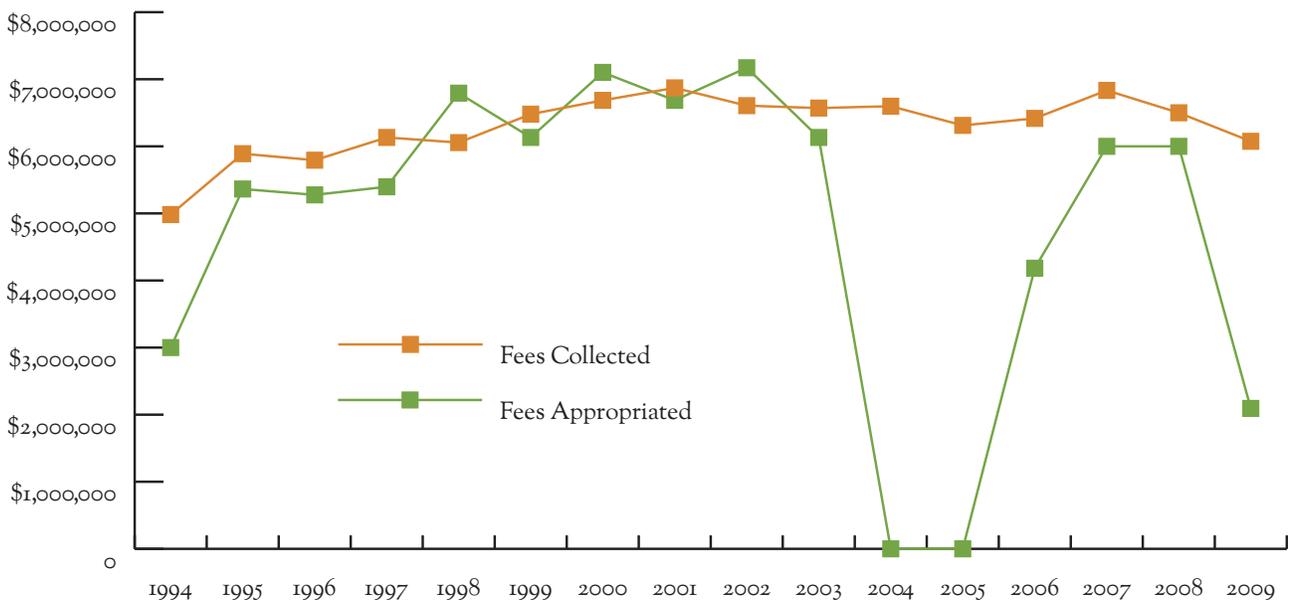
Georgia Solid Waste Trust Fund Fee Collection and Appropriation for FY 09



In FY 09, the Legislature appropriated \$2.09 million to the Solid Waste Trust Fund. The DNR Board approved using the funds (and an additional \$920,015 carried over from FY 08) for the following authorized activities:

- Program Operations: \$2,002,153 (66.45%)
 - EPD: \$1,562,653
 - DCA: \$439,500
- Scrap Tire Cleanup: \$910,947 (30.23%)
- Emergency, Preventative and Corrective Action: \$100,000 (3.32%)

