

# REPORTS

# OppInc.

Opportunity Inc.

Hampton Roads' Workforce Development Board

RECEIVED MAR 11 2011

March 8, 2011

Mr. Michael Johnson  
County Administrator  
Southampton County  
P.O. Box 400  
Courtland, VA 23513

Dear Mr. Johnson:

It is my pleasure to present the Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board and Opportunity Inc. of Hampton Roads Annual Report highlighting activities and accomplishments during the 2009-2010 Program Year. Our workforce investment area represents 1.1 million residents and thousands of businesses in Chesapeake, Franklin, Isle of Wight County, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Southampton County, Suffolk and Virginia Beach.

These are critical times for our region. Over 40,000 remain unemployed in the eight localities served by Opportunity Inc. alone, and another 19,000 on the Virginia Peninsula. Last program year, Opportunity Inc. served almost 11,000 individual clients who made a total of 56,000 visits to our One-Stop Workforce Centers. This was nearly double the volume experienced during the prior year. Opportunity Inc. also coordinated the job placement and training response to several major closures including International Paper and Cooper Vision.

Should you have any questions regarding this report, or would like to learn more about our efforts in your locality, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Ms. Judy Begland  
President and CEO  
Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board

Enclosure

Delivering a workforce 'second to none'



Opportunity Inc.

Hampton Roads' Workforce Development Board

**PROGRAM YEAR 2009**

July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010

[www.opp-inc.org](http://www.opp-inc.org)

## A message from the Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board

We are pleased to present this annual report, on behalf of the Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board. Program Year 2009 (July 1, 2009, to June 30, 2010) was a tumultuous year with high-unemployment rates. Although the recession that began in December 2007 officially ended in June 2009, the lingering effects of increasing and prolonged unemployment have continued to plague the national, state and regional economies.

South and Western Hampton Roads lost some 9,800 jobs over the program year despite being officially out of the recession. While this represented about half of the previous year's job losses, the February 2010 unemployment rate of 7.8 percent was the highest in more than a generation.

The region received funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("stimulus"), providing resources for job training and youth summer job opportunities. Record numbers of individuals utilized the One-Stop Workforce Centers and many companies closed their doors or downsized, including International Paper's Franklin plant.

Initial indications suggest the current year will not be as tumultuous as the last one, yet challenges remain. Many will find their jobs will not come back as the economy improves. Still others will learn, after an extended period of unemployment, they need to upgrade their skills.

In the report that follows, you will see many of the ways we are working to assist those looking to gain new skills and improve old ones. We also are helping to prepare the next generation of workers for the competition they face in a truly global economy and are assisting businesses to meet their need for a skilled and qualified workforce.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to all who work with us in support of the region's workforce development strategy and commend them for their accomplishments as well.

Sincerely,



Donald Goldberg, Chairman  
Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board



## Opportunity Inc.:

Serving workforce needs for both businesses and jobseekers

### Who we are

The Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board is business-led and comprises representatives of the region's key stakeholders in workforce development. The Board is tasked with providing leadership to develop and implement a sound workforce strategy for the communities it represents. Those communities are the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk and Virginia Beach, as well as the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton.

A successful workforce development strategy is fundamental to a successful economic development strategy. Business profitability and competitiveness depend on the capability and productivity of the workforce. A well-paid and secure workforce depends on business profitability and competitiveness. One is not possible without the other. Ultimately, the strength of our workforce will determine the strength of our economy in Hampton Roads.



Workforce Development Board Meeting

### Financial overview

The majority of Opportunity Inc.'s funding comes from the U.S. Department of Labor under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). 2009 funding included substantial sums under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, or stimulus funding.

The table below details the Program Year 2009 source of funds, expenditures and balances carried forward into the current Program Year.

