



# APRIL NEWSLETTER

## TREEDC Releases Annual Report

The Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council (TREEDC) recently completed its annual report for 2025. To view this report visit: [annual\\_report.pdf \(treedc.us\)](https://treedc.us/annual_report.pdf). During 2025, TREEDC hosted an annual conference and awards program with Tennessee Tech University. We worked with various local governments on determining the feasibility of streetlight conversions to LED. TREEDC worked diligently to keep our members informed with grant announcements, site visits, introductions, forums and phone calls. We also partnered with the University of Tennessee MTAS with its Rural Community Development Initiative Program to strengthen rural economies through outreach and resiliency. TREEDC was very active in promoting adequate water infrastructure. TREEDC also worked with the state about the economic and environmental benefits of green stormwater infrastructure.



## TREEDC Partners with TEC for Conservation on the Hill



*Tennessee Environmental Council*

TREEDC partnered with the Tennessee Environmental Council (TEC) for participation for Conservation Day on the Hill on February 25, 2026. A total of 125 participants - from Memphis to Kingsport - joined other partner organizations at the Tennessee state capitol to speak with 85 legislators about protecting the environment and supporting the Tennessee Waste to Jobs Act. Congratulations to TEC President Jimmie Walker, TEC Director Jeff Barrie and staff for organizing this event.

## Middle Tennessee Mayors Association Conducts First Meeting in 2026



*Spencer Mayor Alisa Farmer gives city update at MTMA*

Algood Mayor Lisa Chapman-Fowler and Cookeville Mayor Laurin Wheaton recently hosted the first Middle Tennessee Mayors Association (MTMA) meeting with the University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) on April 9<sup>th</sup> at the Cookeville Police Department. The mission of MTMA is to promote the economic interests and public welfare of the municipalities of Middle Tennessee. Mayors from Coalmont, Crossville, Dunlap, Fayetteville, Gallatin, Graysville, Hartsville-Trousdale County, Hendersonville, Lawrenceburg, Liberty, Livingston, Monterey, Nolensville Sparta, Spencer and Spring City. The topics discussed included MTAS training, budgets and infrastructure. The next meeting will be hosted by Monterey Mayor Alex Garcia later this summer.

This organization will provide mentoring for new mayors, provide an opportunity to network and discuss shared issues facing mayors around the state and be extremely valuable in providing outreach to the Tennessee Municipal League (TML) and MTAS.



*Gallatin Mayor Paige Brown provided recommendations at MTMA*

# ROANE COUNTY MAYORS LAUNCH EAST TENNESSEE MAYORS' ASSOCIATION



*From left to right: MTAS Management Consultant Warren Nevad, Harriman Mayor Wayne Best, Rockwood Mayor Jason Jolly and Kingston Mayor Tim Neal launch*

On April 20, 2026, Harriman Mayor Wayne Best, Rockwood Mayor Jason Jolly and Kingston Mayor Tim Neal joined with the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) to launch the East Tennessee Mayors Association (ETMA). The mission of ETMA is to promote the economic and infrastructure interests and public welfare of the municipalities of East Tennessee. The first meeting will be in Knoxville on September 25, 2026.

This organization will provide opportunities for mayors from Mountain City to Chattanooga to network and discuss shared issues facing mayors around the state and be extremely valuable in providing outreach to the Tennessee Municipal League (TML), the Institute for Public Service (IPS) and MTAS. Stay tuned for updates.

## TREEDC MEMBER SEQUATCHIE COUNTY SAVES OPERATIONAL DOLLARS

Sequatchie County Schools, located in Sequatchie County in Southeast Tennessee, partnered with TREEDC Member ERA Group to conduct a comprehensive expense review. The district serves its local communities with a strong commitment to student success and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Under the leadership of Superintendent Sarai Pierce, the district took a proactive approach to ensure operational dollars are fully optimized. In just the first three months of reporting, Sequatchie County Schools has already realized over 20% in savings in the operational categories reviewed that can be reinvested into the district. Contact ERA Group Consulting Partner Ryan Ball at 615 917 5599. Congratulations to Sequatchie County for continuing to build long-term, sustainable value for the district.

## ERA GROUP PARTNERS WITH KINGS ACADEMY

The King's Academy in Seymour, Tennessee has chosen to partner with ERA Group to review and optimize several areas of operational expenses. Under the leadership of new President Fred Eaves, the school is taking thoughtful steps to strengthen its long-term financial stewardship. Dr. Eaves' vision for The King's Academy includes ensuring that resources are managed wisely so the school can continue investing in what matters most—students, faculty, and its Christ-centered mission.



*King's Academy, Seymour, Tennessee*

Through this engagement, ERA Group will work alongside the school's leadership to evaluate several non-instructional expense areas such as insurance, food service, merchant services, payroll services, and facility-related contracts. The goal is simple: identify opportunities to improve efficiency and redirect savings toward education, student experience, and the continued growth of the school.

