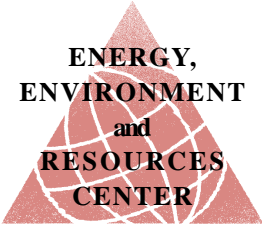


HIGHLIGHTS and INITIATIVES



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The EERC conducts unbiased,
analytical, and multidisciplinary
research designed to promote real-
world solutions to problems in the
fields of energy, environment, tech-
nology, and economic development.

NEW HIRE. The EERC has engaged a certified energy manager, **David Doane**, to lead center-related energy-efficiency projects. **Doane**, who received his industrial engineering degree from the University of Tennessee (UT) in 1986, brings with him extensive experience from the industrial and utility sectors.

PROJECTS. In collaboration with UT's **Tennessee Forest Products Center**, **David Doane**, Research Ecologist **Jack Ranney**, Senior Research Associate **Greg Harrell**, and Professor **Richard Jendrucko (Mechanical, Aerospace, and Biomedical Engineering)**, are representing UT on an Industries of the Future team that's examining energy savings in Tennessee's major industrial sectors. This initiative teams six Tennessee universities with the Office of Economic and Community Development's State Energy Office. UT is leading the team's examination of the forest products industry.

The Southern Appalachian Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit (SA-CESU), coordinated by **Jack Ranney** and hosted by UT's **Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries Department**, will soon mark its five-year anniversary. EERC's **Ranney** also serves as an adjunct professor in the forestry department. SA-CESU has already provided over \$1 million in project funds to UT, which is the host university, and other regional university partners. Five more universities will join the SA-CESU this spring.

WORKSHOPS. Senior Scientist **David Feldman** and Graduate Research Assistant **Lyndsay Moseley (Public Administration)** recently conducted a "Workshop on Faith and the Environment in Appalachia" at UT's Conference Center. The workshop, which explored opportunities for collaboration among faith-based environmental groups, was sponsored by EERC affiliate the Waste Management Research and Education Institute.

Lyndsay Moseley has earned a position on the Henry Institute for the Study of Christianity and Politics "Pollsters and Parishioners" workshop. The week-long seminar on survey research and American religion will be held in July at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. **Moseley** was selected through a nationwide competitive application process.

PUBLICATIONS. **Jonathan Overly**, EERC research associate and coordinator of the East Tennessee Clean Fuels Coalition (ETCFC), recently published "East Tennesseans and Energy Use in the Transportation Sector—Making the Switch" in the Foundation for Global Sustainability's *Hellbender Press* (Nov/Dec 2002). In addition, **Overly** and ETCFC were featured in *Clean Fuel Solutions* (Winter 2003) and *InSites* (Spring 2002).

Responding to the Unthinkable



Each *Highlights and Initiatives* back page presents a closer look at one of EERC's projects or activities. This edition focuses on an upcoming training program that will help communities prepare for and respond to catastrophic events involving mass fatalities.

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Responding to the Unthinkable

UT and Knox County will host a pilot program to help the local community prepare for catastrophic events. • BY ELISE LEQUIRE

“The workshop will train local professionals to perform specific tasks and help them develop mass-fatalities plans,” says Sheila Webster.

TO HELP COMMUNITIES prepare for, respond to, and recover from unforeseen disasters involving massive loss of life, the National Mass Fatalities Institute (NMFI), established in 2000 at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, has launched eight pilot programs across the nation.

The University of Tennessee’s Energy, Environment and Resources Center (EERC) and Knox County officials will co-host one of the first of these workshops with NMFI in summer 2003 at UT’s Conference Center. The workshop will train a diverse group of local professionals to perform specific tasks and help them develop mass fatalities plans, says Sheila Webster, director of EERC’s Technology Research and Development Program and local coordinator of the workshop.

A mass-fatalities incident is one in which the number of deaths overwhelms local resources, including morgue capacity and emergency agencies. One component of the NMFI workshop prepares responders to deal sensitively with victims’ remains, survivors, and family members in potentially chaotic situations. The program trains a cross section of professionals, including mental health workers, emergency responders, physicians, police, funeral directors, and clergy, says Beth Thompson, NMFI’s program coordinator.

When a disaster reaches a threshold that exceeds the ability of local government to handle the response with available resources, local officials may request assistance from the state, says Peter Teahen, the director of NMFI. Teahen co-authored with Lisa LaDue, co-founder of NMFI, the 10-volume plan used in the training program.

Whenever mass fatalities are involved,

the mental health of victims and responders is a huge concern. Building on experience from past events, the workshop trains personnel to conduct debriefings for responders after a catastrophe. Debriefing is a crisis-management technique that helps workers and responders handle the potential after-effects of stress from their involvement in devastating incidents.

Dealing with the emotional needs of survivors and family members of the deceased is also crucial. To that end, program organizers have developed a component of the program to simulate real-life situations faced by responders. A mock disaster, such as a plane crash, is planned for each of the workshops to prepare responders to deal with crisis situations, where emotions run high.

Participants assume the roles of people on both the giving and receiving ends of bad news. For example, they may play the role of parent of the deceased or that of a responder asking next of kin to provide personal effects, such as hair from a hair brush, to aid in the identification of a victim.

Webster is also helping prepare a concise, goals-oriented student manual to accompany the training program, which will help students review each component of the 10-volume plan. Topics for the workshop include protocol for incident command, orientation of agencies and volunteers, disaster-site and morgue-site organization, family assistance and notification of next-of-kin, mental health services during and after a disaster, chaplaincy, security, public information, health services, and handling of evidence.

The program is funded through NMFI by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and supported on the local level by EERC and Knox County. •

For more information, contact Sheila Webster at (865) 974-1985 or <eercmeet@utk.edu>, or see conference information at <<http://eerc.ra.utk.edu/what-new/conference.htm>>.