### Program Year 2009 Funding and Expenditures/Obligations

FUND	WIA and Stimulus Adult	WIA and Stimulus Dislocated Worker	WIA and Stimulus Youth	WIRED Grant	All Other Funds	TOTAL
Funding	\$3,486,001	\$1,774,558	\$3,997,472	\$2,969,101	\$587,284	\$12,814,416
Expenditures/Obligations	\$3,486,001	\$1,202,901	\$3,633,174	\$2,798,683	\$582,154	\$11,702,913
Carried Forward		\$571,657	\$364,298	\$170,418	\$5,130	\$1,111,503

## Displaced workers are helped when International Paper Mill closes

International Paper (IP) announced it would close its Franklin paper mill on Oct. 22, 2009, resulting in the loss of more than 1,100 jobs. In November, Opportunity Inc. opened an on-site Transition Center to provide services and resources such as unemployment insurance, skills assessment, access to occupational training and funding, and employment workshops on resume writing and interviewing skills. Opportunity Inc. also expanded its existing Franklin One-Stop Workforce Center, located at Paul D. Camp Community College. To date, more than 500 IP employees have been served.

To further help support displaced IP workers, Opportunity Inc. sponsored a number of events in 2010:

- Job Fair in January – 43 employers with job openings participated. More than 1,300 people attended with 52 on-site interviews and 29 employment offers made that day.
- Supplier Meeting in February – Connected several IP suppliers with state and federal resources and sponsored ads in local newspapers to promote affected suppliers.
- Community Resource Fair in March – Helped impacted IP families access needed services and resources.
- Community Forum in April – Informed residents on how Franklin and the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton were working together to move the region forward.
- Jobseeker Workshop in June – Partnered with Monster.com to host a workshop at PDCCC for dislocated IP employees.



International Paper Career Fair

## Youth programs operate year-round throughout the region

Opportunity Inc. provides year-round programs to help youth succeed in school and learn relevant workplace-readiness skills. In PY 2009, the KRA Corp. program, funded by Opportunity Inc., served 240 in-school youth at 12 locations and 90 out-of-school youth.

The KRA Youth Employability & Success (Y.E.S.) program includes work-readiness training, subsidized work experiences, job-search preparation and assistance, resume-writing and interviewing-skills training, and leadership development. Activities include community service projects, adult mentoring, financial literacy, and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) competitions. Students also can earn a workplace readiness skills certificate.

Programs are located in various schools and community centers throughout the region: Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority; Booker T. Washington, Lake Taylor, Granby and Maury high schools in Norfolk; Franklin High School; I.C. Norcom High School in Portsmouth, Smithfield High School in Isle of Wight, Lakeland High School in Suffolk, and Green Run and Bayside high schools in Virginia Beach. Southampton County Public Schools ran a similar program, serving 45 in-school youth.

## Summer work experience program is largest in Commonwealth

In summer 2009, 913 youth participated in Opportunity Inc.'s Summer Work Experience program, earning almost \$1.5 million at locations including municipal parks and recreation departments and motor pools, photography studios, child care centers, local colleges and universities, and summer camps. Along with the experience, youth received workplace readiness instruction in the classroom which included lessons in resume writing, interviewing, personal budgeting and dressing for success.

Opportunity Inc.'s program was the largest in Virginia, accounting for 26 percent of the state's total. According to DOL figures, it was larger than entire programs in 11 states.



Summer Work Experience

## Opportunity Inc. offers an array of business services

Opportunity Inc. offered a host of services to area businesses this past year, including applicant referral, candidate prescreening, access to tax credit programs and labor market information, customized skills training for new hires and On-the-Job Training (OJT) subsidies.

OJT is a program that reimburses employers for part of the cost of hiring and training a new employee. It is particularly important in the current economic environment because it reduces hiring costs and helps get the unemployed back to work and earning a wage while training.

PY 2009 saw several mass layoffs including the closing of the International Paper mill in Franklin, where 1,123 people lost their jobs. Since 2007, the number of people impacted by layoffs has steadily increased, with 2009 seeing the greatest number of employees laid off since the Norfolk Ford plant closed in 2006.

As a pro-active measure to layoffs and plant closings, Opportunity Inc. often joins forces with other service providers such as the Virginia Employment Commission to engage in a Rapid Response where they coordinate services and provide immediate information and aid to companies and their affected workers. Opportunity Inc. participated in 15 such actions throughout the program year, reaching 2,400 employees.

