

A NEW ENVIRONMENT:

TDEC 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



A Day in The Quarantine Life



Like many Americans, you probably spent a day (or 14) in 2020 quarantined. Did you realize how TDEC was a part of your day?

7:00 a.m. DIVISION OF Radiological Health

Your alarm sounds, and you disconnect your phone from its charger. The power comes from a nearby nuclear power plant that is monitored for radiation releases.



7:45 a.m. OFFICE OF Energy Programs

You walk the kids to the bus stop. Their new school bus is part of a statewide fleet that will reduce 112,761 lbs. of nitrogen oxide (NOx) over its lifetime.



7:59 a.m. DIVISION OF Air Pollution Control

Instead of 30 miles and 1 hour, your new commute down the hall takes 10 seconds and keeps an average of 26 lbs. of carbon dioxide (CO₂) out of the air.



8:00 a.m. DIVISION OF Natural Areas

You fire up your laptop and its AirCard pings a nearby cell tower. The tower's location was found to have no impacts to Threatened and Endangered species.



10:00 a.m. DIVISION OF Water Resources

Your morning coffee break looks a little different today. You make yourself a strong cup of joe and refill your Keurig with water straight from the tap.



12:00 p.m. DIVISION OF Solid Waste Management

You prepare lunch at home with greens from your victory garden and make sure to compost your leftovers to add nutrients back to the soil.



5:00 p.m. TENNESSEE State Parks

It's been a long day indoors, so you participate in the Tennessee State Parks Virtual 5k. You log your miles on the Healthy Parks Healthy Person app to earn rewards.



6:00 p.m. UNDERGROUND Storage Tanks

To reward yourself for the run, you open a growler from your favorite local brewery. The brewery operates in an old gas station that was cleaned up thanks to the Underground Storage Tank fund.



From the Commissioner

Dear Tennesseans: In 2020, Tennessee has experienced fatal tornadoes, an unprecedented pandemic, economic collapse, record unemployment, and then historic social and civil unrest. As 2020 has been full of unique threats and demands, this TDEC Annual Report shares how Team TDEC has risen to address and overcome these challenges.

COVID-19 arrived in March, and TDEC immediately responded by reimagining our work and adapting to make our staff, citizens and visitors safe as possible while still meeting our mission. We know Tennesseans count on us to protect our environment, provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities and operate a well-run park system, even during a pandemic. That's what we've done throughout 2020, and you can see those results in this year's TDEC Annual Report.

Our divisions deployed technologies that empowered a mobile, remote workforce and enabled us to stay connected with each other and available to citizens. Once we better understood COVID-19 and how to manage through its implications, our park professionals were able to keep Tennessee's 56 state parks open, accessible and safe for visitors. Their dedication and commitment made it possible for state parks to be a haven and respite for Tennesseans. Citizens voted with their feet to show their appreciation and the value they place on outdoor recreational resources by generating record activity in our state parks for visitation, camping and cabin reservations.

Across the department, we continued our prudent management by making even more careful budget and spending decisions. We were also able to complete transformational investments in our state parks' hospitality platforms that will create "WOW" moments for current and future generations of Tennesseans and park guests drawn from across the country.

While we have been moving through an extraordinary season, TDEC employees have been responding in a way that should make all Tennesseans proud. I trust you will be encouraged as this Annual Report shares examples of the skill, commitment, teamwork and resilience making it possible for TDEC to deliver on our mission for all of Tennessee's communities – even in this new environment.

Yours in gratitude and service,



David W. Salyers, P.E.

Team TDEC: A Tale of Two Bureaus

BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENT: PANDEMIC PRODUCTIVITY SPIKE

1,152
Budgeted positions in the Bureau of Environment

33,915
Permit applications received. FY21 is currently 6.8% ahead of last year

13,313
New and repair permits issued for septic systems, a 19% growth since FY15

100
Percentage of Tennesseans that live in areas meeting all federal air quality standards

99.6
Percentage of TDEC permit application decisions made within regulatory time limits

96
Percentage of TDEC customers satisfied or extremely satisfied with their interactions based on survey

94.9
Percentage of non-compliant facilities returning to compliance within specified terms

BUREAU OF PARKS & CONSERVATION: TENNESSEE STATE PARKS' RECORD-BREAKING YEAR

56
State Parks

85
State Natural Areas

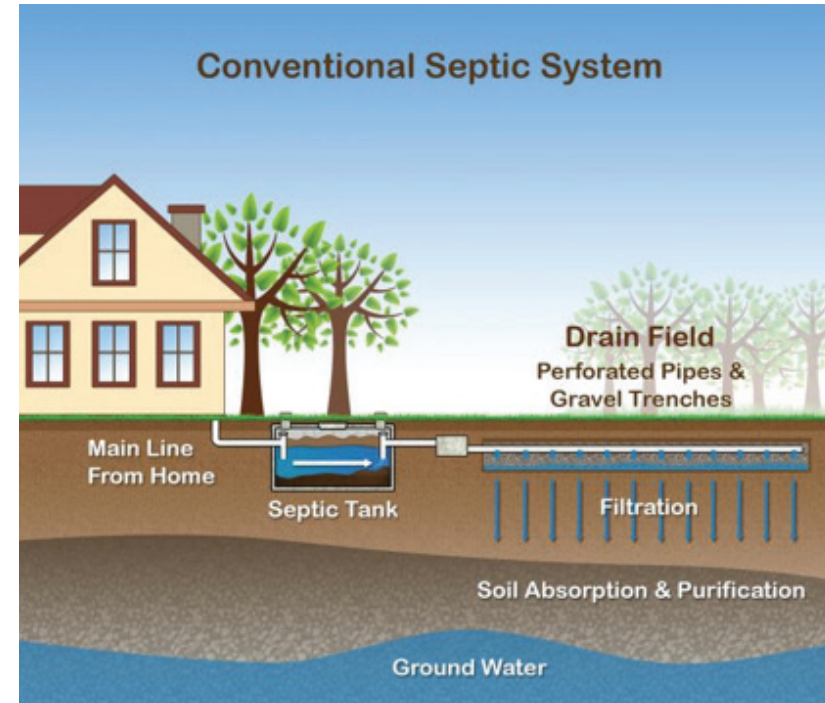
1,519
Budgeted positions in the Bureau of Parks & Conservation