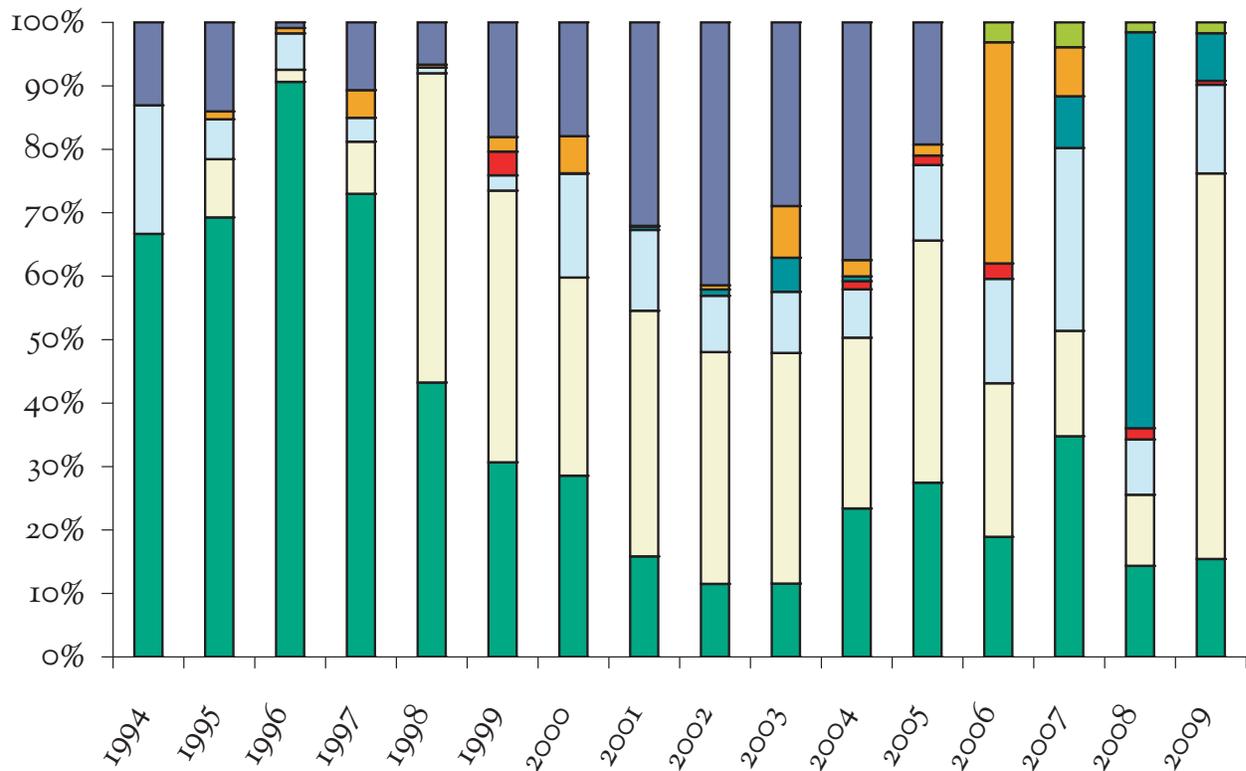
SOLID WASTE TRUST FUND FEES COLLECTED AND APPROPRIATED
FY 94 - 09



Georgia Solid Waste Trust Fund

Authorized Expenditures FY 94 - 09

This bar chart shows a historical breakdown of the money from the Solid Waste Trust Fund by authorized use since its inception in FY 94. In FY 09, the majority of the funds were used to support statewide solid waste recycling and litter prevention initiatives.



- Local Government Enforcement / Education Grants
- Litter Enforcement
- Market Development
- Abandoned Landfills
- Emergency Response / Corrective Action
- Operations and Fund Administration
- Waste Reduction / Litter Education
- Scrap Tire Management and Abatement

Georgia Solid Waste Trust Fund

By the Numbers in FY 09



9,000,000

estimated number of scrap tires generated in Georgia

164,000

estimated number of illegally dumped tires removed and recycled through local government efforts and state enforcement action

\$193,685

amount reimbursed to local governments for approved tire cleanups

33

number of scrap tire dumps awaiting cleanup at end of FY 09

6,969

number of scrap tire generators in the state

\$413,442

amount spent in FY 09 to complete closure activities and provide post-closure care for the abandoned Scales Road landfill in DeKalb County

2,320,532

number of Web site pages viewed at EEinGeorgia.org, Georgia's online guide to environmental education

5,155

number of solid waste related technical assistance questions answered by state agencies

936

tons of materials recycled from state prisons

24,557

tons of food waste and other organics composted at state prisons

\$892,255

landfill tipping fees saved by state prisons through recycling and composting programs

17,161

pounds of recyclable materials collected using "away-from-home" recycling trailers at 186 events around the state

182,338

Christmas trees recycled during "Bring One for the Chipper" events

Scrap Tire Cleanup & Management

Environmental Protection Division



In addition to being fire hazards, scrap tire dumps are breeding grounds for snakes and disease-carrying rodents and mosquitoes. Mosquitoes, carriers of the West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis, can breed up to 100 times faster in a water-filled scrap tire than in the natural environment.

