TN Department of Environment & Conservation

Division of Land Protection

August 5, 2026

Division of Land Protection

- The Division of Solid Waste Management (DSWM) and the Division of Remediation (DOR) is now a single division called, **Division of Land Protection (DLP)**.
- Effective August 1, the Materials Management Program became part of the **Division of Stakeholder Engagement (DSE)**. DLP will continue to engage with the Division of Stakeholder Engagement on matters of solid waste planning.

Division of Land Protection

- Improve reporting consistency, strengthen regulatory alignment across RCRA and CERCLA authorities, and provide clearer, more coordinated communication with our federal counterparts.
- The Division of Land Protection is organized into two branches (**Waste Management Branch** and **Remediation Branch**).
- The administrative and financial groups are being consolidated.
- Leadership is currently evaluating organizational structure, operational procedures, data management, SOPs, budgets to better align the two Branches.

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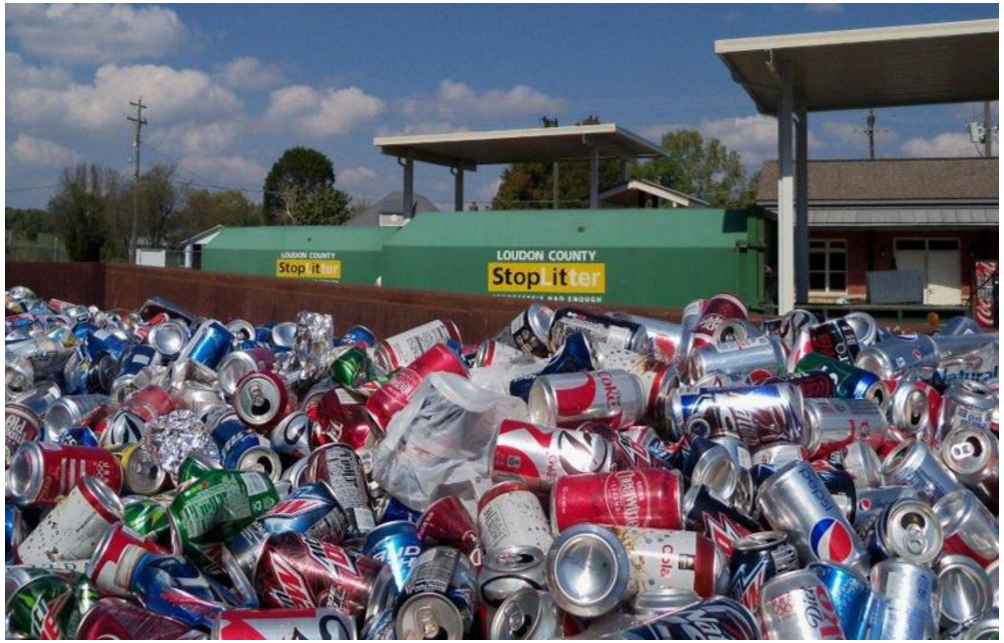
Division of Land Protection

- **Steve Sanders**
  Director, Division of Land Protection
  - **Rob Ashe**
    FO Deputy Director Waste Management Branch
    - Chattanooga
    - Columbia
    - Cookeville
    - Johnson City
    - Knoxville
    - Memphis/Jackson
    - Nashville
  - **VACANT**
    CO Deputy Director Waste Management Branch
    - Solid Waste Program
    - Hazardous Waste Program
    - Toxic Substances
  - **Robert Wilkinson**
    CO Deputy Director Remediation Branch
    - Brownfields Program
    - Technical Program
    - Financial/Admin
    - Enforcement
  - **Justin Meredith**
    FO Deputy Director Remediation Branch
    - Chattanooga
    - Knoxville
    - Nashville
    - Memphis/Jackson

Staffing Updates



- Michael Perry hired as the Division’s financial manager.
- Compliance review functions have been transferred to the Environmental Fellow (B. Philpot).
- Administrative services centralized under R. Meredith.
- The Division has had several recent retirements. Current plans are not to backfill higher cost positions and instead focus on realigning job duties and organizational structure. The Division will combine the vacancy planning/reporting for both legacy programs.