261,280
Total acres managed by State Parks and Natural Areas

50,605
Cabin room nights sold, with the top 3 months of cabin occupancy ever during summer/fall 2020

329,009
Campsite nights sold, with the top 3 months of camping overnight volumes ever during summer/fall 2020

34,726,374
Visits to TN State Parks, with historic high visitation during summer/fall 2020



Septic Permits Soar During the Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic had all the potential to cause a serious disruption in the department's ability to process septic system permits. Because of a new model of efficiency now in place, TDEC's Division of Water Resources never missed a beat.

The transition involved digitizing historical records and making them available online; developing online application capabilities; and, generating electronic documents with tablet technology. The use of technology allows the majority of field staff to work remotely.

In FY19-20, the Division's groundwater staff issued approximately 13,000 new and repair permits for septic systems. This represents a 19-percent increase from five years earlier. The peak demand for conventional permits occurred in the spring when the state was in the throes of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Having implemented most of the planned changes, the program is on track to close all county satellite offices by June 2021, eliminating the historical costs associated with renting the office space and storing files. The closing of satellite offices also led to the decision to assign groundwater vehicles to staff. This minimizes their time spent driving and maximizes their ability to execute permits.

Yet turnaround times in the permitting process have shown TDEC's ability to maintain top-notch service. From April to June of 2020, most counties in the state had average turnaround times of five days or fewer. In April, only seven counties had average turnaround times of 10 or more days. In May and June, only nine counties had average turnaround times of 10 or more days.

Efficiencies realized as a result of this transition have contributed to improved customer service and reduced permit turnaround times.

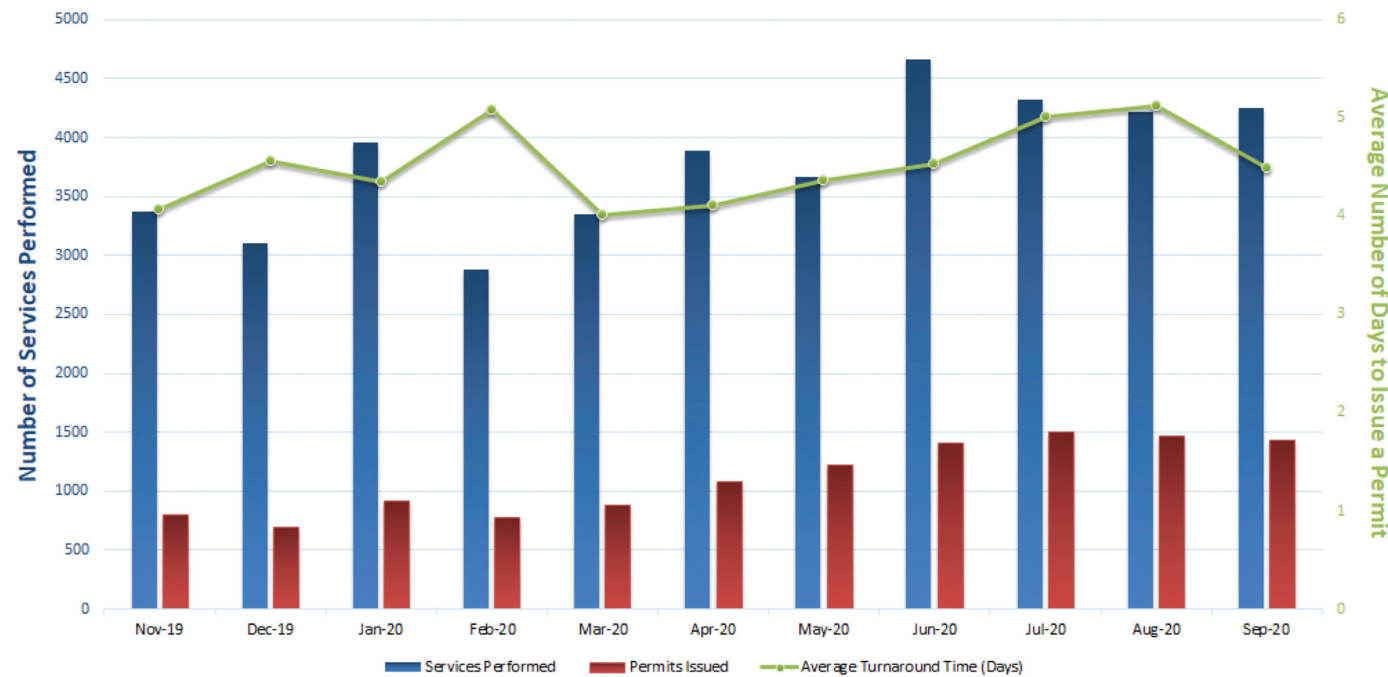
Sumner County illustrates how TDEC groundwater staff effectively managed a busy workload and improved turnaround times despite the pandemic. In November and December of 2019, the county was seeing an average turnaround time in the permit process of 18 days. By June of 2020, that average had decreased to five days.

The commitment needed to accomplish the transition was shared at all levels. However, the real challenge was shouldered by the Division of Water Resources field staff who are ultimately responsible for implementing these changes in the on the ground. It is because of their willingness to embrace change, while often utilizing their own problem-solving capabilities, that the program is operating as a success today.