Because of these dangers, eliminating scrap tire dumps is a major goal of EPD's Scrap Tire Management Program.

Using a combination of permitting, outreach, compliance monitoring and enforcement, the program helps prevent new tire piles from forming and ensures that the majority of the 9 million scrap tires generated each year in Georgia are recycled. The program also reimburses local governments for cleaning up illegal tire dumps.

Since the program began in 1992, more than 14.2 million scrap tires have been removed from illegal tire dumps and either recycled into new products or used as an alternative source of fuel.

In FY 09, the DNR Board approved spending \$910,947 from the SWTF to begin the first phase of cleanup at an illegal tire dump in Upson County that contains an estimated 3.6 million scrap tires. However, the project was not started due to state budget concerns.

The Scrap Tire Management Program also funded 38 projects that resulted in the recycling of an estimated 164,000 tires. The program maintains a list of "orphan" tire dumps — sites where the person responsible for

SCRAP TIRE NUMBERS FY 09

6,969 registered generators
146 permitted carriers
53 permitted sorters
32 permitted processors
95% compliance rate

dumping the tires is not known. At the end of FY 09, there were 33 orphan sites around the state, containing an estimated 160,500 tires.

The program also registers retailers and other generators of scrap tires (including public and private fleet owners) and collects the tire fee. Tracking those who sell new tires and generate scrap tires helps ensure all retailers are paying the tire fee and that scrap tires generated are properly managed and do not end up in illegal dumps.

Scrap tire carriers (those who transport the tires) and processors (those who recycle the tires) are issued permits by EPD. This is another way EPD monitors the number of scrap tires and how they are managed.

Georgia's nationally recognized scrap tire management program would not have been established without the support of the state's tire retailers. In the early 1990s, retailers recognized that the growing number of illegal scrap tire piles was tarnishing the industry and took proactive steps to prevent and clean up illegal scrap tire piles. The industry is proud of the accomplishments of the program over the past 18 years and remains supportive of its continuation.

Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Environmental Protection Division



EPD provides technical assistance to a variety of clients. In FY 09, staff spearheaded a public-private initiative to reduce the amount of food residuals going into landfills. This effort included working on changes to the state compost rule, as well as educating the local foodservice industry. EPD's environmental education staff continued to promote environmental education resources and support school efforts to enhance public health and environmental stewardship.

EPD waste reduction staff responded to 102 requests for technical assistance in FY 09. This assistance included recommendations on how to manage organics, conduct waste audits and recycle various items, including asphalt shingles, toilets and carpet from government buildings in Rome. Staff also supplied information on market development to three potential plastics and construction and demolition debris recycling facilities.

FOOD RESIDUALS DIVERSION

As part of an initiative funded by a \$45,000 federal grant, EPD continued its focus on options to divert food residuals from landfills. Activities included:

- Speaking at conferences on organics recovery and reducing waste in the foodservice industry
- Organizing national conference calls and a listserv to discuss composting with other states
- Setting up a Web site to disseminate composting information

- Compiling and analyzing compost rules from across the country
- Co-sponsoring a workshop for International Compost Awareness Week

RULEMAKING: UPDATING GEORGIA'S COMPOST RULE

In FY 09, EPD began the process of updating its compost rule. In November, EPD led a conference call to gather information on food waste composting rules across the country. The call drew participants from 27 states, six EPA regional offices and EPA headquarters.

As a follow-up to the conference call, EPD developed an online survey and conducted phone interviews to gather additional information. Subsequent national conference calls were also held as the group's effort continued.

