

# Georgia Solid Waste Trust Fund



Report for  
Fiscal Year 2008

# Introduction

EPD has published several documents on the Solid Waste Trust Fund outlining its history and uses. These documents are available for viewing and download at [http://www.georgiaepd.org/Documents/techguide\\_lpb.html#swtf](http://www.georgiaepd.org/Documents/techguide_lpb.html#swtf)

The Solid Waste Trust Fund (SWTF) was established in 1990 as part of the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act. This Act, along with its amendments, provides a framework for guiding how solid waste is to be managed in the state.

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. 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 the trustee for the fund. The moneys allocated to the trust fund are then used to carry out the solid waste management goals of the Act.

The trust fund is authorized for:

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

The Act also requires that EPD produce an annual report on the activities funded by the SWTF; this report fulfills that requirement.

## Appropriation

In FY 08, the Legislature appropriated \$6 million from the tire fees collected in 2007 to the Solid Waste Trust Fund. In addition to funding internal programs that carry out the intent of the SWTF, EPD also disperses money from this fund to other state agencies and divisions within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), including the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA), the Wildlife Resources Division (WRD), the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) and the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division (P<sup>2</sup>AD).

These state agencies provide technical assistance, funding and public education on waste reduction, recycling and other solid waste issues, and assist local governments with solid waste planning.

In FY 08, the trust fund was used to:

- manage and clean up scrap tires
- respond to three solid waste emergencies
- close the abandoned Scales Road Construction and Demolition landfill (page 16)
- implement three major statewide waste reduction and recycling initiatives (page 12)
- carry out litter prevention and abatement activities (page 13)

# FY 08 Spending Plan

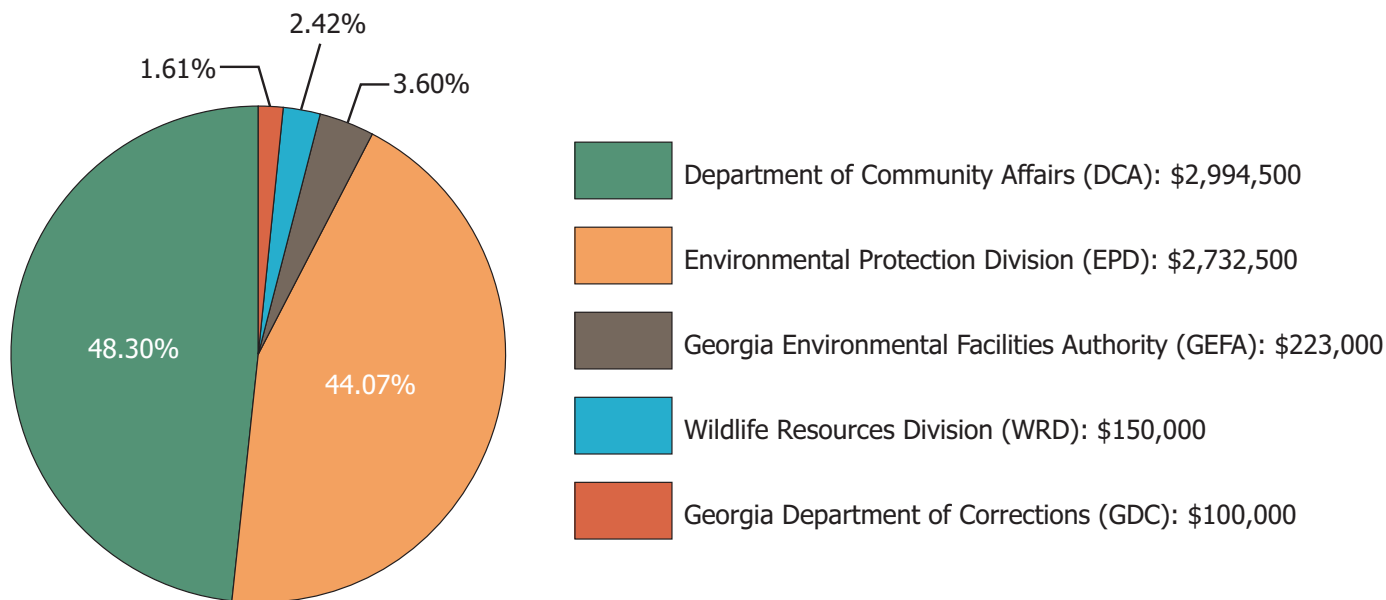


In FY 2008, \$6.2 million\* was approved by the DNR Board for the following authorized uses:

- Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling: \$2,067,500 (33.35%)
- Litter Prevention and Abatement: \$1.4 million (22.58%)
- Scrap Tire Management and Cleanup: \$1,257,028 (20.27%)
- Administrative Costs: \$1,055,472 (17.02%)
- Closure of Abandoned Landfills: \$220,000 (3.55%)
- Emergency, Preventative and Corrective Action: \$200,000 (3.23%)

*\*In addition to the \$6 million legislative appropriation, this total includes \$200,000 carried over from FY 07.*

SWTF Budget by Agency\*



*\*The Pollution Prevention Assistance Division (P<sup>2</sup>AD) received no money from the SWTF in FY 08.*

# The Solid Waste Trust Fund

By the numbers in FY 08



Scrap Tire Management and Cleanup	Closure of Abandoned Landfills	Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling	
<p><b>472,124</b> estimated number of illegally dumped tires removed and recycled through local government efforts and enforcement action</p> <p><b>\$304,941</b> amount reimbursed to local governments for approved tire cleanups</p> <p><b>38</b> number of scrap tire dumps awaiting cleanup</p> <p><b>6,695</b> number of scrap tire generators in the state</p>	<p><b>\$4.38 million</b> amount spent to clean up and provide post-closure care for the abandoned Scales Road landfill in DeKalb County</p> <p>Emergency, Preventative and Corrective Action</p>	<p><b>1,912,604</b> number of Web site pages viewed at EEinGeorgia.org, Georgia's on-line guide to environmental education</p> <p><b>2,808</b> number of solid waste related technical assistance questions answered by state agencies</p> <p><b>\$223,000</b> total amount of recycling and waste reduction grants awarded by GEFA to local governments to fund solid waste and recycling infrastructure improvements</p>	<p><b>25,800</b> tons of food waste and other organics composted at state prisons</p> <p><b>\$938,595</b> amount of landfill tipping fees saved by state prisons through recycling and composting programs</p> <p><b>35</b> number of "away-from-home," event recycling trailers distributed around the state</p>
<p>Litter Prevention and Abatement</p>	<p><b>\$121,730</b> amount spent on corrective action at landfill fires and at a landfill where uncontrolled methane created an explosion risk to nearby homes and a school</p>	<p><b>11</b> number of local governments receiving SWTF dollars through GEFA</p> <p><b>1,017</b> tons of materials at state prisons collected for recycling</p>	<p><b>\$131,000</b> total amount of Clean Community Challenge grants awarded to Georgia communities</p> <p><b>171,758</b> Christmas trees recycled during "Bring One for the Chipper" events statewide</p>
<p><b>141</b> number of litter-related citations issued by WRD rangers</p>			

# Solid Waste in Georgia

By the numbers in FY 08



How much waste was disposed in Georgia landfills in FY 08?

**16.5 million**  
total tons of waste (from all categories) disposed in Georgia landfills

**11.3%**  
percent of total tons of waste disposed in Georgia that is generated in other states

**12.9 million**  
tons of municipal solid waste (from Georgia and other states) disposed in Georgia

**3.3 million**  
tons of construction and demolition waste (from Georgia and other states) disposed in Georgia

How many landfills are operating in Georgia?

**55**  
number of municipal solid waste landfills in Georgia

**47**  
number of construction and demolition debris landfills in Georgia

How much capacity remains in Georgia landfills?

**34**  
number of years of capacity remaining in Georgia's municipal solid waste landfills

**59**  
number of years of capacity remaining in Georgia's construction and demolition landfills

What is the economic impact of recycling?