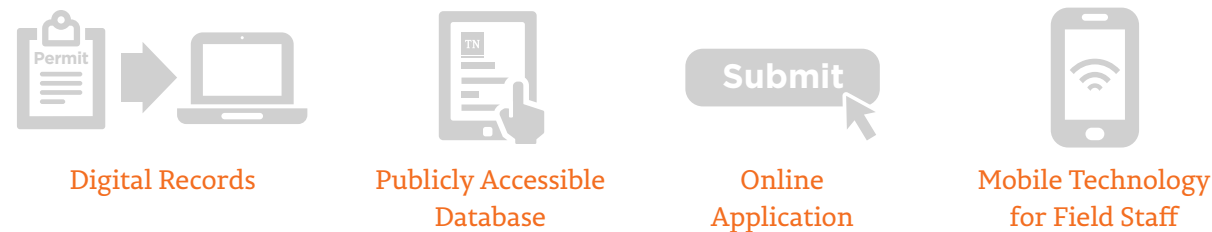
While the Division of Water Resources continued to see a decrease in permit turnaround times during the pandemic, the foundation of this success story began several years earlier. In 2011, in an effort to reduce costs without continuing to reduce staff, the department developed and launched a comprehensive plan to reshape its decades-old business model that was reliant on hard-copy applications, permits and historical records housed at over 80 locations across the state.

TDEC has the duty of regulating onsite wastewater disposal in a way that protects groundwater in Tennessee and protects public health. The systemic changes implemented by the department have proved beneficial in ways that go beyond the basic mission of managing the permit process. They have resulted in a more efficient and more customer-focused government – even in the face of a pandemic.

Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Services Performed



Updating the Groundwater Business Model





Vehicle Emissions Centers Serve as Stand-ins for COVID Testing Sites

Thanks to a partnership with the state, nearly 10,000 southeast Tennessee residents were tested for the novel coronavirus during the spring season as vehicle emissions testing was put on hold.

The Hamilton County Health Department conducted drive-through COVID-19 testing operations at the Bonnyshire Drive vehicle emissions site from April 3 through May 22 as well as drive-through and walk-up testing operations at the Riverfront Parkway site during the weekends of April 25-26 and May 2-3.

Hamilton County Health Department Administrator Becky Barnes said, "Using Opus Emission testing facilities made COVID-19 testing much easier for both our staff and the public. The locations, existing infrastructure, and support from Opus all worked together for efficient testing for our community."

A total of 9,234 tests were performed at the two Hamilton County vehicle emission testing facilities.



"Tennessee is in a position to eliminate the vehicle inspection and maintenance program because of the significant work that has been done by many stakeholders to improve air quality, specifically related to ozone and particulate matter. As someone who has suffered with asthma, it gives me great pride that we are in a position to eliminate a program that may have burdensome financial consequences for low income Tennesseans while at the same time we have ensured, and demonstrated to EPA, that Tennessee's compliance with air quality standards will be maintained."



Rep. Mike Carter (R-Ooltewah)

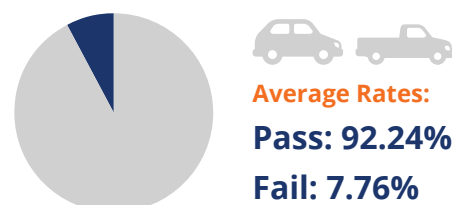
Vehicle Emissions Testing by the Numbers:

2019 only



1,058,018 VEHICLES

2010 through 2019



Tennessee on Track to End Vehicle Emissions Testing Thanks to Carter, Watson

Tennessee is on track to be free of vehicle emissions testing in a sign of years of diligence to clear Tennessee's air.

The Division of Air Pollution Control is charged with maintaining the purity of the air in the state. The division's responsibilities have included controlling pollution from mobile sources in counties that were not meeting federal ozone standards. That has meant vehicles registered in Hamilton, Davidson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson and Wilson counties have been required to pass vehicle emissions tests.

Led by State Rep. Mike Carter (R-Ooltewah) and State Sen. Bo Watson (R-Hixson), the Tennessee General Assembly passed a bill in 2018 that sought an end to the testing, paving the way for Tennessee to make a submission to the federal Environmental Protection Agency toward that end. The EPA establishes and updates National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants that are deemed harmful to public health and the environment. States must develop and implement State Implementation Plans that are federally approved to attain and maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

On February 27 this year, Tennessee submitted to the EPA revisions to the State Implementation Plan to eliminate the testing. The state is awaiting approval. If EPA approves the revisions, emissions testing in Tennessee can end 120 days later, unless a contract with a vendor extends the period beyond that time. Tennessee is obligated to show the EPA that elimination of emissions testing in the state will not prohibit Tennessee from meeting standards in the future, and the plan packages submitted to EPA included technical data to that effect.

Even the submission of the plan is a historic step. It shows years of effort to rid Tennessee of pollutants and puts the state on the cusp of ending the task of testing.

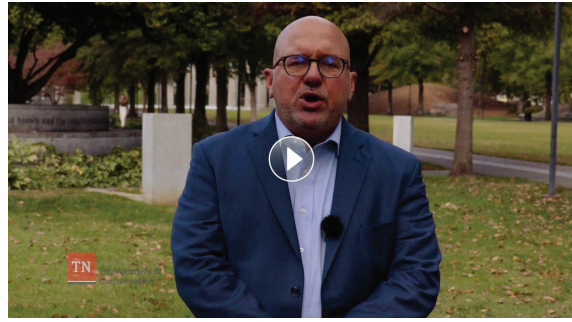
Most of the counties that have conducted tests have expressed an interest in ending it. However, the state law passed in 2018 allows Metropolitan Nashville/Davidson County to choose whether to continue its program, and the Metro Council in Nashville has voted to continue.

TDEC remains committed to ensuring the air in Tennessee does not revert to previous levels of non-attainment. Alternative controls on air pollution may be necessary in the future to ensure Tennessee remains in compliance with the established air quality standards and the Clean Air Act requires vehicle emissions programs for certain levels of nonattainment should they occur. But now, Tennessee is on the verge of ending the tests.

