



# DeKalb County's GREEN FOCUS

An Environmental Newsletter

February 2014

## Get More by Driving Less The Vanpool Program

Lee May, Interim CEO



DeKalb County Government  
2013 Bronze Certification

Volume 3, Issue 1

### Did You Know?

In Georgia, 50% of all smog-forming emissions come from tailpipes.

Vanpooling is one way to help reduce air pollution. One van full of commuters can take 10 to 14 cars off the road, which means less traffic and cleaner air.

Thought about joining a Vanpool? Here are six reasons to join DeKalb County Government and The Clean Air Campaign this year Vanpooling.



**AFFORDABILITY;** vanpooling is an affordable option compared to driving alone at 45¢ a mile. **LESS WEAR AND TEAR;** riding to and from in a vanpool reduces wear and tear on your personal vehicle. **MORE FREE TIME;** you can make better use of your time when you do not have to spend it driving. **IT'S EASY;** with more than 300 vans operating in Georgia, joining a vanpool is easy. A special ride-matching tool can help you find vanpool routes in your area and contact info for vans seeking riders. **GUARENTEED RIDE HOME;** get a Guaranteed Ride Home in the event of an emergency, when you

can't ride home from work in the van. **EARN FINANCIAL INCENTIVES;** log your clean commute activity online and you can:

- Earn \$3 a day, up to \$100, when you switch from driving alone to vanpooling
- Win \$25 prizes – each vanpool trip you record is an entry into a monthly drawing

For more information on how to join a Vanpool please make plans to visit the staff in February and March in downtown Decatur and the Department of Watershed Management.

### Inside this issue:

- Vanpool with The Clean Air Campaign 1
- Atlanta Regional Commission Green Communities Recertification 2
- Spring Happenings

### VANPOOL DATES: Visit The Clean Air Campaign & Find Your Vanpool Match

#### February

Clark Harrison Building  
 Friday, Feb. 21 11 a.m.—2 p.m.  
 Wed., Feb. 26 11 a.m.—2 p.m.

#### March

Department of Watershed Management—Roadhaven  
 Wed., Mar. 5 11 a.m.—2 p.m.  
 Wed., Mar. 26 11 a.m.—2 p.m.



## DeKalb County Government's ARC Green Communities BRONZE Recertification



Last week, DeKalb County was one of seven local governments to be recognized by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) for leadership in implementing policies and practices that contribute to efficient and sustainable use of resources in metro Atlanta. The county was honored as a Bronze Certified Green Community at ARC's January Board meeting.

An original Green Community, DeKalb County reaffirmed its commitment to sustainability by recertifying as at the Bronze level. The LEED-certified Gregory A. Adams Juvenile Court-house was the first facility in the county with an Energy Star

rated cool roof. Since 2009, DeKalb County has installed 15 cool roofs, saving an estimated 921,000 kWh in electricity each year through reduced cooling loads. DeKalb County's renewable energy facilities at the Seminole Road Landfill is the first local government in the U.S. to capture methane landfill gas to produce electricity, natural gas and compressed natural gas (CNG) at a single landfill. The operation is equivalent to taking 30,000 cars off the road every year and will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 17,000 tons. The county jail uses an ozone system for laundry that has resulted in an annual savings on natural gas usage, water, sewer and chemicals of approximately \$18,000 per year. Each pound of laundry now uses approximately 84 percent fewer gallons of hot water and 35 percent fewer gallons of total water. In 2008, DeKalb became the first county in the state that requires structures built prior to 1993 to replace inefficient plumbing fixtures with low flow plumbing fixtures prior to obtaining new water service after the sale of a property. Since its inception, nearly 56,000 properties have had low flow plumbing fixtures installed upon resale.

ARC developed the Green Communities Program to foster greater environmental stewardship and to recognize local governments that invest in programs leading to a more sustainable region. The nationally recognized program showcases the ways in which local governments are helping to transform the region by reducing their environmental footprint.

## Think Green. Live Green. Be Green.

### 2014 Plant Sale

**DeKalb County Extension's Plant Sale.** The Plant Sale is *pre-order only*, beginning now until March 10, 2014. DeKalb Cooperative Extension will host two free seminars to help you get started on the care of your new plants. [Click here](#), for more information on ordering plants and dates to the free seminars.



### Water Drop Dash

Join the Department of Watershed Management and Blake the Duck (their mascot) at the Second Annual Water Drop Dash 5k on Saturday, March 15 at the Chattahoochee Nature Center. The Water Drop Dash is a fast, flat course along the banks of the beautiful Chattahoochee River! This event will kick-off national WaterSense Fix a Leak Week and encourages metro Atlanta residents to conserve water and check their plumbing fixtures for leaks. [Register now](#) for the event.



For more information on environmental happenings, visit DeKalb County's Green Focus website, and click on Upcoming Events.