Nearly 300 business and community leaders attended Opportunity Inc.'s State of the Workforce: 2010 event in June to help them better understand how regional demographic and workforce trends will affect Hampton Roads' businesses, organizations and communities. Dr. Ed Gordon, author of *Winning the Global Talent Showdown*, was the keynote speaker. Decision makers were presented information that compared Hampton Roads' workforce to the state's and nation's. Each attendee received a technical report, prepared by Chmura Economics and Analytics. To view the complete report, go to [www.opp-inc.org](http://www.opp-inc.org).

Through funding from the U.S. Department of Labor, Opportunity Inc. developed a world-class Workplace Readiness Skills curriculum to provide resource materials to support teaching employer-valued workplace skills to Virginia high school students. It also partnered with the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) to create a national workplace readiness skills certification test.



State of the Workforce 2010

## Three-year SEVA-PORT grant helps boost economy, increase high-paying jobs throughout the region

In July 2007, the U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration awarded a three-year, \$5 million Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant to help local Workforce Investment Boards reposition the economy of Southeastern Virginia. The regional grant, officially named the Southeastern Virginia Partnership for Regional Transformation (SEVA-PORT), was managed by Opportunity Inc. in Norfolk, with support from the Peninsula Council for Workforce Development in Newport News and Crater Regional Workforce Investment Group in Petersburg, until it ended June 30, 2010.

The WIRED grants, awarded to 39 regions across the country, were designed to integrate economic and workforce development activities by bringing together state, local and federal entities with area businesses and industries, community and civic organizations, and academic establishments from grade schools to institutions of higher learning. More than 50 such groups participated in SEVA-PORT activities which aimed to diversify and expand the economy, increase higher-paying job opportunities and reduce the area's dependence on military spending.

SEVA-PORT's specific mission was to integrate, enhance and help link the emerging industry of Modeling and Simulation (M&S) with the expanding port-related industries of Transportation, Warehousing and Distribution (TWD). To accomplish this task, Opportunity Inc. implemented a two-prong approach that strengthened the talent pipeline by developing the skills and talent of dislocated workers and untapped labor pools, and supporting small business development.

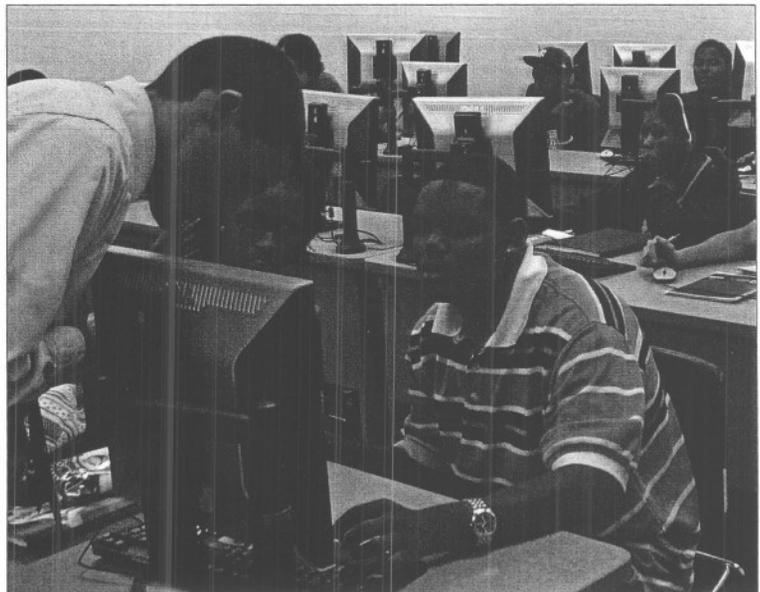
At the high school level, the SEVA-PORT initiative helped expand the M&S talent pipeline through a new curriculum for seniors. Teachers and school counselors received specialized training related to M&S and TWD careers. A variety of technology-based summer camps and after-school programs for high school students were held at community colleges and Old Dominion University.

The community colleges of Tidewater, Thomas Nelson, Paul D. Camp, John Tyler and Southside Virginia now offer an associate's degree and certificate programs in M&S and logistics and have expanded their regional truck driving programs. Grant funds also were used to expand lab facilities with state-of-the-art software and hardware.

SEVA-PORT resources in existing One-Stop Centers provided students, dislocated workers and others with information on M&S and TWD programs. Tuition assistance was available to individuals interested in certificate and degree programs in these fields. SEVA-PORT funds also were used to increase employee access to training and proficiency in these new and emerging technologies.