While emissions from an individual car are considered low, emissions from numerous automobiles have created significant amounts of pollutants. But ozone levels have been reduced by lower volatility gasoline, and newer cars have improved emission control systems. Many Tennesseans have done their part by driving cleaner vehicles and by demonstrating a commitment to good maintenance of their vehicles. Tennessee's success in air quality has come from thoughtful decisions and perseverance through the process. While the EPA approval is pending, the progress in Tennessee has been substantial.

Note: At the time of writing this article, Tennessee State Rep. Mike Carter has been battling pancreatic cancer. The TDEC family would like to express its thoughts and prayers to Rep. Carter, his family, and his close colleagues in the Tennessee legislature.

Rep. Carter has been a driving force behind the effort to end vehicle emissions in Tennessee on behalf of his constituents. The TDEC family is grateful for his partnership, collaboration and leadership.



Adapting is the name of the game as we continue to transition into fall while maintaining the high level of excellence in our jobs and caring for ourselves and our families at the same time. I've so enjoyed the opportunities I've recently had to get out into the field with our technical staff — to listen and learn to the realities, challenges and joys of the work. We've had some exciting grand reopenings at our state parks recently, and I've been so impressed by the level of teamwork and camaraderie I've witnessed among our parks staff. Thank you for continuing to do what it takes to keep our Department moving forward while keeping your health — both physical and mental — top of mind. - DWS

How are you feeling today?

Last month's survey revealed that participants were feeling better than average.

Keep the good feelings flowing by introducing mindfulness into your daily life. As fall progresses, take a cue from nature to slow down when you need to and adapt to the season's changes.

Click the box above to do a quick anonymous check-in of your well-being today.

One star may mean you're feeling low, frustrated or stressed. Three stars may mean you're content and your day feels manageable. Five stars may mean you're excited, happy and feel open to whatever the day may bring.

Stress Management Support: Q&A with Commissioner Marie Williams



The COVID-19 pandemic continues to test our stamina under unprecedented circumstances. Commissioner Marie Williams of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services answers questions for TDEC Together on coping with the pandemic.

What sort of problems have you noticed that have emerged most from this crisis?

The primary impacts we're seeing both nationally and here in Tennessee are increases in anxiety or depression, and that's natural when you're feeling uneasy about your present and worried about your future.

The pandemic has been a strange new experience. Has it created any new forms of stress, or is dealing with stress the same regardless of the reason?

I think what's most unique about this situation is the amount of different types of stress that it has placed on people all at once. People might be accustomed to worrying about their health, their kids' education, their personal finances, or even the loss of a friend or loved one, but when you compound all those things together, this really has been a trying time for a lot of people.

Do you have any particular bits of advice for handling children, either for keeping them inside or for instructing them for situations outside the home, such as in a classroom?

As a parent, it is important to really look at the different options that have been presented and to consider what is best for you and your family. In addition, it's essential for parents with children to watch for behavior changes like excessive crying or irritation in younger children, excessive worry or sadness, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, and irritability and "acting out" behaviors in teens. How do you respond? Talk with your child, answer questions, and share facts. Reassure your child that they are safe. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you. Be a role model. Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members. And remember it's OK to not feel OK right now.

TDEC employees are fortunate to still have their jobs, but for some the pandemic may have caused financial problems in the household. Do you have advice for dealing with the financial ramifications?

Whenever your income is impacted, it is normal to feel stress, concern, and worry. The most important thing is to try to focus on what you can do rather than what's out of your control. Don't let stress, strain, and worry cause you to lose sight of the bigger picture, of what's really important, or the opportunities that might come your way.

Can you talk about stress management techniques for our personal lives and our professional lives, and how those tactics are different?

I think this moment has redefined the line between personal life and professional life. The "check your baggage at the door" mentality isn't really applicable in the current times. With so many external factors and concerns affecting personal life, we really have to check on each other, take care of each other, and then get down to the task at hand. TEAM has never been more important than in this moment.

In a professional setting, how would you advise coworkers to "check in on each other" in a caring yet non-intrusive way?

Start with the relationships you had in place prior to the pandemic — especially people outside of your direct circle. Who are the people you had "water cooler" moments with in the office? Reach out to those people. Check in with them. And be intentional about it. Maybe set a calendar reminder or put a sticky note on your monitor. Think about how you're structuring your interactions. Set up more video conference meetings and fewer phone calls. Seeing your coworkers will do you good and do them good.

How has the pandemic affected relationships in the workplace?

TDEC Together: A Unified Approach

Increasing demand for TDEC services paired with the stresses of a pandemic had the potential ability to severely disrupt work routines and place unhealthy levels of stress on TDEC employees.

Several leaders within the department saw a pressing need to address issues of mental health and well-being among TDEC employees. They responded with a comprehensive effort known as TDEC Together.

TDEC Together aims to be supportive of employees and acknowledge the challenges associated with working through a health crisis, while fostering a new type of togetherness to help the department function in innovative ways. In addition to meeting the needs of individual employees, the hope was that this approach would also help staff to better serve Tennesseans.

Maintaining the flow of communication through crisis is key. TDEC HR established a TDEC Together landing page on the Department's internal communications network with resources. In addition, each month all staff receive the TDEC Together electronic newsletter. The newsletter includes an uplifting video message from the commissioner, interview stories with figures associated with mental well-being, links with information about informative discussions, and survey questions for employees to answer about their emotional health.

Over the summer months, more than 1,000 employees joined six different virtual Town Halls via Webex. These meetings not only allowed

TDEC Word Cloud
On State Employee Appreciation Day, TDEC staff members were asked to use one word to describe their coworkers. This word cloud represents the most popular responses.

leadership to convey messages of importance to TDEC staff but gave all employees a direct line of communication to leadership to ask questions or give earnest feedback and feel heard.

Feedback gathered after the Town Halls demonstrated staff appreciation for the effort. One employee said, "Seeing all the smiling faces of my colleagues who I miss so much was wonderful. I also think it's great that we can all still come together in a forum to ask questions and share concerns. It's hard not to feel disconnected right now; I left the meeting feeling much more grounded and "part of something" than before the meeting."