## APPALACHIAN SOLAR FINANCE FUND IMPACT REPORT IS RELEASED



This report highlights the progress made possible through strong regional partnerships and collaboration. The findings reveal a powerful shift taking place across Central Appalachia. With strategic financial and technical support, local nonprofits, schools, public institutions, and small businesses are investing in cost-saving energy upgrades that strengthen budgets, attract investment, and enhance local resilience.

For more information click here: [Appalachian Solar Finance](#)

## SOUTHERN RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES ARKANSAS INITIATIVE



Southern Renewable Energy Association, an initiative that represents renewable energy stakeholders, has started a new program focused on development of renewable energy in Arkansas.

The program, Powering Arkansas, is a collaborative statewide effort to provide timely and accurate information about energy issues in the state, a news release said.

The release said the program will bring together civic organizations, local and state government, industry and communities to start conversations about energy affordability and burdens. The program will also work to expand access to reliable power and debunk misinformation about energy and transmission. The Southern Renewable Energy Association (SREA) is an industry-led initiative dedicated to fostering the responsible use and development of renewable energy sources, specifically wind energy, solar energy, energy storage, and transmission solutions, in the Southern United States For more information click here: [Southern Renewable Energy Association launches Arkansas initiative | The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette - Arkansas' Best News Source](#)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR: MAY 13-15, 2026



The [Tennessee Environmental Network Show of the South \(TENSOS\)](#) will be held in Chattanooga, May 13-15, 2026. The three-day event will host environmental professionals seeking to exchange knowledge and share ideas. The educational program offers over seventy unique courses in nine educational breakout sessions, allowing attendees to design their own personalized curriculum.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR: SEPTEMBER 2-3, 2026

The 2026 conference will be held at the Chattanooga Hotel, 1201 Broad Street, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402. The focus of the Tennessee Valley Solar Conference is to bring together people who are interested in growing the solar and storage market in the Tennessee Valley to discuss strategies, market trends and policies that impact solar and industry. Attendees will participate in in-depth and forward-looking discussions on TVA policy and process and evolving technical opportunities facing the industry in the Tennessee Valley region. For more information click : [Conference – TenneSEIA Solar Association.](#)



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR TREEDC CONFERENCE ON NOVEMBER 12, 2026

TREEDC will hold its annual conference and awards reception on November 12, 2026, at the Cookeville -Putnam County Chamber of Commerce building in Cookeville. We are excited to be partnering again with the Tennessee Tech University Center for Rural Innovation and School of Professional Studies along with the University of Tennessee Municipal Technical Advisory Service.

The conference will include presentations from municipal sustainability professionals, energy services providers, rural economic development officials, PACE clean energy initiatives and updates from TDEC Office of Energy Programs and USDA Rural Development funding opportunities. The awards reception will be held across the street at 37 Cedar Restaurant and will begin at 5 pm. More information and registration details will be provided in early September.

For sponsorship and presentation opportunities, please call TREEDC President Dwain Land at 423-718-3436 or email at [mayorland@gmail.com](mailto:mayorland@gmail.com)



*TREEDC President/ Dunlap Mayor addresses mayors at MTMA meeting*

## SAVE THE DATE FOR THE TENNESSEE SMART MOBILITY EXPO

The Tennessee Smart Mobility Expo, presented by TennSMART in partnership with the State (TDEC, TDOT, and TNECD) and Tennessee Clean Fuels, will take place at GEODIS Park in Nashville on May 12. The Expo is a celebration of the latest transportation technologies, innovations, and research that make Tennessee an emerging leader in mobility solutions. With thought-provoking sessions, tech demonstrations, and networking, the expo celebrates the state's position in automotive manufacturing and as a generator of smart mobility solutions.

Starting in 2023, the Smart Mobility Expo joined with the [Tennessee Sustainable Transportation Forum & Expo](#). The joint event aims to promote greater networking and educational opportunities for mobility stakeholders.

The Expo is attended by leaders from vehicle manufacturers and suppliers, Tennessee-based research institutions and universities, fleet operators, utilities, municipalities, state agencies, and the advanced transportation ecosystem, fostering valuable connections.

Sign up for the [email list here](#) to stay up to date. Registration and a detailed agenda will be released soon.

## SAVE THE DATE: TDEC OEP K-12 ENERGY CAMPS FOR EDUCATORS

OEP's K-12 Energy Education Program is excited to announce that [Energy Camps for Educators](#) will return in Summer 2026. These immersive, hands-on professional development experiences are designed to equip teachers with tools, resources, and inspiration to bring energy education into the classroom. Whether new to energy topics or looking to deepen your expertise, these camps offer engaging content, expert-led sessions, and practical classroom applications.



### Camp Locations & Dates:

- [Montgomery Bell State Park](#): June 9-11, 2026
- [Fall Creek Falls State Park](#): June 16-18, 2026
- [Paris Landing State Park](#): July 14-16, 2026

To apply for Energy Camp, complete the K-12 Energy Education Camp Application [available here](#) and email the finished application to [Angela.McGee@tn.gov](mailto:Angela.McGee@tn.gov) and [Alisha.Brewer@tn.gov](mailto:Alisha.Brewer@tn.gov). Applications are due April 3, 2026.