



Renewable Energy Outreach by the City of Jackson, Tennessee and TREEDC

The Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) and the City of Jackson held a clean energy workshop for community leaders, businesses and farmers on Tuesday, April 13th at the University of Tennessee West Research Center. Jackson City Councilman Ernest Brooks II and Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS) Management Consultant and TREEDC Executive Director Warren Nevad crafted the curriculum of biofuels and renewable energy power systems for this inaugural workshop sponsored by Jackson Energy Authority and the Jackson Chamber of Commerce. More than 60 attendees from 20 cities, 16 counties and 7 states took advantage of educational and networking opportunities that focused on developing new markets for renewable energy development in West Tennessee. Councilman Brooks is also the West Tennessee TREEDC Advisory Board Member.

Chris Disher, Business Development Manager for Flex Fuel U.S highlighted their firm's successful efforts in converting the City of Chicago, Illinois Public Works Department's older vehicles to flex fuel vehicles while reducing greenhouse gases for its fleet. Russell Beals, Vice President with Biodiesel Logic discussed the City of Hoover, Alabama's model program in collecting waste vegetable oil and converting it to biodiesel. He announced that Clarksville, Tennessee recently opened a similar process with the assistance of TREEDC. Greg Martin with the Boone Pickens Clean Energy Group demonstrated successful approaches used in Maryland and Virginia to convert garbage trucks into compressed natural gas as the fuel source. Dr. Don Tyler of the University of Tennessee reviewed the University's partnership with Genera Energy to grow a new energy crop in Tennessee.

Steven Maupin, President of Diversified Renewable Energy Systems of McKenzie, TN urged cities and counties to consider their municipal wood waste to create a decentralized green energy source for public facilities. Christopher Charlton of Greenway Renewable Energy informed the audience about the potential of wind energy and shared the successful story about the Wisconsin wind energy toolbox. Chad Payne with Solar & Renewable Power Systems of Jackson described the various incentives for solar energy use by small businesses. TREEDC President and Pikeville, Tennessee Mayor Greg Johnson was awarded an educational grant from Penny Judd and Paul Phelan of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). This grant will allow TREEDC to develop a website consisting of educational portals for citizens and businesses to discover best practices in renewable energy

Councilman Brooks expressed his appreciation to TREEDC for affording area farmers tools to practice sustainability measures to their land. The Council has held previous workshops in Memphis and Pikeville Tennessee. The Chairman of TREEDC is University of Tennessee President Emeritus Dr. Joseph Johnson.

Plans are underway for a Middle Tennessee forum in Franklin, Tennessee on June 8, 2010. For more information, contact warren.nevad@tennessee.edu.