In an effort to reframe the department's duties in the "next normal," TDEC employees responded by adjusting to new working conditions and creating new ways to perform vital department functions. TDEC's mission statement says the department exists to enhance the quality of life for citizens of the state and to be stewards of the natural environment. While COVID-19 tested resolve to meet these goals, the department not only maintained its commitment to the stated ideals, employees found ways to cope – and evolve – in such an extraordinary time.





Cookeville Field Office Responds to Devastating EF-4 Tornado

On Tuesday March 3, 2020, Gov. Bill Lee declared a State of Emergency due to severe storms and multiple tornadoes that struck the state in the early morning hours. Multiple counties were affected: Benton, Carroll, Davidson, Fentress, Overton, Putnam, Smith and Wilson. Among them, Putnam County was hit particularly hard. An EF-4 tornado, the strongest to hit the nation in three years, touched down in a Cookeville neighborhood at 1:49 a.m. It cut a wide path, destroying more than 150 structures and taking the lives of 19 individuals, including five children.

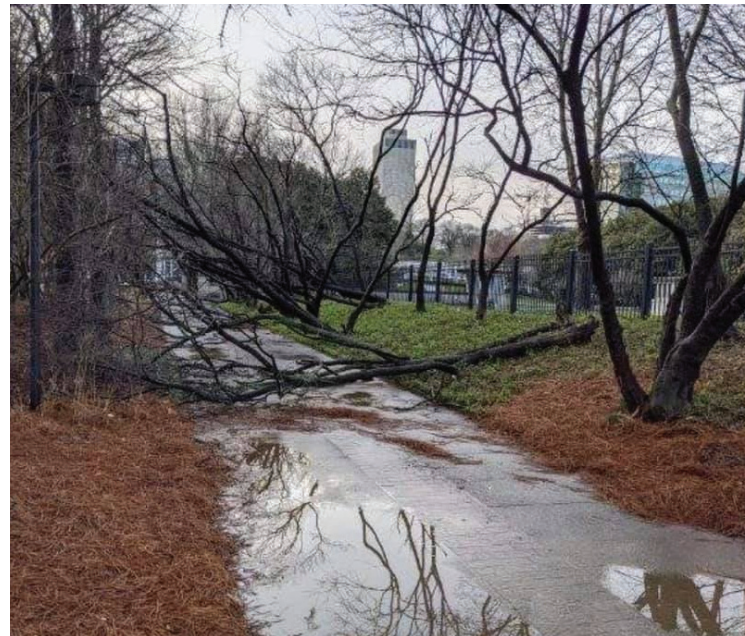
"We answered questions and assisted in gathering and passing information to other TDEC personnel. TDEC's Cookeville staff did a great job at quickly replying and assisting the local officials with environmental concerns as needed," Puckett said.

Putnam County officials had many concerns and issues to address following this disaster. The Cookeville Underground Storage Tank team responded to a gas station leveled by the storm to check for damage. The Solid Waste Management team approved debris staging areas for the City of Cookeville and Putnam County the same day the requests were submitted. The Air Pollution Control team approved a borrow pit near the Putnam County Class III landfill for emergency burning of woody debris. Moreover, Cookeville's Water Resources team worked to assist the local utility district with line repairs and quickly passed a statewide waiver of fees associated with groundwater protection services for affected homeowners.

The Cookeville Environmental Field Office is located just three miles south of the path of the tornado. Despite communication from the Governor that the field office was closed, on the morning of March 3rd half of the staff showed up for work. Those assembled immediately begin asking themselves: "What can I do to help?"

TDEC's Cookeville Field Office Environmental Response (ER) team was first on site. Team members Shawn Puckett or Oakley Hall attended several of the twice daily tactical meetings with local emergency officials. Their role was to be available as the primary point of contact for any environmental issues that may arise. Shawn Puckett, an environmental scientist with the Division of Water Resources, is assigned to oversee the Environmental Response Program in the region.

Despite being confronted by feelings of grief and loss, despite COVID-19 constraints and anxieties, despite a housing boom and push to rebuild, TDEC's staff has persevered. They rise each day to meet the challenge, not for themselves but for their neighbors, for their community, for all Tennesseans.



On March 4, Commissioner Salyers brought lunch to the Cookeville Field Office and listened as staff shared their experiences and concerns.



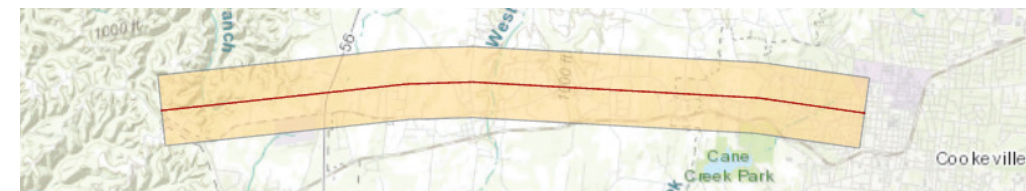
Rangers and Volunteers Unbury Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park

At 12:45 a.m. on March 3, 2020, an F3 tornado tore through the north end of Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park. As sunrise revealed the reality of the tornado's devastating effects upon the park and its surrounding neighborhoods, Chef Ranger Shane Petty made an emergency callout, and Park Rangers from around the state answered.

Dr. Jerry Wooten, Park Manager of Bicentennial Mall, recalled the extraordinary efforts from those who assisted. "It was remarkable seeing so many caring people, including our Directors and Commissioners, who showed up, some even with chainsaws in hand, to jump in and assist our rangers and volunteers with cutting and dragging brush."

Teams worked for three solid days to unbury the park from mounds of brush and debris.