Logistics Industry Tour



Summer Technology Camp

## One-Stop system sees influx of users

### Workforce centers attract record numbers

This past year, almost 11,000 individuals made a total of 56,000 visits to Opportunity Inc.'s One-Stop Workforce Centers. This was nearly double the volume experienced during the prior year.

The centers offer local area residents job seeking and keeping skills workshops, as well as up-to-date information on labor-market demands, training programs and financial aid. To help with job searches, the centers feature computers equipped with Internet access and other helpful tools. Assessment services and unemployment insurance benefits are also available to jobseekers.

The One-Stop system partners with the Virginia Employment Commission, local public schools, rehabilitative services, AARP, The Stop Organization, the Educational Opportunity Center, local housing authorities, community colleges and local human services departments.

### Training services also on the rise

The centers provided funding to train 1,437 individuals. This increased capacity was made possible through additional stimulus funds and nearly two-thirds of the program participants netted jobs that paid an average \$14.14 an hour.

The majority of the participants (52 percent) were trained in the allied health fields, while 10 percent received training in information technology. The table at the right shows the overall breakdown by categories.

### Share network locations approach 30

In an effort to expand its reach into the community, Opportunity Inc. has been working with city libraries and faith-based organizations to develop additional sites to access workforce development services.

Currently there are 29 active Share Network Access Points (SNAP) sites operated by public libraries and neighborhood community centers within Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Virginia Beach.

Under the initiative, local venues help connect jobseekers with employment services. Staff members are trained by One-Stop Development Center personnel. Individuals in need of more extensive services are referred to the centers.

Efforts are continuously under way to identify new partners and expand the initiative to other areas.

TRAINING CATEGORIES	PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS
Medical	749 52%
Information Technology	137 10%
Transportation/Logistics	114 8%
Personal Services	86 6%
Construction/Maintenance	79 5%
Business	74 5%
Manufacturing	69 5%
Education	41 3%
Automotive	20 1%
Other Various	68 5%

#### OppInc. One-Stop Workforce Center

Circle East Office Building  
 861 Glenrock Rd., Suite 223  
 Norfolk, VA 23502  
 (757) 461-7537

#### Regional Workforce Development Center

Paul D. Camp Community College  
 100 N. College Dr.  
 Franklin, VA 23851  
 (757) 569-6070