**50**  
estimated number of manufacturers in Georgia that use recyclable materials to make their products

**8%**  
percent of the paper used in the U.S. that is recycled by Georgia's paper industry

**1/3**  
fraction of the plastic beverage containers recycled in North America that are used by Georgia's carpet industry

# Scrap Tire Clean-up & Management

Number of scrap tires removed through enforcement action  
**9,700**

Number of scrap tires cleaned up through local government events  
**462,424**

Amount reimbursed to local governments for cleanups  
**\$304,941**

Since the program began in 1992, more than 14.2 million scrap tires have been removed from illegal tire dumps and recycled.



## Environmental Protection Division

### Scrap Tire Cleanup

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.

The Solid Waste Trust Fund is used to clean up tire dumps where the responsible party is either unwilling to remove the tires, cannot afford to remove them, or is unknown. Since the program began in 1992, more than 14.2 million scrap tires have been removed from illegal tire dumps and recycled into useful products or used as an alternative source of fuel (scrap tires have a high BTU value and can



A citizen reported this abandoned house in Fulton County to EPD in FY 08. Approximately 2,000 tires were found dumped on the property. If EPD cannot locate the property owner, or the owner refuses to pay, EPD will work with the local government to reimburse them for the collection and recycling of the tires.

be successfully substituted for coal in certain industries).

Depending on the circumstances, EPD either hires a contractor to remove the tires or reimburses local governments who lead the cleanup. A local government may also use SWTF money to remove scrap tires as part of a community-sponsored clean up event.

As FY 08 began, 10 projects were awaiting cleanup and 24 more were identified later in the fiscal year.

Cleanup began at 28 of the projects in FY 08; an estimated 462,424 scrap tires were removed and recycled. In FY 08, EPD reimbursed 33 local governments a total of \$304,941 for projects to clean up and recycle scrap tires.

An additional 9,700 scrap tires were removed and recycled by private parties as a result of EPD enforcement action.

# Scrap Tire Clean-up & Management

Number of registered scrap tire generators in Georgia  
**6,695**

Number of permitted processors in Georgia  
**9**

Number of carrier permits issued  
**163**



Tires that are not properly managed can end up in illegal tire dumps.

## Scrap Tire Management

To ensure that the majority of the approximately 9 million scrap tires generated in Georgia each year (plus the millions more imported from other states) are properly managed, EPD tracks scrap tires from their point of generation to their final disposition at a processor or recycler.



Tire chips are used to make other products, such as road base, or are burned in power plants as a source of fuel.

EPD regulations require retailers and other generators of scrap tires (including public and private fleet owners) to register with EPD. Tracking the generators helps ensure scrap tires are properly managed and do not end up illegally dumped. Scrap tire carriers and processors must be permitted by EPD.

In FY 08 there were 6,695 scrap tire generators, 135 carriers, 39 sorters and nine processors in the state. EPD also issued permits to 28 scrap tire carriers located in other states that also do business in Georgia.

EPD has seven staff members in district offices around the state who conduct compliance inspections and outreach and enforce the state's scrap tire laws. In FY 08, EPD conducted 4,509 inspections.



Roughly 9 million scrap tires are generated in Georgia each year. Millions more are brought to Georgia from other states for processing.

# Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Number of technical assistance requests answered  
**227**

Number of schools enrolled in Georgia Green & Healthy Schools program  
**8**



Twelve percent – or more than 800,000 tons – of the waste sent to Georgia landfills each year is food waste, with approximately 48% of this total coming from the greater Atlanta area, according to a statewide waste characterization study completed in 2005.

This represents the largest single category of solid waste going into the state's municipal solid waste landfills.

## Environmental Protection Division

EPD waste reduction staff responded to 227 requests for technical assistance in FY 08. Requests included recommendations on managing zoo waste and recycling a variety of materials including toilets, concrete and asphalt shingles. Staff provided in-depth assistance to businesses interested in processing construction and demolition materials and starting composting operations.

### Food Residuals Diversion

As part of a new initiative funded by a \$45,000 federal grant, EPD held two one-day conferences in FY 08 to encourage options to divert food residuals from landfills.