"Regardless of this year's misfortunes from the tornado and impacts from Covid-19," Park Manager Wooten says, "I am encouraged knowing that I have a team that understands the importance of moving forward and not letting misfortunes such as those from earlier this year, dampen our outlook as we move into our 25th Anniversary year in 2021. We have many great things planned in the upcoming year, and our future looks bright as we look to a new generation for Bicentennial Capitol Mall."



The tornado's path in Cookeville and Nashville included Bicentennial Capital Mall State Park, dense residential areas and thriving commercial centers.





Mapping 'Smart Parks' in a Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic presented an entirely new challenge for managing Tennessee State Parks. Conventional means of decision-making on issues like closing and opening parks simply weren't enough in addressing the health crisis. It took a 21st century approach.

Fortunately, Tennessee State Parks staff was able to incorporate geographic information system (GIS) technology to make detailed, informed decisions about how to respond to the virus outbreak.

GIS allowed parks staff to visualize and analyze concerns related to keeping park guests and staff safe. Each park identified areas where it was impossible to properly social distance, identifying conditions that could lead to visitors being too close together or terrain that could involve rescues.

Staff also used GIS to keep track of personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies, deemed vital to decisions of whether a park should be open or closed.

The success of this system involved not only applying data from the parks but using data from the Tennessee Department of Health on the outbreak of the virus, as well as modeling data from the Institute of Health Metrics Evaluation. The department relied heavily on information input from park managers and rangers in the field, getting detailed data from the 56 parks.

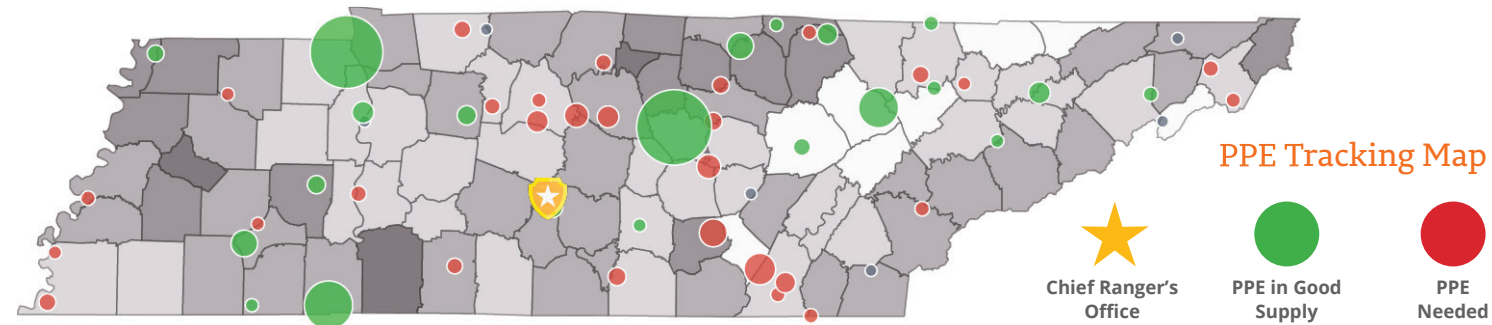
This process not only informed leadership and staff throughout Tennessee State Parks but informed the Governor's Office with updated data to assist in decision-making at the highest executive level.

While this GIS technology proved significant in a closed setting for staff in making informed choices in park

management during the pandemic, it is certainly not new technology for Tennessee State Parks. The parks for years have employed GIS as a public service to enhance knowledge and enjoyment of the parks.

TDEC has used online maps and apps in a variety of GIS features about the parks. It offers maps showing boundaries of all public access land under the department, including Tennessee State Parks, state Natural Areas, archaeological sites, and historic sites. This includes details of hiking, biking, and horse trails in the parks, as well as trail surface, difficulty rating, and types of use. It includes the location of cabins in parks across the state.

The technology allows TDEC to pinpoint for anyone interested the natural features of waterfalls, mountains, cedar glades, and archaeological mounds. With the use of GIS technology, the department calls the program "Smart Parks," using the data to make the smartest decisions possible. It's a way to organize and present data on the parks' more than 1,300 miles of trails, 245,000 acres of protected land, 3,230 campsites and 380 cabins.



The Smart Parks program makes organization and data presentation easier for important subjects like:



1,300 Miles of Trails



245,000 Acres of Protected Land



3,230 Campsites



380 Cabins



In the case of the pandemic, GIS technology was a tool not just for the sake of recreation but literally for the sake of public health across Tennessee. It provided a way to make decisions that addressed the fundamental well-being of the thousands of Tennesseans who visit the state parks and need this level of trust with those who manage the award-winning system.



Chattanooga Public Transportation Gets Jolt from Volkswagen Settlement Money

Chattanooga will soon have three new all-electric transit buses dedicated to travel through areas formerly in non-attainment status for air pollution.

environmental impact,” TDEC Commissioner David Salyers said. “This will help reduce emissions and enhance quality of life in these communities.”

The new buses come from the Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA)'s successful application from the Volkswagen Diesel Settlement Environmental Mitigation Trust (VW Settlement EMT) this year.

The new transit buses will operate 70 percent or more of the time in former nonattainment areas for ozone and/or fine particulates (PM2.5) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS.) After its dirty industrial past, Chattanooga reached attainment for NAAQS standards in 2008 and has remained in attainment ever since.

The CARTA grant is one of three grants dedicated to support transit and shuttle bus replacement projects across Tennessee.

“The Volkswagen settlement money helps CARTA fulfill our mission of providing a cost-effective, efficient and safe multimodal transit system for our more than 3 million passengers annually,” CARTA Executive Director Lisa Maragnano said. “We are so excited this funding will help us continue to operate, and expand upon, what was already one of the country's largest electric vehicle fleets.”