Financial Update – Remediation Branch

- 327.38 (Hazardous Waste Remedial Action Fund)

Revenue

- **$9,587,658**

Expenses

- Personnel - $4,587,647
- Operating - $3,281,472
- Total Expenses - **$7,869,120**

Fund Balance

$104,516,370 (obligated (BRAG, ORR, TN Clean, DCERP, NPL SSC, etc))

$16,456,489 (unobligated)

Financial Update – Waste Management Branch

Revenues

- 327.23 – (Used Oil) $973,465
- 327.35 – (Solid Waste Management) $17,398,141
- 327.42 – (Solid Waste Assistance) $13,845,119

Expenses

- 327.23 – Personnel $209,691, Operating $606,523
- 327.35 – Personnel $11,839,647, Operating $1,659,797
- 327.42 – Personnel $1,466,483, Operating $12,378,636

Fund Balances

- 327.23 – $2,016,196
- 327.35 – $1,929,412 (SW $855,928/HW $975,819/SPILLS $78,188/LBP $19,425)
- 327.42 – $14,444,868

Environmental Protection Fund

- The Department has had to cover shortfalls in the Solid Waste EPF in FY23, FY25, and expects additional shortfalls in the next three FYs.
- The Hazardous Waste EPF has experienced similar pressures because of shortfalls in the Toxics programs grants funding.
- EPF funds are statutorily “siloed” and set at a ratio of regulatory fees to state funding.
- Projected revenue for DLP - Waste Management is expected to be flat over the next three fiscal years, resulting in a negative impact on reserve funds.

Solid Waste Program Fees

- In calendar year 2007, **6,923,305 tons** of waste was disposal in Class I landfills in TN; In fiscal year 2025, **8,962,207 tons** were disposed in Class I landfills in TN.

- Inflation from 2007 to 2025 is about 60%, while tonnage at landfills has increased 30%.

- Environmental Protection Fund surplus from the Solid Waste Program has been exhausted.

- Fees were last updated in 2006 and 2007.
  - $0.90/ton is placed in the "solid waste management fund" (327.42) specifically to fund actives authorized by the Solid Waste Act of 1991 TCA 68-211.
  - $0.35/ton (Rule 0400-11-01-.07(5)) funds the operation of Solid Waste Program.

Total collections for FY25 were $4,538,166 ($3,136,772 is from the $0.35 surcharge).

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Rule Proposal – Hazardous Waste Fees

- The current HW fee structure is based on a regulatory framework established by the EPA in 2010.

- Since this rulemaking, the EPA has introduced a range of exclusions, exemptions, and specialized regulatory provisions that have negatively impacted the State’s ability to collect fees sufficient to support program costs. A fee increase is necessary to avoid deficits in the next fiscal year and has sufficient resources to comply with its obligations to EPA as a delegated program.

- As of April 2026, the hazardous waste program had collected only $2.71 million in fees, compared with $3.18 million at the same time in April 2025. This nearly **15% reduction** is unsustainable and reflects recent structural changes at the federal level that must be addressed.

Division of Land Protection

Legislation from 2nd Session 114 General Assembly

- PC 970 - DCERP Modernization Act (began drafting rule updates)
- PC 814 - Part 8 Solid Waste Plan
  - Establishes a state policy to ensure there is enough landfill capacity for waste that cannot be recycled or recovered.
  - Requires each region to create and update a 10-year solid waste plan detailing how waste will be managed and disposed of, with updated plans by July 1, 2028.
  - Directs TDEC to promulgate rules by December 31, 2027.
- PC 1096 - Office of Cooperative Marketing for Recyclables
  - Creates an Office of Cooperative Marketing for Recyclables to help connect buyers and sellers of recyclable materials, share market information, and support recycling programs and economic development.
  - Establishes an advisory council to study and improve Tennessee's recycling market, recommend strategies, and support industry growth and collaboration.
- PC 994 - Regulatory Freedom Act

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Brownfields to Ballparks

- In 2024, the Chattanooga Lookouts announced plans for a new stadium development. The stadium is located at the former U.S. Pipe property and opened on April 15, 2026. The project includes a surrounding 400-acre development which will include retail, office, and residential units.

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