

## STAYING current

**EPA/Clean Power Plan** On January 21, 2016, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals declined to stay the centerpiece of the Obama administration's climate change agenda, the Clean Power Plan regulation. On January 26 and 27, several parties, including Georgia and 25 other states, took the rarely used step of directly petitioning the U.S. Supreme Court to stay EPA's regulation. On February 9, the Supreme Court granted the stay, which extends until the D.C. Circuit Court decides on the numerous lawsuits challenging the regulation, and will extend further if the Supreme Court then takes the case on appeal. More than two dozen states continue to press lawsuits opposing the regulation, arguing that it oversteps EPA's authority and is against the Constitution. The stay granted by the Supreme Court will delay the need for states to develop compliance plans that would have been due later this year.

**Vogtle Expansion** The project has received the final major permit needed for its new nuclear units under construction at Plant Vogtle with the issuance of a water discharge permit from Georgia environmental regulators. Also, the Unit 3 "turbine tabletop" has been completed. This milestone marks the first turbine tabletop placement for a U.S. AP1000 new nuclear project. The task involved a 15-hour continuous concrete pour. The tabletop serves as a pedestal for the Unit 3 generator and turbines and is designed to support the weight of the heavy components.

**Georgia** In 2015, for the third consecutive year, Site Selection magazine named Georgia the No. 1 state in the nation in which to do business.

**Ash Ponds** Georgia Power announced that it plans to permanently close all of its 29 ash ponds, including those located at Plant Wansley and Plant Scherer. The closing schedule will be developed to respond to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) final Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR) rule and the final Steam Electric Effluent Limitation Guidelines rule, discussed below.

**EPA/Wastewater** In November 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency finalized a rule that updates and strengthens the technology-based effluent limitations guidelines and standards for steam electric power generating plants. The prior regulations for these plants were last updated in 1982. The updated rule allows no discharge of pollutants in fly ash transport water, thereby requiring the use of only dry fly ash handling systems at coal-fired units. The updated rule also sets limits on mercury, arsenic and selenium for water discharges from flue gas desulfurization systems employed at coal-fired units. The process and schedule for compliance with the rule are under study.

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# PARTICIPANTS ON THE MOVE



MEAG Power is excited about the numerous activities that our Participants are engaged in concerning economic development in their area. Following are just some of the projects that are underway to attract and grow business in their communities.

**College Park** and **East Point** have partnered their separate destination marketing organizations, Meet College Park and Explore East Point, under a single new brand name: the ATL Airport District. Working as one, the partnership aims to generate economic development for the two communities by promoting them as a viable tourism, convention and meeting destination.

**LaFayette** has stepped up to help hometown businesses Syntec and Dixie Color expand their operations. The city is upgrading the electric power supply and adding three new transformers. One will be used by Syntec, another by Dixie Color and the third will serve as a backup.

In **Lawrenceville**, the city's first-ever Economic Development Strategic Plan has been created. The fundamental purpose of the plan is to set the standards and the pace necessary for Lawrenceville's continued growth, advancement and development.

Plus, **Albany** and its neighbors are making sure they have an ample skilled workforce in Southwest Georgia. To that end, they have received approval by the State Board of Education to create the Commodore Conyers College and Career Academy. The combination of the new Career Academy and Move On When Ready, a program that allows high school students to get a jump-start on their college career at Albany Technical College, Albany State University or Darton State College, is meant to ensure that the local workforce is prepared and well-educated.

Finally, the **Norcross** Department of Economic Development is making sure the city's local businesses are aware of opportunities that will add to their bottom line, and in this case, improve sustainability, too. To that end, the Department is providing them with information about qualifying for a Georgia Cities Foundation Green Communities rebate. A 25 percent rebate is available to those businesses that pursue eligible "green" improvements such as the installation of solar panels, high-efficiency lighting or HVAC systems.

## Changing of the Guard

Several MEAG Power communities have new mayors on board. We applaud their desire to lead at the local level and honor the efforts of those who are leaving and have contributed much to their individual municipalities.

### Arriving

Rufus Davis  
Tony Paulk  
Eric Wilson  
Preston Dees  
John David Stallings

Camilla  
Douglas  
Forsyth  
Sylvania  
Thomaston

### Leaving

Vernon Twitty, Jr.  
James Dennis  
John Howard  
Margaret Evans  
Hays Arnold

**Buford** Liberty Property Trust of Pennsylvania is planning to build its new Liberty Business Center on 38 acres in Buford. The project will include two warehouse buildings totaling about 355,000 square feet.

**College Park** The city is the home of the new 24,000-square-foot Google Training Academy, which welcomes thousands of contractors annually.

**Marietta** Marietta Mayor Steve “Thunder” Tumlin was named Cobb Citizen of the Year by the Marietta Daily Journal. He credited the Marietta City Council for much of what he has accomplished as mayor, including the redevelopment of the Franklin Road corridor.

**Mansfield** Citizens and city officials have met with a representative of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission to discuss the municipal comprehensive planning process and provide input into development of an update of the current plan that is due in February.

*staying current continued*

**EPA/Waters of the U.S.** In January 2016, the President vetoed the legislation sent to him from the Senate and House to overturn this Environmental Protection Agency rule that asserts federal authority over small waterways. The Senate could not muster enough votes to override the veto. In October 2015, a federal court granted a nationwide stay of the Waters of the United States rule pending determination of the court’s jurisdiction on the matter.

**EPA/Ozone** In October 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency finalized a regulation that strengthens the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone from 75 parts per billion (ppb) to 70 ppb. The first step in the compliance process is for states to recommend to EPA, by October 2016, which areas of its state are attaining or not attaining the updated standard.

## READY. GET SET. *Educate.*

A recent issue of IBM’s Idea Watch, a newsletter published by the corporation’s Institute for Business Values, stated that “as economic shifts and technological advances dramatically change workforce requirements worldwide, corporate recruiters struggle to find qualified graduates.” To help address this situation, Georgia is actively promoting College and Career Academies. Today there are more than 30 such institutions in the state, including a new one, thINC, in **LaGrange**. Ten other Participant communities – **Albany, Barnesville, Cairo, Calhoun, Cartersville, College Park, Covington, Douglas, Griffin** and **Newnan** – are also home to these “Ready-our-Children-for-21st-Century-Jobs” schools that partner with nearby colleges, businesses and community stakeholders.

In LaGrange, before creating their academy, a steering committee surveyed 250 employers and used that data to determine employers’ needs for the next five years. The responses showed the following areas of priorities: manufacturing, mechatronics, business, marketing, healthcare, energy, science, technology, engineering and math. Conversations with area business personnel also revealed the need for potential employees to have better “soft skills,” such as a strong work ethic, critical thinking aptitude and solid communication skills.

## YOUR *Best Foot Forward*

Recently MEAG Power posted a series of Participant Profiles on our website. We created these individual summaries to point out the positive, business-friendly features throughout our communities, including abundant labor forces, prime logistic locations, shovel-ready building sites, competitively priced utilities, job creation tax incentives and more. Businesses, both those in place and those contemplating a move to Georgia, seriously consider such items in their checklists, and we believe these new Profiles highlight some of the pluses you can be proud to point out. If you haven’t already viewed your community’s brief, please take a look at [www.meagpower.org](http://www.meagpower.org). To remain current, this document will be update periodically. Please contact Elaine Koster at 770-563-0326 or [ekoster@meagpower.org](mailto:ekoster@meagpower.org) with any suggested changes.

**2016 MAKE A NOTE**

**MEAG Power Board Meetings**

- March 17
- April 21 (Calhoun, GA)
- May 19

**ECG Economic Development Summit**

April 13-15



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