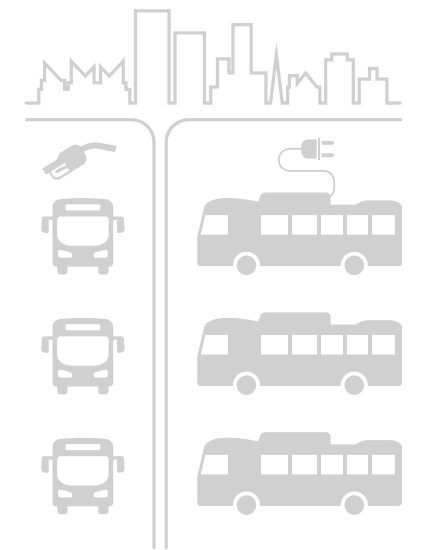
CARTA's grant of \$1.88 million will support the replacement of three diesel transit buses with three all-electric transit buses as well as the acquisition and installation of associated charging infrastructure.

“These grants will support the adoption of all-electric and diesel-hybrid buses, so they will have a significant

Knoxville and Memphis also received a portion of the \$5.69 million in VW Settlement EMT grants.



\$1.88 Million Grant

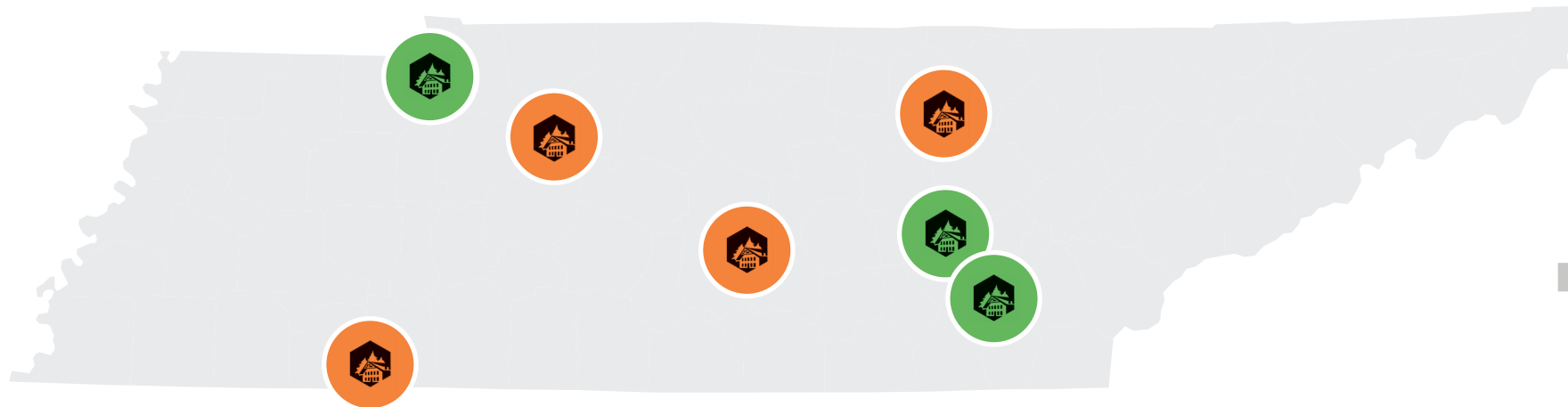


3 Diesel BUSES

3 Electric BUSES

+ charging infrastructure





Capital Investments in Tennessee State Parks Modernize TN Hospitality

Tennessee State Parks is in the middle of an extraordinary era of capital investment in facilities that will welcome and delight guests across the state for years to come.

Thanks to the support of the Tennessee General Assembly over the last two administrations, Tennessee State Parks saw major improvements, with capital investments totaling approximately \$184 million.

The new and renovated facilities are coming online in a year when the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the value of Tennessee State Parks. Tennesseans flocked to the parks while many other travel destinations were adversely impacted by the health crisis.

FACILITIES THAT OPENED IN 2020

The Lodge at Montgomery Bell State Park	The Lodge at Pickwick Landing State Park	Fall Creek Falls State Park Visitor Center	Mack S. Prichard Visitor Center at Cummins Falls State Park
\$12.1 million	\$11.7 million	\$2.7 million	\$2.8 million
<p>In October, renovations were completed on the 117-room Lodge at Montgomery Bell State Park. Situated on the banks of Lake Acorn, the Lodge features modern rooms, a new full-service restaurant and bar, and 6,000 square feet of flexible event space. The Lodge features multiple room options with large windows and stunning balcony views. The restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Guests have access to an outdoor pool, fitness room and outdoor patios overlooking the lake.</p>	<p>In October, renovations were completed on the 119-room Lodge at Pickwick Land State Park. Situated on the shores of Pickwick Lake, the Lodge features a restaurant, conference center, lobby, kitchen, restrooms, and office spaces. The full-service restaurant and lounge will serve breakfast, lunch and dinner. The renovated conference center and meeting spaces will provide 6,000 square feet of event space. Guests have access to a pool and fitness room.</p>	<p>The new Visitor Center at Fall Creek Falls features 24-hour accessible restrooms, a gift shop, a rentable conference room and a covered patio with a gas fire pit. Its friendly staff will conduct cabin and camper check-in as well as guide guests to the park's many attractions and amenities.</p>	<p>The new Visitor Center at Cummins Falls State Park is named in honor of Tennessee Naturalist Emeritus Mack S. Prichard. The facility features a spacious lobby with exhibits, gift shop, rentable conference room, two covered patios, restrooms, and staff offices. Visitors will pass under the building's breezeway as they walk down the trail to the waterfall.</p>