EPD hosted two of three facilitated stakeholder meetings to review Georgia's existing compost rule and create a revised rule. Stakeholders represented academia, nonprofits, industry, state and local governments, and trade groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & OUTREACH

EPD coordinates with more than 300 state agencies, nonprofits and others to produce EEinGeorgia.org, an online guide to environmental education (EE) in Georgia.

Classroom teachers and other educators rely on the site to locate available EE lesson plans, curriculum guides, grants, awards, outreach programs, field studies, conferences and professional learning courses. FY 09 showed a steady increase in the use of the site:

- 354 EE organizations submitted resources to EEinGeorgia.org, up from 302 at the start of the fiscal year — a 17.2% increase
- The number of schools included in the EE School Directory increased 180% from 25 at the start of the fiscal year to 70
- EE event submissions increased in all 12 months by comparison to the previous year; 868 more calendar events were submitted in FY 09 — a 78.8% increase
- The number of pages downloaded by site users per month increased in 11 of the 12 months and overall by 407,928 pages — a 21.3% increase

The EE program also published 12 monthly electronic newsletters to inform teachers and other educators of the latest EE news, teaching resources, events, grants, contests and awards added to the Web site. Subscriptions increased 14.7% — from 3,690 to 4,231.

GEORGIA GREEN & HEALTHY SCHOOLS

The Georgia Green & Healthy Schools (GGHS) program works to aid schools in understanding and practicing environmentally sound principles. All public and private/independent schools (grades K-12) in Georgia are eligible to join. By the end of FY 09, 16 schools were enrolled and two schools had advanced to the second of three program levels.

While many environmental education programs focus on teaching students about recycling and waste reduction, GGHS goes beyond the basics. Understanding the complex nature of schools, GGHS reaches an audience that includes teachers, school nurses, facility managers and other school personnel. GGHS broadens the scope of traditional environmental education by incorporating public health and environmental safety and integrating concepts from various disciplines. In FY 09, the program:

- In cooperation with a pediatric environmental safety and health group and EPA Region IV, produced and distributed a school environmental health module for school nurses and teachers
- Provided information to schools about the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard and Emergency Response Act, in conjunction with EPD's lead and asbestos unit
- Spoke on GGHS at events around the state, reaching close to 2,000 people
- Provided support for 24 teachers through school visits and assistance conducting GGHS audits

From the Classroom to the Community

The Dekalb Academy of Technology and Environment, a Georgia Green & Healthy School in Lithonia, conducted a two-day waste audit in FY 09. Students produced a public service announcement and took the information they learned into the community.

The school followed up the audit with a two-week recycling contest involving the Clarkston community in which more than 2,500 pounds of recyclable materials and 58 pounds of electronic waste were kept out of the landfill. They also collected and recycled 156 batteries.

The school has since conducted experiments on the best placement for its recycling bins. Through a combination of effective placement and education, the school has been able to increase its recycling by 10 percent.

Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Sustainability Division



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Since 1993, DNR's Sustainability Division (formerly the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division) has provided free, non-regulatory and confidential technical assistance in the areas of pollution prevention, resource conservation, reuse, and recycling.

While the Sustainability Division received no money from the SWTF in FY 09, the division used funds awarded in years prior to help in responding to 443 requests for technical assistance with disposal or recycling of a broad range of materials.

The following is a partial list of materials that were recycled, reused or otherwise diverted from landfills:

- 38 pallets of electronic scrap
- 300 tons/month of shingles
- 150 tons/month of polyester fabric
- 1,000 aerosol cans per month
- 5,000 lbs. of bagged fertilizer
- 10 tons of elemental sulphur
- 6 tons/year of rubber gloves and mats
- 3 tractor-trailer loads of plastic auto bumpers
- 50 lbs. of elemental mercury
- 40,000 lbs. of cottonseed oil
- 87 old mercury-containing thermostats
- 135,000 lbs. of wooden shipping crates
- 500 gallons of antifreeze
- 2 pallets of rubber
- 5 pallets of tea leaves

Staff also assisted small businesses in conducting waste audits and beginning recycling programs.