#### Suffolk Workforce Development Center

157 North Main St.  
 Suffolk, VA 23434  
 (757) 514-7737

# Hampton Roads Workforce Development Board

2009-2010

**\*Jeffrey W. Ainslie,**  
The Ainslie Group

**Dr. Elsie M. Barnes,**  
Norfolk State University

**Dan Bell,**  
Canon Information  
Technology Services

**Dr. Douglas Boyce,**  
Paul D. Camp  
Community College

**Theresa Bryant,**  
Tidewater Community  
College

**Curtis Byrd,**  
Office of Congressman  
J. Randy Forbes

**\*John A. Canfield,**  
Caroga Resources LLC

**\*Teresa Carrington,**  
Carrington Business  
Consulting Group

**Andy Chapman,**  
Ashland Hercules  
Water Technologies

**James P. Councill III,**  
City of Franklin

**\*Joseph M. Donnelly,**  
Roger Brown's Restaurant  
& Sports Bar

**\*Dr. Larry Dotolo,**  
Virginia Tidewater  
Consortium for  
Higher Education

**Mark Dreyfus,**  
ECPI College of Technology

**Sande Dukas,**  
CONCOA North America

**Dan Duggan,**  
Bon Secours DePaul  
Medical Center

**Marian D. Flickinger,**  
Norfolk Federation  
of Teachers

**\*Stephen Fuschetti,**  
Gannett Media  
Technologies International

**Scott George,**  
Office of Congressman  
Robert C. Scott

**\*Donald Goldberg,**  
DD Jones Transfer &  
Warehouse Co.

**Darryl W. Gosnell,**  
Hampton Roads Economic  
Development Alliance

**Joseph Hopkins,**  
Virginia Employment  
Commission

**\*John A. Hornbeck Jr.,**  
Hampton Roads Chamber  
of Commerce

**Leonard Horton,**  
City of Suffolk

**Mark Johnson,**  
United Way

**Edith R. Jones,**  
The STOP Organization Inc.

**Dr. Stephen C. Jones,**  
Norfolk Public Schools

**Lynn Kushner,**  
Virginia Department of  
Rehabilitative Services

**Clarissa McAdoo,**  
Suffolk Redevelopment &  
Housing Authority

**\*Dick R. McCullough,**  
Lindab Inc.

**Dr. Michael W.  
McPherson,**  
Isle of Wight County  
Public Schools

**Paul Michels,**  
Coastal Training  
Technologies Corp.

**Peter K. Mueller,**  
Stihl Inc.

**BarBara Murphy,**  
AARP

**Kenneth D. Newman,**  
Metro Machine

**Lisa T. Perry,**  
Isle of Wight County

**Jerome Richardson,**  
Cost Plus World Market

**Dr. David Stuckwisch,**  
Portsmouth Public Schools

**\*Susan Walston,**  
City of Virginia Beach

**Edith White,**  
Urban League of  
Hampton Roads

**Tom Winter,**  
Norfolk Southern Corp.

**\*James Wofford,**  
MacArthur Center

**Steven C. Wright,**  
City of Chesapeake

**Gerald Yagen,**  
Centura College

*\*Executive Committee  
member*

## Youth Council

2009-2010

**Jeffrey W. Ainslie,**  
**chair,**  
The Ainslie Group

**Elsie Barnes,**  
Norfolk State University

**Kendra Bish,**  
Virginia Job Corps

**Barbara Brinson,**  
City of Virginia Beach

**Karen Campbell,**  
Tidewater Community  
College

**Christina C. Conner,**  
Youth representative

**Orlando Douglas,**  
Youth representative

**Geraldine Draughan,**  
Parent representative

**Linda Filippi,**  
Tidewater Regional Group  
Home Commission

**Kim Garrett,**  
Wachovia/Wells Fargo

**Mark Johnson,**  
United Way

**Alice Jones,**  
Old Dominion University

**Dr. Pat Konopnicki,**  
Virginia Beach Public  
Schools

**Rebecca M. Mercer,**  
Smithfield High School

**Denise Wiggins,**  
Norfolk Public Schools

**Kevin Will,**  
Junior Achievement

**Yvette Young,**  
Urban League

## Contact Information

**Opportunity Inc.  
of Hampton Roads**  
500 E. Plume St.,  
Suite 700  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
(757) 314-2370

**Youth Career Center  
of Hampton Roads**  
4554 Virginia Beach Blvd.,  
Pembroke Mall,  
Suite 750  
Virginia Beach, VA 23462  
(757) 233-8686

**OppInc.**  
Opportunity Inc.  
Hampton Roads' Workforce Development Board

**Youth  
Career**  
CENTER OF HAMPTON ROADS

# SPSA ~~E-WASTE~~ ELINE

The logo features the text "SPSA" in a small font above "E-WASTE" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The "E" and "W" are connected. To the right of "WASTE" is a silhouette of a semi-truck with a long trailer. Below "WASTE" is the word "ELINE" in a large, bold, sans-serif font.

February 2011

## ***FROM THE CHAIRMAN . . .***

**Joseph A. Leafe...**

As we begin our second full year as a Board, we start as an organization sitting on solid financial ground and planning for the future of SPSA and our eight member localities. Many noteworthy actions have been accomplished and are sprinkled throughout this newsletter under their respective topic headings. Additionally, our Board is now complete with the addition of our final Governor-appointed member, Mr. Page Johnson who represents the City of Virginia Beach.

At this time I am pleased to inform you that to date we have:

1. Created and adopted a Strategic Plan as required by law which was approved by the Board at the December 8, 2010 meeting. It can be viewed on the SPSA website: [www.spsa.com](http://www.spsa.com)
2. Implemented a \$5 reduction in the municipal tipping fee to \$145 effective 1/01/11.
3. Finalized the terms of the sale of the recycling property for \$1.2 million which was approved by the Board at the January 26, 2011 Board meeting. Closing is estimated to occur during the month of May.
4. Signed a new Landfill Gas Agreement which will increase SPSA revenue substantially.