The first conference, on composting basics, was held in December 2007 in conjunction with EPA and North Carolina. Forty-four people from across the state attended, including EPD staff, local government solid waste managers, EPA Region 4 staff, farmers and non-profits.

In May 2008, 70 people attended the second event, "From the Table to the Farm." This conference covered options for diverting food waste and ways to

encourage the development of markets in Georgia to compost food waste. Local and national experts spoke on subjects such as food rescue and the connection of organics diversion to climate change. In June 2008, EPD staff launched a webpage that will serve as the primary source of information in the state for food waste diversion.

### Environmental Education and Outreach

EPD coordinates with more than 300 state agencies, non-profits and others to produce [EEinGeorgia.org](http://EEinGeorgia.org), an on-line guide to environmental education (EE) in Georgia. EE in Georgia provides a range of information related to environmental education in the state, including a directory of organizations; a statewide calendar of events; a searchable database of resources; lesson plans based on state curriculum standards; facts about Georgia's environment; and updates on grants, awards and news.



Terry Coleman, deputy commissioner of the Georgia Department of Agriculture, addresses EPD's food waste composting conference, "From the Table to the Farm."

Other sponsors include DCA's Keep Georgia Beautiful program, the Department of Education, the Georgia Parent Teacher Association and the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia.



# Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Number of EEinGeorgia.org  
Web site pages viewed  
**1,912,604**

Percent increase from FY 07 in submissions of  
environmental education events to EEinGeorgia.org  
**24**

“The **EE in Georgia Web site** offers value to environmental education in Georgia by providing a comprehensive directory of in-depth information on a variety of topics.

This service is invaluable for helping promote our workshops, events, resources and contests to both formal and non-formal educators, while also enhancing capacity building and networking opportunities.

It is truly the bridge that links the gap between formal education and environmental education.”

*Karen Garland,  
Environmental Education  
Senior Manager,  
Georgia Conservancy*

In FY 08, EE in Georgia continued to see increased use of its Web site. The program added a searchable EE school directory to the site. By June 2008, 25 schools had created profiles to showcase their EE programs and serve as models for other schools.

Compared to the previous fiscal year, the number of Web site pages downloaded per month increased in eight of the 12 months. The program also published 12 issues of an electronic newsletter to inform teachers and other educators of the latest EE news, teaching resources, events, grants, contests and awards (subscriptions increased from 2,702 to 3,705).

In FY 07, EE in Georgia received \$15,000 from the Georgia Department of Education to revise EE lesson plans to meet new Georgia Performance Standards. By June 2008, 99 plans had been revised.

Fourteen Georgia public schools participate in EIC, **Using the Environment as an Integrating Context for Learning**, a program designed to improve student en-



Potter Street Elementary in Bainbridge, a Georgia Green & Healthy School, has earned thousands of dollars as well as national recognition for its recycling program, which boasts a 100% school participation rate. Here, the students learn from “Dr. Recycling.”

agement and achievement. The program is based on research by a national education organization showing students perform better on standardized tests when they take part in environment-based investigations in their communities. EPD provides teachers at the EIC schools with access to professionals, programs and resources.

EPD collaborated with local governments, state and national agencies and nonprofit organizations to create **Georgia Green & Healthy Schools (GGHS)**, a

program designed to reduce waste and conserve natural resources.

In FY 08, through workshops at three conventions, GGHS introduced more than 300 teachers and education leaders to the program. GGHS also worked with EPA to host a conference on indoor air quality for school facility managers and nurses. In addition, GGHS is working with Southface on a grant to increase energy conservation in schools by adding high quality energy education. By the end of FY 08, eight schools were enrolled in the program.

# Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Number of technical assistance requests answered by P<sup>2</sup>AD staff  
**423**

Amount of local government grants awarded by GEFA  
**\$223,000**



Sustainable development guidelines will help preserve marshes like these on the Georgia coast.

## Pollution Prevention Assistance Division

In FY 08, the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division (P<sup>2</sup>AD) responded to 423 requests for solid waste assistance, including questions on wood, food and electronics waste; packaging materials; construction and demolition debris; and recycling.