Staff members worked closely with the Green Food Service Alliance as technical advisors to set up criteria and implement the Downtown Atlanta Zero Waste Zone. Located in the heart of the convention district, participating business and restaurants pledge to recycle cardboard, plastics, paper, metal, glass, grease and compost food residuals.

In FY 09, the division led an effort to characterize the materials disposed of at construction and demolition (C&D) landfills. Waste sorts were conducted at representative landfills across the state. The study was specifically designed to quantify the amount of carpet and materials containing lead and asbestos. The final report is due in Spring 2010.

The Georgia Industrial Materials Exchange (ScrapMatchGA.org) is an online materials exchange where companies can advertise their excess materials or by-products, including metal, plastics and textiles. Companies also can place "want ads" for items. Finding uses for these unwanted materials saves energy, conserves natural resources and lowers disposal costs. Use of the site continued to grow, both in numbers of registered users (66) and visitors. During FY 09, the site had 48,370 visits during which 134,830 pages were viewed and 220,122 files were accessed.

Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority



GEFA is a state agency that administers a wide variety of programs that provide financial assistance and other support services to improve Georgia's environment. GEFA's program focus areas are water, wastewater, solid waste, recycling, land conservation, energy efficiency and fuel storage tanks for local governments, other state agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The Recycling and Waste Reduction Grant program, administered by the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), provides funding to local governments to construct recycling facilities and purchase equipment to reduce and recycle waste.

While GEFA received no money from the SWTF in FY 09, several projects funded in FY 08 continued to be implemented.

For example, Bulloch County purchased 200 carts with grant funding for a new, subscription-based curbside recycling program in Statesboro.

Bulloch County is also part of the regional recycling hub program and received SWTF grant money through DCA in FY 08 to fund an expansion of its recycling facility.

When the hub project is complete, the facility will be able to accept single-stream recyclables collected through Statesboro's curbside program and from other neighboring local governments.

In addition to Bulloch County, 11 more grants were awarded in FY 08. By the end of FY 09, the following projects were completed:

- Bacon County purchased a forklift for recycling

- Decatur County purchased a portable recycling trailer for use throughout the county and a baler for recyclables
- Hart County purchased four recycling containers to place at schools in the county
- Kennesaw purchased curbside recycling carts
- Macon purchased curbside recycling carts

Bulloch County has a well-established recycling program that has been in operation for 16 years. The current program includes 17 recycling drop-off centers, cardboard pickup service for participating businesses, and special event recycling provided by Keep Bulloch Beautiful.

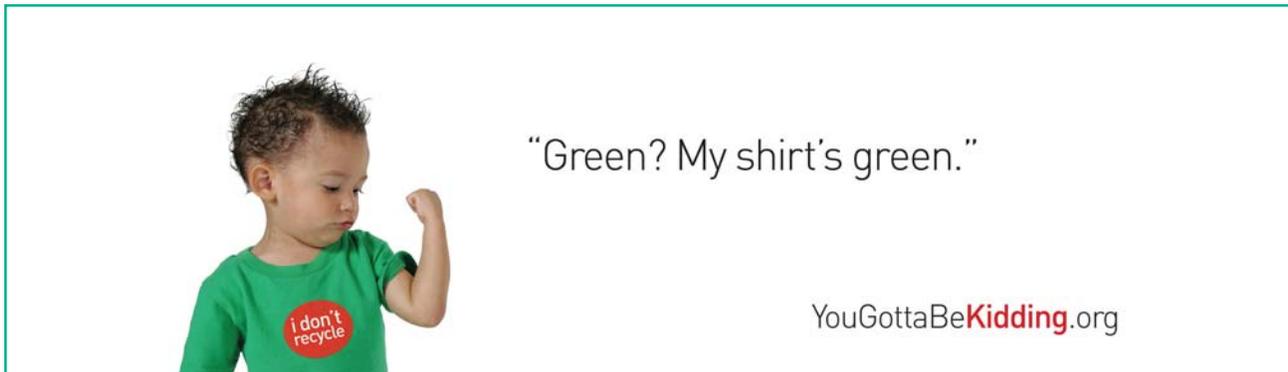
The curbside program, once fully implemented, will be an expansion on the current recycling program in Bulloch County and will also provide means for smaller, surrounding communities to offer recycling programs by bringing their materials to Bulloch County.

