

## FROM THE DEPUTY DIRECTORS

The External Affairs team is stronger than ever and equipped to tackle your worst problems.

This year we added new team members who embody our proactive, additive approach. We built robust frameworks to engage with key stakeholders on tough issues. We supported innovation and transparency to advance customer service. We provided strategic communications in situations that were politically charged, complex, and ambiguous.

We are TDEC's special operations team: devoted to the mission, unafraid of a challenge, and here to help you succeed.

-Tara Pedraza and John Lecroy, OEA Deputy Directors



## BY THE NUMBERS

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>28</b>    | Public Hearings                        |
| <b>44</b>    | Park Events                            |
| <b>112</b>   | Distressed County Support              |
| <b>395</b>   | Bureau of Conservation Support         |
| <b>786</b>   | Bureau of Environment Support          |
| <b>1,944</b> | External Stakeholder Support           |
| <b>1,043</b> | Mayoral Interactions                   |
| <b>153</b>   | Legislative Interactions               |
| <b>90</b>    | Environmental Compliance Notifications |

**4,595 OEA Actions in 2022**

### 2022 Spotlight: Stakeholder Engagement for DAPC Fee Rule Changes

"OEA was contacted by the Division of Air Pollution Control (DAPC) with an opportunity to collaborate on a project to create a stakeholder engagement plan for upcoming DAPC fee rule changes. This project is essential in maintaining federal regulatory compliance in DAPC's Title V program.

OEA and DAPC worked together to create a stakeholder engagement plan for the proposed fee rule changes. The plan, and documents relating to the plan, are housed on the DAPC website, where stakeholders can access the documents at their convenience.

Several platforms were used to garner stakeholder feedback. Interactive Microsoft Teams surveys were used during stakeholder meetings and after the meetings, Formstack surveys requesting more detailed feedback were sent to stakeholders using the myEmma digital campaign software. The analytics gathered from these platforms helped identify which facilities needed alternative communication methods for optimal engagement.

This project remains ongoing as the TDEC Deputy Commissioner and DAPC Director are currently meeting with stakeholders. At the end of calendar year 2022, this partnership was successful in increasing stakeholder participation and input related to the proposed diversification of the DAPC fee structure."

- Mary-Margaret Chandler, Business Administrator, DAPC

### 2022 Spotlight: TDEC Water Infrastructure Non-Competitive Grant Outreach

"We had the enormous task of outreach to approximately 366 municipalities in Tennessee to solicit applications for our non-competitive ARP Water Infrastructure grants in a very short amount of time.

OEA was able to step in with a massive effort to not only reach out to each entity but make meaningful contact and ensure that all who were interested had the information needed. OEA worked extensively with our team to set up dozens of calls across the state to provide personalized information to communities that needed it, as well as set up regional workshops in every field office area.

They also helped us do a final major push to the remaining communities that we hadn't heard from prior to the application deadline - including driving out to very rural offices and knocking on doors. When it was all said and done, we had approximately 95 percent participation, and OEA played a huge part in making this very important outreach effort a fantastic success."

-Vena Jones, Statewide Water Infrastructure Grants (SWIG) Manager, DWR



TDEC Policy and Planning Director Dr. Jennifer Tribble is shown here leading a TDEC Water Infrastructure Non-Competitive grant workshop in April 2022. OEA coordinated 10 in-person workshop across the state, hosting over 300 mayors, local government staff, and consultants, in the spring of 2022.