Also in FY 08, P<sup>2</sup>AD released the second version of the Sustainable Office Toolkit (<http://p2ad.org/toolkit/>). Organizations can use the toolkit to help plan, develop and implement environmentally-friendly practices, such as waste reduction, environmentally preferable purchasing and sustainable building.

The site, <http://www.scrapmatchga.org>, is an on-line materials exchange sponsored by P<sup>2</sup>AD that provides a place for companies to 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. In FY 08, the site had 117,336 Web page views and 89 new registered users.

P<sup>2</sup>AD continued to work with Southface to promote sustainable community development guidelines for coastal Georgia with the publication of the Earthcraft Coastal Communities Guidelines in FY 08.

## Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority

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. In FY 08, GEFA received \$223,000\* from the SWTF for these local government grants. Projects funded for FY 08:

**Athens-Clarke County**  
 Household hazardous waste storage building  
 \$16,000

**Bacon County**  
 Forklift for recycling center  
 \$6,750

**Bulloch County**  
 Recycling containers  
 \$14,000

**Decatur County**  
 Recycling container  
 \$15,490

**Forsyth County**  
 Recycling containers  
 \$13,500

**City of Griffin**  
 Recycling containers  
 \$21,000

**Hart County**  
 Recycling containers  
 \$19,068

**City of Kennesaw**  
 Recycling containers  
 \$24,117

**City of Macon**  
 Recycling containers  
 \$50,000

**Rome-Floyd County**  
 Recycling center  
 \$42,200

**City of Tifton**  
 Recycling facility upgrades  
 \$19,000

\*Actual total (\$241,125) included funding not spent from previous year.

# Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Tons of organic material composted  
**25,800**

Tons of material recycled  
**1,017**

Dollars saved through composting and recycling  
**\$938,595**



In FY 08, GDC recycled 780 tons of cardboard from 30 of its state prisons and other facilities.

## Georgia Department of Corrections

As part of its efforts to manage and reduce solid waste, the Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) operates 10 composting operations that process food and other organic waste from 21 of its state prisons.

In FY 08, GDC composted 5,500 tons of food waste and 20,300 tons of other organic material. Assuming a landfill tipping fee of \$35 per ton, the cost savings to GDC was \$903,000.

GDC also recycles solid waste from 30 of its state prisons and facilities. In FY 08, GDC recycled 780 tons of cardboard, 187 tons of steel and other metals and 50 tons of pallets. Assuming a landfill tipping fee of \$35 per ton, the cost savings to GDC was \$35,595.



A new "in-vessel" composting system at Coastal State Prison will allow GDC to process more material and generate more compost.



Organic material is shredded and mixed inside the composting vessel.

# Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Number of technical assistance questions answered  
**2,158**

Tons of material recycled through special events program  
**14**

Number of Christmas trees recycled  
**171,758**

## Department of Community Affairs

In the FY 08 spending plan for the SWTF, DCA was allocated over \$2.9 million to fund the following projects:

### Regional Recycling Hubs

In FY 08, Savannah, Bulloch County, Griffin and Valdosta were selected to receive regional recycling collection hub grants. The funds will be used to construct new or expand existing facilities that will serve as the initial framework of a statewide network of regional collection hubs for commingled recyclables. These regional recycling hubs will reduce transportation and other recycling costs, making it more viable for communities to offer recycling and for industries to obtain recovered materials.

### Special Event Recycling

To help provide easy and convenient recycling opportunities away from home, DCA began a special event recycling program in FY 07. As part of this program, in FY 08, 35 special event recycling trailers were delivered around the state. Local governments apply for grants to receive the trailers, which are then made available to event organizers



Trailers to collect recyclables are part of a statewide campaign to encourage recycling away from home.

in their communities. In FY 08, 14 tons of recyclable materials were collected through this program at 180 events around the state.

