

TENNESSEE GREEN STAR PARTNERSHIP MEMBER HIGHLIGHT



Volkswagen Group of America, Chattanooga Operations LLC

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Volkswagen Group of America, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Volkswagen AG, one of the world's leading automobile manufacturers and the largest carmaker in Europe. It operates a manufacturing plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee and houses the U.S. operations of a worldwide family of distinguished and exciting brands including Audi, Bentley, Bugatti, Lamborghini and Volkswagen. The Chattanooga plant assembles the Volkswagen Atlas, Volkswagen Atlas Cross Sport and Volkswagen Passat. In 2019, Volkswagen broke ground on its Chattanooga factory expansion to become the company's North American hub for electric vehicle assembly. The Volkswagen ID.4 will start production in Chattanooga in 2022.

The Volkswagen Chattanooga factory is a model of environmental responsibility. The Chattanooga Enterprise South Industrial Park was constructed on a 7,000-acre former brownfield site. Volkswagen committed to restoring the area wetlands, which have grown from 40 to more than 88 acres and has set aside more than 78 acres for conservation.

Over 168 species of animals have been catalogued on the site including 65 bird species, 8 of which are endangered. In early 2012, local birding enthusiasts were allowed to come onsite to view the birds. The first visit included five people. Enthusiasm spread quickly about the Volkswagen wetlands. Groups from the Tennessee Ornithological Society and the Chattanooga Audubon Society frequently visit. One bird, the "sedge wren," survives only in marshy areas and is present in the wetland. A well-known local birder paid the company a great compliment when he said that "Volkswagen has provided a perfect environment for this bird to live and breed."

Adjacent to the 88 acres of wetlands is the 33-acre Volkswagen Chattanooga Solar Park. The park contains 33,600 solar modules which produce 13.1 gigawatt hours of electricity annually—which is enough energy to power 1,200 homes. The electricity from the solar park meets 12.5% of Volkswagen's plant energy requirements during full production and 100 percent during non-production periods. It is the second largest solar farm in Tennessee (the largest is at the Millington Naval Facility).

FEATURED THIS MONTH

- Established in 2011
- Employs approximately 3,800
- Member since 2020

INTERESTING FACTS

- Constructed on a 7,000 acre brownfield site
- Site of the second largest solar farm in Tennessee
- World's first automotive manufacturing site to achieve LEED Silver certification



Biodiversity display

Energy conservation is a priority for Volkswagen Chattanooga. Volkswagen Chattanooga won the Tennessee Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award for the Building Green category in 2011 and 2012 for Pursuit of Excellence. In 2012, the factory became the world's first automotive assembly plant to achieve a LEED Platinum certification. In 2018, Volkswagen Chattanooga received the Environmental Excellence award from the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

Volkswagen Chattanooga currently has the capacity to assemble about 750 vehicles per week. In 2018 the facility began an aggressive effort toward waste reduction. While typical waste reduction projects focus on costs, Volkswagen's holistic approach also examined the environmental impact from raw material to solid waste and recycling impact.

"We're focused on quantifying the hidden environmental cost of scrap and rework," said Kaye Fiorello, Volkswagen environmental specialist. In 2018, the plant achieved a 56% reduction in waste per car over 2017. Part of that was due to scrap reduction and a focus on recycling packaging waste.

The production team even achieved a 22% reduction in steel recycled. There is also an ongoing and innovative project for the reuse of 100% of powdered limestone in their paint scrubbing system. There is a tremendous commitment at Volkswagen Chattanooga to become as efficient as possible.

Volkswagen Chattanooga is an example of forward-thinking in energy efficiency, onsite biodiversity and production efficiency. They are an excellent addition to the Tennessee Green Star Partnership.



"Partners like Volkswagen are consistently leading the effort for a sustainable Tennessee through innovation, vision and determination." – **Kendra Abkowitz, Director of the Office of Policy and Sustainable Practices**

The [Tennessee Green Star Partnership](#) is a voluntary environmental leadership program designed to recognize industries in the state that are committed to sustainable practices. If you are interested in joining Volkswagen Group of America, Chattanooga Operations LLC and other sustainable industries in Tennessee by becoming a member, please contact us.