I spoke to the Mayors and Chairs in Suffolk regarding the importance of placing the disposal of solid waste after January 24, 2018 high on the communities' list of things to deal with in a timely manner. The SPSA Board of Directors needs the input from each community as to whether you feel a SPSA type organization would be beneficial to your community after the current Use and Support Agreements expire in January 2018. Decisions that the SPSA Board must make in the very near future may drastically impact whether the current organization will be able to continue to provide services in the future.

SCS Engineers' update of its previous Post-2018 Waste Disposal Study is due to be submitted to the communities in April. It is our understanding that the communities will

review this information in conjunction with each community's future needs and decide whether your community will or will not be a part of a SPSA-type organization after January 2018.

The SPSA Board respectfully requests each community to perform their due diligence in a timely manner. The SPSA Board, in order to move forward with plans to close down or continue after January 2018, needs direction from the communities by the fall of this year. To remain open or to close down will take a tremendous amount of time, planning, effort and energy in order to do it properly and without negative impacts on the communities. Please help us perform in the best interest of your future needs and requirements.

### ***NEWS FROM ADMINISTRATION . . .***

Staff continues to review agreements to insure that monetary computations are in accordance with contracts and or agreements. To date this has resulted in excess of \$900,000 in recovered expenses.

SPSA has discontinued the white goods and household hazardous waste programs at the Virginia Beach landfill. The City of Virginia Beach will continue these services for its citizens.

### ***EMPLOYEE NEWS . . .***

While staffing levels have remained consistent since November, SPSA continues to evaluate positions in its quest to operate more cost-effectively. SPSA's current staffing level remains at 154...down from 480 employees two years ago.

### ***FINANCIAL NEWS . . .***

The FY2012 budget will be presented to the Board at the March 23, 2011 meeting. While SPSA staff is recommending that the tipping fee remain at \$145 per ton, it is important that the communities insure that all the appropriate municipal waste that is under their control is getting to SPSA at the fee established in the fee schedule. This is very important as we look toward the future.

Tonnages continue a downward trend. Other reductions in the operating budget have allowed the budget to absorb the reduction in tonnages for the coming year.

As of this date SPSA has:

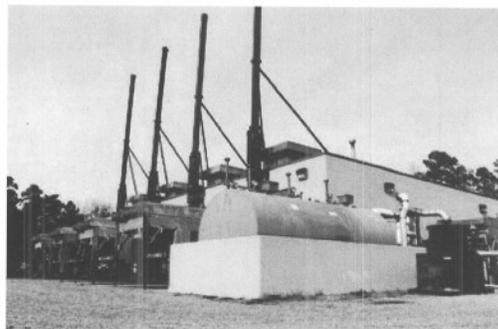
Negotiated a reduction in the cost of the current annual audit for FY10 by \$20,000.

Issued an RFP for annual audit services and subsequently awarded to a new company. This has resulted in a \$45,000 savings per year for the next four years.

Received approval from the Department of Environmental Quality to change the method by which SPSA posts financial assurance for closure and post-closure care costs at the regional landfill and transfer stations resulting in a reduction in a Letter of Credit from \$22.8 million to \$1 million. The savings are approximately \$268,000.

Began the process of changing enterprise computer software resulting in savings in excess of \$250,000 per year or \$1.7 million from FY12 through FY18.

Negotiated a reduction in the cost of the annual survey and report prepared by R. W. Beck of approximately \$20,000 per year. This report is required annually by SPSA's bond documents.



## **REGIONAL LANDFILL NEWS . .**

Completed the updated Landfill Gas Agreement which should double SPSA's amount of revenue from the sale of gas from \$280,000 annually to \$600,000 with the potential of \$1 million per year following a proposed system expansion for BASF.

Completed the installation of a new gas well collection system in Cell VI approximately two years before the normal required timeline.

Cell VII Permit is pending. The Department of Environmental Quality will hold a public hearing Thursday night, March 31, 2011 in the auditorium of Nansemond River High School in Suffolk. The decision on the issuance of the permit is scheduled to occur in May under a best case scenario.

Received a temperature study conducted by HDR Engineers on Cell V to determine the underlying cause of elevated temperatures in some of the gas extraction wells at the Regional Landfill.