### Recycling Education Campaign

To educate citizens and local officials on the benefits of recycling, DCA launched a statewide recycling education campaign in FY 07. As part of the project, DCA hired a contractor in FY 08 to test market different recycling messages to help choose which one would be most likely to

change recycling behavior in the state.

### Technical Assistance

All local governments are required under the Solid Waste Management Act to have a 10-year plan for managing solid waste. In FY 08, DCA staff fielded 456 requests for assistance with the process and approved 34 plans. DCA also answers questions on recycling and general waste management issues. In FY 08, staff responded to 1,186 such requests and also answered 516 calls related to proper management of household hazardous waste.



Since 1996, when the ban on yard trimmings began, more and more communities have developed ongoing programs to dispose of yard waste, including Christmas trees.

In FY 08, the "Bring One for the Chipper" program collected 171,758 trees from 363 sites. More than 5,200 volunteers from 128 communities and organizations participated, working an average of four hours each.

# Litter Prevention & Abatement

Average number of items of litter per mile on Georgia roadsides  
**655**

Pounds of litter removed during Great American Cleanup  
**2 million**

Amount of Clean Community Challenge grants awarded  
**\$131,000**



Gov. Sonny Perdue meets with Valdosta Mayor John Fretti and Buster the Brown Trasher, mascot for the state litter campaign.

## Department of Community Affairs

### Statewide Litter Campaign

In FY 08, DCA received \$1.25 million to continue its administrative support of the statewide litter initiative. As part of the surveys conducted to gauge the public's perception of litter, 87 percent of Georgians said that litter affects their quality of life. Most Georgians — 94 percent — think litter is a problem in the state and 46 percent said they knew someone who had littered in the past two years.

A statewide roadside litter assessment conducted as part of the initiative found that almost two-thirds of the litter in the state can be attributed to "passive" sources (e.g., unsecured loads, garbage trucks, construction sites).

In FY 08, a follow-up study revealed that, on a statewide basis, an average of 655 items of litter per mile were found on the state's roadsides. This figure was down 23 percent from 2006.



Debris from waste hauling trucks is a common source of "passive" litter on Georgia's roads.

### Great American Cleanup

The Great American Cleanup is an annual event designed to assist local governments in revitalizing their communities and educating citizens. In FY 08, 57,667 volunteers representing more than 700 communities worked 307,560 hours picking up litter from Georgia's roadways and cleaning up illegal dumpsites. Nearly 2 million pounds of waste were removed and properly disposed.

### Clean Community Challenge

The Clean Community Challenge (CCC) is an incentive-based program to recognize local governments that are holistically addressing litter prevention in their communities. Participants have access to resources to conduct community-based litter assessments and be eligible to receive grant funding to implement local litter prevention strategies. In FY 08, five communities completed the eligibility requirements to participate in the program and three — Forsyth, Madison and Liberty counties — were selected to receive Clean Community Challenge grants totaling \$131,000.

# Litter Prevention & Abatement

Litter citations  
issued by WRD  
**141**

## Wildlife Resources Division

### Litter Law Enforcement

In the course of their day-to-day activities, rangers with the Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) of the Department of Natural Resources come across litter and solid waste dumping violations that might otherwise have gone undiscovered (e.g., dump sites in remote areas of the state) and, therefore, play a crucial enforcement role in the state's litter initiative.

In FY 08, WRD rangers issued 141 litter-related citations. See list at left for a breakdown by citation.

WRD rangers not only look for violations of the state's litter laws on land (below right), they even take to the waterways (above right). Many times the rangers are able to identify suspected litterbugs from the trash they find.



Number of Citations Issued per Charge
<b>78</b> Littering
<b>30</b> Unlawful dumping of egregious litter < 500 lbs.
<b>2</b> Unlawful dumping of egregious litter > 500 lbs.
<b>16</b> Unlawful burning of egregious litter < 500 lbs.
<b>13</b> Unlawful burning of egregious litter > 500 lbs.
<b>2</b> Unlawful dumping/burning of egregious litter (biomedical/hazardous/commercial)

# Solid Waste Emergencies & Preventative and Corrective Action

Emergencies and corrective actions  
3

SWTF dollars spent to respond to emergencies  
\$121,730



The Miller/Trammel Road Landfill in Forsyth County remains a risk for methane explosions.