Jenna Lawson

Executive Director, Keep Bulloch Beautiful

Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Georgia Department of Community Affairs



In FY 09, DCA received \$439,500 to fund personnel that provide technical assistance to local governments and coordinate three statewide recycling initiatives.

RECYCLING EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

To educate citizens and local officials on the benefits of recycling, DCA launched a statewide recycling education campaign in June 2009. Activities included:

- developing the campaign theme
- producing ads and promotional materials
- creating the Web site, yougottabekidding.org
- registering 101 site users
- co-sponsoring six recycling outreach events
- signing up 1,147 Facebook friends in 30 days

In recognition of this work, EPA gave Georgia the 2009 National Innovations Award for its recycling strategy.

REGIONAL RECYCLING HUBS

In FY 08, Savannah, Bulloch County, Griffin and Valdosta were selected to receive grants to construct or expand facilities that will form the basis of a statewide network of collection sites for commingled recyclables. These hubs will reduce transportation and other costs, making it more viable for communities to offer recycling.

In FY 09, DCA worked with Bulloch County to advertise the hub program to neighboring communities. The county purchased recycling bins to support curbside collection in Statesboro and the hub was built. In Griffin, the shell of the facility and a concrete loading pad were built. Both Griffin and Bulloch County plan to be in operation in early 2010.

Savannah's hub was completed and the city began curbside recycling, averaging 500 tons per month. Savannah also encouraged nearby communities to use the hub and Garden City began its own curbside recycling program. Valdosta issued a request for proposals for single-stream curbside recycling.

SPECIAL EVENT RECYCLING

To offer recycling options away from home, DCA began a special event recycling program in FY 07. Local governments applied for grants to receive recycling trailers, which are then available to event organizers in their communities. In FY 08, 35 trailers were delivered around the state. In FY 09, 17,161 pounds of recyclable materials were collected through the program at 186 events around the state (of which, 97 were able to offer recycling for the first time because of the trailers).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & REPORTING

In FY 09, DCA staff responded to 4,115 requests for assistance with recycling and/or general waste management issues; they also answered 495 questions related to the proper management of household hazardous waste. DCA worked with local governments and private recycling facilities to enter their solid waste data into an online database designed to track and measure the effectiveness of voluntary recycling activities in the state. Workshops on recycling and solid waste planning for local governments reached an audience of 349.

Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Georgia Department of Corrections



As part of its efforts to manage and reduce solid waste, the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) has 9 composting operations that process food and other organic waste from 17 of its state prisons and facilities.

In FY 09, GDC composted 4,619 tons of food waste and 19,938 tons of other organic material. Assuming the prisons would have to pay a landfill tipping fee of \$35 per ton to dispose of the materials, GDC realized a cost savings of \$859,495.

GDC also has 23 recycling operations that accept solid waste from 40 of its state prisons and facilities. In FY 09, GDC recycled 627 tons of cardboard, 258 tons of steel and other metals and 51 tons of pallets. Again, assuming a landfill tipping fee of \$35 per ton, the cost savings to GDC was \$32,760.

Solid Waste Emergencies & Preventative and Corrective Action

Environmental Protection Division



Since 1993, the SWTF has been used to respond to tire fires, control methane gas coming from landfills, and extinguish fires at landfills.

The FY 09 budget reserved \$100,000 to respond to such emergencies. Fortunately, in FY 09 EPD did not have to use SWTF money to respond to emergencies at solid waste sites.