FACILITIES UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN 2020

Henry Horton State Park Restaurant and Visitor Center	The Lodge at Fall Creek Falls State Park	The Lodge at Paris Landing State Park
\$8.25 million	\$40.4 million	\$43.9 million
<p>In May, construction was launched on a two-story Visitor Center and a new 6,381-square-foot restaurant at Henry Horton State Park. The visitors center at Henry Horton State Park will feature a 1,154-square-foot exhibit and interpretive area, as well as a conference room of matching size, and another 2,100 square feet of office space. The restaurant will seat 120 people in its dining area and lounge, along with outdoor dining for 52.</p>	<p>The new 85-room Lodge at Fall Creek Falls State Park will provide hotel and resort-style vacation rentals lakeside in the center of Tennessee's premier park. The Lodge will feature modern room design, conference space and a full-service restaurant and lounge. The Lodge is expected to open in 2021.</p>	<p>The new 90-room Lodge at Paris Landing State Park will provide hotel resort-style vacation rentals on Kentucky Lake near Land Between the Lakes. The Lodge will feature modern room design, conference space, a full-service restaurant, bar, and lounge overlooking scenic lakes and natural beauty. The Lodge is expected to be completed in 2021.</p>



\$500,000 grant to the City of Paris

The City of Paris used a Local Parks and Recreation grant to develop the \$1.5 million Eiffel Tower Splash Park, the largest non-amusement-park splash pad in Tennessee. The 12,000 square foot splash pad features zones for family, teen and youth play and a 40-foot tidal tank, but the pièce de résistance is its miniature Eiffel Tower fountain.



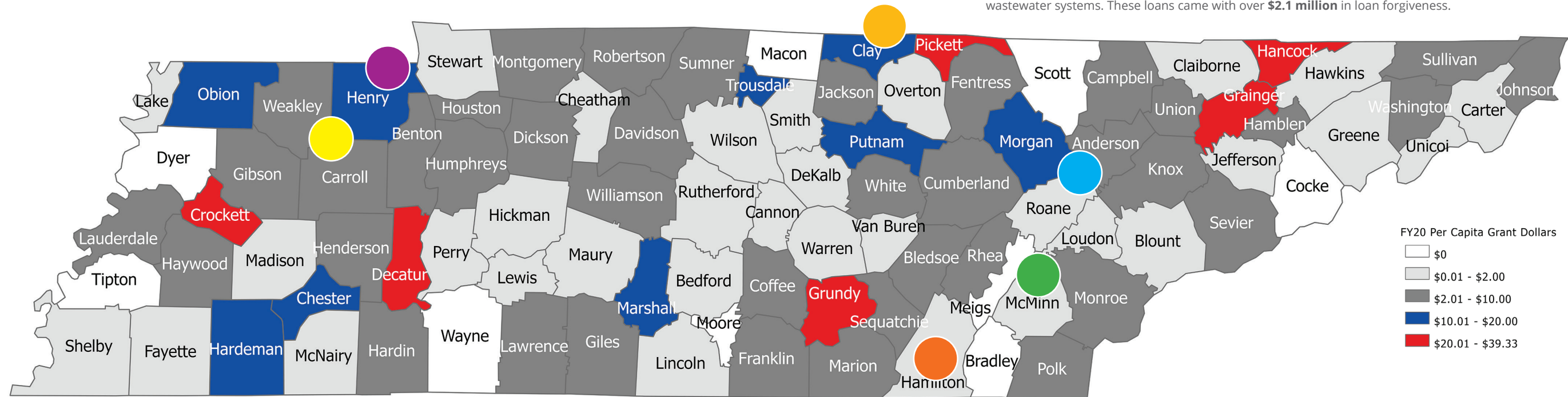
\$220,500 grant to Clay County Schools

Clay County Schools received \$220,500 to replace three diesel buses under the VW Environmental Mitigation Trust. Pictured is Ashley White with a new diesel bus.

TDEC Grant Dollars Serving Tennessee Communities

TDEC is proud to serve Tennesseans and support the work of communities across the state in their efforts to safely dispose of household hazardous waste, replace old school buses with cleaner and more efficient vehicles, engage residents in Parks and Recreation master planning and preserve historic structures and stories. In FY 2020, TDEC granting programs awarded just over **\$20.8 million**.

In state fiscal year 2020, the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan program awarded 21 different communities low-interest loans totaling **\$187,903,200** for infrastructure improvements to drinking water and wastewater systems. These loans came with over **\$2.1 million** in loan forgiveness.



\$60,000 grant to City of McKenzie

The City of McKenzie made improvements to three parks with a Local Parks and Recreation grant. Both Mulberry Park and City Park received new playground equipment, and SplashPark installed outdoor musical play elements.



\$125,000 grant to American Battlefield Trust in Chattanooga

The TN Historical Commission's Civil War Sites Preservation Fund supported the American Battlefield Trust's acquisition of a 9-acre tract containing Browns Tavern near Chattanooga. Brown's Tavern is the oldest structure in Chattanooga and was built in 1803 by Cherokee businessman John Brown.



\$45,600 grant to the City of Etowah

The TN Historical Commission's Historic Preservation Fund supported the City of Etowah's window restoration project for the Etowah L&N Depot. The project includes the restoration of +/- 56 original double-hung wood sash windows and the restoration of +/-10 exterior door windows and transoms.



\$500,000 in principal forgiveness to Town of Oliver Springs

Officials from TDEC and the TN Dept. of Economic and Community Development presented checks to the Town of Oliver Springs for a Clean Water State Revolving Fund loan of \$500,000, with 100% principal forgiveness, and a Community Development Block Grant of \$525,000. Pictured is Sammie Arnold, TNECD; Rep. Kent Calfee; Rep. John Ragan; Sen. Ken Yager; Mayor Omer Cox, Oliver Springs; George Garden, TDEC; Lt. Gov. Randy McNally; Leslie Gillespie-Marthaler, TDEC; Commissioner David Salyers, TDEC; Joe Van Hook, Oliver Springs; Kenneth Brown, Oliver Springs; Thomas McCormick, Oliver Springs.



The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation
exists to enhance the quality of life for citizens of Tennessee
and to be stewards of our natural environment by:

- **Protecting** and improving the quality of Tennessee's air, land, and water through a responsible regulatory system;
- **Protecting** and promoting human health and safety;
- **Conserving** and promoting natural, cultural and historic resources;
- **Providing** a variety of quality outdoor recreational experiences.



Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation,
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