## 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 08 budget reserved \$200,000 to respond to such emergencies.

**Forsyth County.** While grading the site of a new subdivision being built around the abandoned Miller/Trammel Road Landfill in Forsyth County, the contractor destroyed wells used to monitor methane levels.

When new wells were installed, readings showed that explosive levels of methane had moved underground to several of the subdivision lots.

After the subdivision's developer filed for bankruptcy in March 2007, EPD hired a contractor to add more monitoring wells, evaluate methane levels, test the groundwater and recommend corrective actions to protect nearby residents. An estimated \$33,000 of the funds reserved for emergencies was used for this project.



Cobb County firemen work to douse the fire at the West Sandtown Road Inert Landfill, as a backhoe mixes the burning debris with soil.

Readings taken in November 2007 and January 2008 showed levels well above the explosive limit. Due to limited funds, EPD has not been able to fully mitigate the problems. EPD continues to monitor the site.

**Cobb County.** At the request of Cobb County officials, EPD used emergency funding to put out an underground fire at the closed West Sandtown Road Inert Landfill in November 2007. A contractor extin-

guished the burning debris by mixing it with soil and the county's fire department doused it with water. In December 2007, the Cobb County Fire Marshal notified EPD that smoke was coming from two other areas of the landfill. The contractor returned and again extinguished the fire.

**McRae.** Approximately \$87,000 from EPD's emergency fund was spent to clean up improperly disposed solid waste contaminated with lead in a residential area in the city of McRae, Georgia.

# Abandoned Landfills

Amount spent in FY 08 to close  
the Scales Road landfill  
**\$4.38 million**



As part of the work at the Scales Road landfill, a backhoe is used to move waste and create a stable final slope.

## Environmental Protection Division

### Scales Road Landfill

Georgia's population growth over the past 20 years resulted in an unprecedented building boom across the state. But along with construction of new housing, commercial districts, schools and infrastructure comes waste from these activities. Landfills specifically built to take this construction and demolition (C&D) debris dot the state. One of those is the Scales Road Landfill in DeKalb County.

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 landfill's owner declared bankruptcy, soon to be followed by the insurance company that provided financial assurance for landfill closure. In 2005, the owner informed EPD the company did not have the funds needed to properly close the landfill and abandoned the site. Because the landfill was not properly closed, environmental conditions deteriorated: erosion exposed waste and fires broke out.

In addition to the fires, other environmental threats included increased sedimentation in nearby surface waters due to runoff and contamination of groundwater with

leachate (rainwater that falls on the landfill and percolates 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 insolvent, EPD budgeted 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.

The final cost of the project is expected to be within the projected budget of approximately \$4.9 million, which also will provide for the contractor to maintain the site and monitor groundwater for 12 months after EPD accepts the final closure report.



# Abandoned Landfills

## Scales Road Successes

- Work completed under budget
- Work completed on time
- Risks to environment reduced
- Results of methane gas monitoring are below explosive hazard levels
- SWTF dollars responsibly managed by EPD with appropriate oversight and accountability

**Before**



The large amount of rainwater entering the landfill created deep gullies and craters that exposed waste and allowed gases and odors to escape. Exposed waste also increased the risk for fire.



Before work began, large cracks were visible in the vegetation covering the surface. These cracks allowed a higher than acceptable amount of rainwater into the landfill, which increased the production of gases such as methane and allowed them to escape.

**After**



The area of large rocks to the left in the picture above has stabilized the former gully in the “before” picture (left).



Near the end of work on the landfill, the cracks are gone as new vegetation is established. Other changes include new equipment to monitor the generation of methane and other gases and to vent them safely out of the landfill.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Environmental Protection Division

4244 International Parkway

Atlanta, Georgia 30354

[www.georgiaepd.org](http://www.georgiaepd.org)



**Printed on recycled paper**

Photo of mountains on cover and photos on pages 3-5 courtesy  
of the Georgia Department of Economic Development