

The Catalyst

Activating TN's Sustainable and Resilient Future

Office of Sustainable Practices



Recycling and Reusing Tires in Tennessee



Every year, Tennesseans generate large quantities of used tires that take up valuable space in landfills. While some tires may no longer be safe for vehicles, they are still made of durable, valuable materials that can be recycled and reused in other projects.

The Tire Environmental Act Program provides grants for initiatives that support beneficial end uses for the state's waste tires. The program is funded by a small flat fee on the sale of new motor vehicles titled and registered in Tennessee.

Since its launch in 2015, grantees have received nearly \$12 million, and almost 9 million scrap tires (100,000 tons) have been diverted from landfills. Funded projects include tire recycling, the use of products made from recycled tires, and research and development. Examples include asphalt and construction materials made with rubber, porous pavement trails that help reduce flooding, and playground surfaces.

Interested in applying for a Tire Environmental Act Program grant? All types of entities are eligible, including local governments, state agencies, nonprofits, K–12 schools, higher education institutions, and for-profit companies.

The next grant application period runs January 15th through April 15th. Visit The Tire [Environmental Act Program Webpage](#) to learn more and register for the upcoming [webinar](#), which will cover eligibility requirements and showcase examples of previously funded projects.

REGISTER FOR THE WEBINAR

The TN Conservationist Magazine



The [Tennessee Conservationist Magazine](#) is the official magazine of TN State Parks, but it's so much more than that. The bi-monthly magazine has been covering articles on native species, history, archeology, and Tennessee culture for over 85 years. In addition to receiving a print subscription, the magazine now offers digital or combination print & digital subscriptions. So, whether you want to hear about Chattanooga becoming the first ever National Park City in North America, the Folk Arts at Cordell Hull Birthplace State Historic Park, or milestones such as the 40th anniversary of the Foothills Land Conservancy, you can find it in the award-winning Tennessee Conservationist Magazine. Through January 16, you can save \$5 off a 1-year print and digital subscription with promo code Gift25.

REDEEM OFFER

New Year, New Resolutions: Sustainability Simply



If you're setting resolutions, why not add one that helps the planet? Here are two ideas that can make a meaningful difference starting in January:

Give Your Holiday Tree a Second Life

For many Tennesseans, Christmas isn't complete without a real tree. After the holidays, these trees often end up in landfills, which already have limited space! Check out TDOT's *Nobody Trashes Tennessee* campaign for [five sustainable options for tree disposal](#).

Try a "No Buy January" Reset

Feeling the pinch after holiday spending? Join the *No Buy January* challenge! Here's how it works: make a list of essentials and commit to buying only those for the month. Everything we purchase takes energy, water, resources, and labor to produce. By participating in *No Buy January*, you'll protect your budget and the environment.

Award Applications Open Now!

Have you or someone you know made outstanding achievements for environmental initiatives in Tennessee? Apply for the [Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards](#).

Join our upcoming [webinar](#) on January 14th to learn how to submit a strong application. The session will cover:

- Eligibility requirements for nominations
- Key components of a successful application
- Tips for writing a compelling nomination
- Important deadlines and submission guidelines
- Answers to frequently asked questions



Public Participation Opportunities in TDEC

Public Participation Opportunities

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) encourages public participation to ensure environmental decisions reflect community values. Citizens can share ideas, concerns, and solutions that help shape policies and projects across the state.

One example is the environmental permitting process. If a business applies to build a large facility, TDEC holds a public comment period near the end of the application process. This allows residents to express concerns about potential environmental impacts on their neighborhoods, workplaces, and recreational areas.

To find current opportunities to get involved, visit TDEC's [Public Participation Opportunities webpage](#). The page is organized by Divisions, such as air, water, and waste. Also, check out the *Helpful Links* table in the bottom right corner, which includes a *Calendar of Events* showing upcoming hearings and comment periods in a calendar format.

Sustainable Recipe

Looking to eat healthier and save money this New Year? Try a [Zero-Waste Bowl](#). Start with a base like rice or quinoa, add a protein such as beans or leftover chicken, and finish with vegetables and herbs you already have on hand. According to the EPA, the average [U.S. family of four throws away \\$2,913 worth of food each year](#), so using what's in your fridge can make a real impact. For flavor, skip buying new condiments and whip up a simple dressing from pantry staples, like a [balsamic vinaigrette](#), [chipotle dressing](#), or [lemon vinaigrette](#).



News Articles

[The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Wildlife Photo Contest](#)

[City Looks to Expand Composting and Glass Recycling to All Chattanoogaans, Depending on Resident Participation](#)

[Tennessee Department of Transportation's Nobody Trashes Tennessee No Trash November Winners](#)

Get Involved

Volunteer

[The Giving Grove Community Orchard](#)
Nashville

[Nobody Trashes Tennessee: Litter Cleanups](#)
Statewide

[State Park Volunteer Opportunities](#)
Statewide

Conferences

[Pick Tennessee Conference](#)

Lebanon
January 15-17

[Keep Knoxville Beautiful 7th Annual Summit](#)
Knoxville
January 30

[Vanderbilt 2026 Social Ventures Summit](#)
Nashville
January 30

Events

[Vegetable Garden Planning Workshop](#)
Knoxville
January 24

[Make & Take: Reusable Paper Towels Workshop](#)
Cookeville
January 30

Award Nominations

[Keep Tennessee Beautiful Love Where You Live Award](#)
Deadline: January 9

[Keep Tennessee Beautiful Leader Against Litter](#)
Deadline: January 9

Receive Funding

[Keep Tennessee Beautiful Law Enforcement Grant](#)

[TDOT Litter Grant Program](#)

[TDEC Grants and Programs](#)

[Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#)

[Grants.gov](#)

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