

BIRMINGHAM BUSINESS JOURNAL

Monday, December 29, 2008

Green Resource Center recognizes local 2008 initiatives

Birmingham Business Journal - by [Crystal Jarvis](#) Staff

The Green Resource Center of Alabama recognized significant green initiatives that got underway in 2008 in its first Green Gauge Report.

Across the state this year, more green buildings opened across the state, including Jacksonville State University's Canyon Center at Little River Canyon, the new Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World in Leeds and Birmingham's new Social Security Administration building, according to the report.

Several municipalities in Alabama also made the roster for use of alternative fuels for energy sources. Hoover, for example, is considered a national leader in the use of biofuels for its fleet vehicles. Cities including Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Montgomery, Auburn, Florence, Gadsden and Daphne are now either using biodiesel or producing biodiesel from grease or used oil to help power their fleets also, the report stated.

The nonprofit organization's report highlighted a number of other events that helped improve the environment and protect natural habitats, including:

- Stricter laws implemented by Alabama Environmental Management Commission to establish tougher standards for more than 50 cancer-causing pollutants, which brought Alabama up to code when compared with neighboring states;
- New fees levied for waste disposal at Alabama landfills, which is now \$1 per ton. The fee, which is expected to generate between \$7 million and \$8 million annually, will fund the cleanup of illegal dumps, support the state's landfill inspection program and provide grants to help expand recycling across the state;
- More stringent fines for illegal hunting and fishing are set to take effect next year;
- And a solution to the solar energy liability issue, in which Alabama lawmakers decided to eliminate an insurance mandate on solar-generated energy sold to Alabama Power, reducing the cost for individuals who want to generate power from solar systems and sell excess electricity back to the utility.

The Green Resource Center for Alabama is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Homewood.