Litter Prevention & Abatement

Georgia Department of Community Affairs



STATEWIDE LITTER CAMPAIGN

DCA is required, under the Comprehensive Litter Prevention and Abatement Act of 2006, to create an annual report on the status of litter prevention and abatement in Georgia.

The litter report includes an itemization of expenditures made from the Solid Waste Trust Fund for the prevention and abatement of litter; a compilation and analysis of litter prevention, collection, and enforcement efforts; an assessment of littering in the state; a statement of progress in achieving a litter prevention ethic; and recommendations for improving litter abatement and prevention efforts.

In March 2009, DCA released the 2008 Georgia Statewide Litter Assessment. This update to the initial 2006 assessment was commissioned to evaluate any changes in litter on Georgia roads. Overall, the report found 23 percent less litter on state roadways than in 2006. This decline could be attributed, in part, to the statewide litter campaign and its litter prevention and abatement efforts.

In FY 09, DCA continued its support of the litter campaign through the use of the state's anti-litter mascot, Buster the Brown Trasher; the Web site, LitterItCostsYou.org; and assistance to local Keep America Beautiful affiliate organizations.

LITTER ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

Four enforcement trainings were conducted in FY 09 in Bainbridge, Columbus, Cobb County and Barrow

County. Four hours of peace officer standards and training (POST) credit were earned by some 125 law and code enforcement officers. Each attendee received a Litter Tool Kit to support efforts to reduce litter in their jurisdictions.

GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP

The Great American Cleanup is an annual event designed to assist local governments in revitalizing their communities and educating citizens. For the first time in the program's history, events were held in every county in the state. Georgia was one of only two states to achieve a 100% participation rate. In FY 09, 80,494 volunteers representing 737 communities participated in a total of 1,421 events. By the numbers:

- 2,042,442 pounds of trash were removed from roadways, public spaces, waterways and trails
- 903,981 pounds of electronics were recycled
- 2,018,336 pounds of aluminum and steel were recycled
- 2,078,336 pounds of plastic bottles were recycled
- 236,720 pounds of clothing were collected for reuse
- 511 graffiti sites were cleaned up
- 327 illegal dumps were cleaned up
- 863 environmental education events drew 243,013 people

Abandoned Landfills

Environmental Protection Division



Since 2005, EPD has been working to clean up and close Scales Road Landfill in DeKalb County. While the bulk of the work took place in FY 08, there were a few tasks that remained before the project was wrapped up in FY 09.

The Scales Road Landfill began accepting waste in 1990. By the time it ceased operating in 2004, it covered nearly 25 acres and contained approximately 2 million tons of waste.

In 2000, the owner of the landfill declared bankruptcy, as did the insurance company that provided financial assurance for the landfill's closure. In 2005, the owner informed EPD the company did not have the funds needed to properly close the landfill and it abandoned the site. Because the landfill was not properly closed, environmental conditions deteriorated; erosion exposed waste and fires were reported.

In addition to the fires, other environmental threats included increased sedimentation in nearby streams due to runoff and the contamination of groundwater with leachate (rainwater that has fallen on the landfill and percolated to the bottom, picking up pollutants along the way).

Gases, such as sulfides and methane, from the landfill also threatened the quality of life of the roughly 10,000 people who live within a two-mile radius of the site.

EPD began cleanup and closed the landfill in order to protect human health and the environment. Because the landfill owner and its insurance company were bankrupt, EPD used money from the Solid Waste Trust Fund for the project. In March 2007, EPD awarded a \$4.9 million contract to close the landfill. The majority of the work on the landfill was completed in FY 08, for a total of \$4,382,372.47. In FY 09, \$413,441.90 was spent.

In FY 09, EPD continued to monitor the contractor's work on the landfill, including construction of the landfill cover. The contractor also continued to perform upkeep and maintenance, including repairing an eroded area and replacing vegetation.

The final cost of the project is expected to be within the projected budget of approximately \$4.9 million.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Environmental Protection Division

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