Changing the hours of operations to be 4 days a week – Tuesday through Friday with no hours on Mondays or Saturdays. This will begin on Monday, April 4th. SPSA also eliminated the 2nd and 3rd shifts at the regional landfill.

### **TRANSPORTATION NEWS . . .**

Changed the hours of operation at our garage to reduce overtime. As with everyone, SPSA has seen the price of diesel increase to over \$3.20.

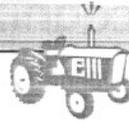
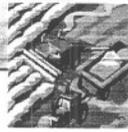
### **TRANSFER STATIONS UPDATE . . .**

Major maintenance project has begun at the Oceana Transfer Station in Virginia Beach. The station will be closed for six weeks. In the picture below demolition is almost complete. The building is scheduled to arrive on site on Friday, March 18th.

SPSA Executive Director Rowland Taylor and Superintendent of the Landfill & Environmental Scott Whitehurst attended the groundbreaking ceremony for GPC Green Energy in Suffolk on February 17, 2011. When this project is completed considerably more landfill gas will be put to a beneficial green use. Construction is estimated to take 8 months.



**FULL STEAM AHEAD.** GPC Green Energy LLC and BASF earlier this month hosted a groundbreaking for a new landfill gas-processing, electricity and steam-production facility in Suffolk. This project, expected to create nine new jobs, is located on the BASF campus at 2301 Wilroy Road. Virginia-based GPC will head the project, which intends to convert methane gas from the SPSA landfill in Suffolk into electricity. The electricity generated from the gas will completely power the operations at the BASF site, as well as about 4,000 homes in the area.



# CONSERVATION NEWS

Chowan Basin Soil & Water Conservation District



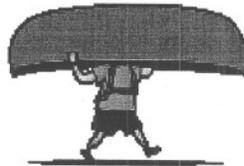
## Summer Camp Opportunity



Do you enjoy exploring nature? Do you think you might want to study a natural resources field in college? Then Youth Conservation Camp is for you!

Two lucky students, grades 9–12 will be selected to attend the 2011 Youth Conservation Camp at Virginia Tech during the week of July 10 –16.

Activities include visiting Claytor Lake to study lake ecology, fisheries management, land use planning, hiking to the Cascades Waterfall, tree climbing and studying urban forestry and turf-grass management, touring the Agricultural Research Farm to learn about best management practices, soils and touring the swine and dairy centers, traveling to Mountain Lake where you will learn about karst geology, tree identification and wildlife issues, then to round out the week, you can canoe the New River and tour the vet school.



Yes, the week is full of great activities to get your feet wet in many natural resources conservation fields of study.



If you are interested, check with your schools guidance counselor or call for more information and an Application.

Deadline for Applications is April 1st!!! Hurry to get yours



South Centre' Corridors Buy Fresh Buy Local program is looking for more local businesses to be in the next food guide to be published in April 2011. If you are a local grower or local restaurant this is a great opportunity for you. The local food guide connects growers with consumers in the area and provides marketing and advertising to those in the guide. In other words, it gets your name out there for a very minimal cost.

Rates for the 2011 guide are Free to agricultural producers and for all others, the rates have been reduced. You can also become a sponsor of the BFBL program!

- Categories include:
- Fruit and Vegetable Growers
  - Specialty Vendors
  - Meat/Seafood/Eggs
  - CSA's
  - Restaurants & Specialty Stores
  - Farmers Markets

For more information contact the local SWCD office (434-634-2115) or the South Centre Corridors Resource Conservation and Development Council at 804-732-4375.

# Good Stewards Recognized at annual Awards Banquet



The recipient for Greenville County was the mother and son team of Elizabeth and Bill Robinson (Robinson Farm) for the Forestry award.

The Robinsons have

participated in federal programs to assist with preparations to reforest and actual planting of 151 acres of loblolly pines in the last 18 months. In addition to participating in programs offered, they have used their own resources to repair a 25 acre pond on the farm and do other conservation activities as well. These include working with the agricultural producer farming their land to use strip or no till methods of planting crops, making sure cover crops are used when needed and installation of a grazing land protection system, keeping livestock out of nearby waterways.



The Wildlife Conservationist award went to Leonard and Diane Newbern.

They have utilized the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program to convert 57 acres of

cropland back to forested acres and installed a high tunnel hoop house for cut flower production. They are very concerned about protecting and enhancing habitat for pollinators and quail and make sure the activities they do and the best management practices they install has that objective in mind. Since beginning their work in 1990, they have seen an increase in the number of quail coveys on the farm, which for them is very encouraging and let's them know they are doing conservation activities to restore the natural habitat.



The Clean Water Farm Award was presented to Diggs Brothers, Alan and Milton Diggs of the Sedley area. The Diggs Brothers farm approximately 1200 acres and have been using no-till

or strip-till conservation tillage for their soybeans, corn and wheat land for years. Conservation tillage methods such as these help reduce the amount of soil run-off that occurs during a rain event and helps keep our streams and rivers free from sediment. They use winter cover crop which helps build up organic matter in the soil to help reduce the amount of fertilizer used. The Diggs have just been approved in the Conservation Stewardship program meaning they have been doing above and beyond what is required on the farm under the farm bill and also agree to do even more, such as implementing a nutrient management plan or making sure there is some type of ground cover at all times on the cropland they farm.



R. Graydon Deloatche was recognized for his efforts in Forestry on the land he and his family own in the Boykins area.

Mr. Deloatche, with assistance from a local for-

est consultant have been working to manage 156 acres for loblolly and long leaf pines and a mixture of hardwoods.

Mr. Deloatche wanted to restore the cropland he had back to trees and recently converted 56 acres to Long Leaf Pines and 6 acres to native grasses. He hopes one day his grandchildren with benefit from the land as his great-grandparents did years ago when they cut the timber to send their 4 daughters to college. He continues to work with a local forest consultant and NRCS to make sure that the land is properly cared for and is managed in the most environmentally and economically way to meet this objective.



The Outstanding Volunteer Award was presented to a very busy lady, Nancy Reid, who is currently attending Norfolk State University to obtain her environmental

biology degree. Mrs. Reid volunteered for the Natural Resources Conservation Service as an Earth Team Volunteer and put in approximately 10 hours of service. She assisted with the Grassland Preserve Program in doing site evaluations and other related paperwork. Due to her extremely heavy school work load, she was not able to put in more hours, the NRCS staff feels she did a great service for them.



Spiers Farm LLC, under the direction of Robert and Mark Spiers, were presented with the Conservation Farm Award for their efforts in protecting and conserving the natural resources

on the 1500 acres they farm in Sussex and Dinwiddie counties. They have been very successful in using conservation tillage methods, especially with the strip-till tobacco they plant, increasing from planting 5 acres in 2008 to 93 acres in 2010. The Spiers' use cover crops, reseed any critical areas which have washed away soil due to heavy rains, and have gone beyond the normal farming practices to ensure their farming operation is using sound environmental farming practices and still be able to have a profitable operation.



Clean Water Farm Award in Sussex County was presented to Woodview Farms, owned by Chris Parker and his wife Vicki. When Chris returned to the farm in 1976 he

farmed 18 acres and today he farms 1800 in Sussex and Surry counties. Chris is another agricultural producer concerned with conserving the land in an environmentally and economical way. He plants cover crop, uses conservation tillage methods to plant crops, and, as a result has seen the soil improve over time. Mr. Parker is a strong advocate of no-till planting, but does feel it does not work as well on poorly drained soils. He keeps in mind the need to protect the soil and surrounding surface water (streams) near the fields he has to lightly cultivate and only does the minimum tillage he has to.



The Forestry Award for Sussex was presented to VACAR Properties, an 11,000 acre operation owned by Mr. Owen Strickler. The acreage is in four counties, with the

majority in Sussex County. Timber production and management are his primary objectives, with a strong priority placed on conservation and preservation. Mr. Strickler uses many sound forestry practices to manage the timber stand, making for a good mixture of young and mature trees. He has participated in several federal programs to assist in these management activities, in addition to using his own resources. Over the last 18 months, a prescribed burn was done on 100 acres, 51,751 feet of fire breaks put in, 9 acres of critical areas seeding done, 38 acres of loblolly pine planted and another 62 acres are planned for a long-leaf pine planting. Mr. Strickler loves the land and wants to see it maintained for future generations.

