

CONFERENCE PROGRAM (Updated 03/17/2026)

SWANA-GEORGIA CHAPTER

2026 SPRING CONFERENCE

March 23-25, 2026; Unicoi State Park & Lodge

Conference Attendees may earn **11.5 professional development hours** (PDHs) towards their Georgia Landfill Operator Certification Renewal by attending the conference in its entirety.

MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM	Chapter Board Meeting (Board Room, 3 rd Floor) / Indoor Exhibitor Set-Up (Prefunction Area / Lobby 3rd Floor)
10:30 AM	Registration Open (Fireside Lobby 2 nd Floor)
12:00 PM – 1:30 PM	Opening Lunch & Keynote Address (Master Hall 1-4, 3rd Floor): <i>Welcome Note</i> – Matthew Dolan, President SWANA-GA Chapter <i>Keynote Address</i> – Jeff Cown, Director Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD)
1:30 PM – 2:00 PM	Exhibitor Break (Prefunction Area / Lobby, 3rd Floor)
2:00 PM – 3:30 PM (Master Hall 1-4, 3 rd Floor)	<i>Panel Discussion - Safety as a Core Value</i> – Suki Janssen and Freddie Hardy, Athens-Clarke County; Chris Jones and Brian Edgemon, Meriwether Site Solutions; Justin Rice, Midwest Recycling Sales & Service; Paul Mitchell, Republic Services <i>Where oh where does our glass go, and how and why?</i> – Abbey Patterson, NAIMA; Jamey Moran, Rippleglass
3:30 PM – 4:00 PM	Exhibitor Break (Prefunction Area / Lobby, 3rd Floor)
4:00 PM – 5:30 PM (Master Hall 1-4, 3 rd Floor)	<i>Landfill Microbiology and Why It Matters</i> – Stephen Descher and Deya Bowers, SCS Engineers <i>Geophysical Testing to Assess the Limits of Closed, Undocumented, or Unregulated Landfills</i> – Cole Angelo and Nick Ratcliff, Terracon Consultants <i>Smart Landfilling</i> – Charlie Nowak, TANA North America
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM	Opening Reception with Indoor and Outdoor Equipment Exhibitors and Cornhole Tournament* – Hors d'oeuvres, Cash Bar, and Door Prizes (Prefunction Area / Lobby, 3rd Floor / Upper-Level Parking Area)

TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026

6:30 AM – 7:30 AM	5K & 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk at Unicoi Lake*^y
7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Breakfast (Unicoi Restaurant, 3rd Floor)
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM (Master Hall 1-4, 3 rd Floor)	<i>Landfill Intermediate Covers: A Technical Overview and Real-World Performance Evaluation</i> – Dr. Ming Zhu, P.E., Christopher Timpson, Watershed Geo <i>Demystifying Soil Liners</i> – Raphael Debaty, P.E., Bunnell Lammons Engineering, Inc. <i>Landfill F**** [Fires]: Surface and Subsurface</i> – Daniel Kim, EIT; Vinuta Sheshappanavar, P.E., SCS Engineers
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Exhibitor Break (Prefunction Area / Lobby, 3rd Floor)
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM (Master Hall 1-4, 3 rd Floor)	<i>300 Million And Counting: What We Can Learn From Keeping Pace With Tire Waste</i> – Stratton Kirton, Liberty Tire Recycling <i>Tire Trouble- Cleanup and regulation</i> – Gordon Kenna, DeKalb Public Works; Ricky Crockett, DeKalb Beautification Unit; Kathy Reed, DeKalb Sustainability Coordinator <i>Status Update on the Georgia Statewide Waste Characterization Study & Post-Consumer Materials Management Plan</i> – Lena Sassone and Sarah Knapp, GA EPD; Anna Schnittker, P.G., Geosyntec Consultants
12:00 PM	Golf Tournament at Valhalla Resort Golf Club (Lunch at Golf Club)* Community Service Project with Keep Rabun Beautiful at Foxfire Museum (Box Lunch Provided)*
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Young Professional Axe Throwing Event at Unicoi State Park & Lodge Outdoor Range*^y
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Casino Night (Dinner Buffet / Cash Bar / Door Prizes / Raffle / Awards!) (Fireside Lobby, 2nd Floor)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2026

7:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Breakfast (Unicoi Restaurant, 3rd Floor)
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM (Master Hall 1-4, 3 rd Floor)	<i>Heavy Lifting: Managing Bulky Waste in Athens-Clarke County</i> – Nancy Flowers, Athens-Clarke County Solid Waste Department <i>Lessons Learned from Residential Compost Collection Pilot in Athens, GA</i> – Dr. Taylor Maddalene Myers and Dr. Evan White, University of Georgia <i>"Circular UGA" - Less is More on a College Campus</i> – Mason Towe, University of Georgia Waste Reduction Services
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Exhibitor Break (Prefunction Area / Lobby, 3rd Floor)
10:00 AM – 11:30 PM (Master Hall 1-4, 3 rd Floor)	<i>Owning the Map: How Local Facilities Can Beat National Brokers in the AI Era</i> – Samie Worthington, EMILY Revolutionary Marketing Group <i>What is RCRA?</i> – Ray Hoffman, P.E., Quad R Materials <i>Solid Waste Management Program Updates</i> – William Cook, GA EPD
11:30 PM	Final Door Prizes / Exhibitor Break-Down / Adjourn

* Pre-registration required

^y 1. The SWANA-Georgia 2026 Spring Conference 5K & 1-Mile Fun Run/Walk is a voluntary activity and will follow an out-and-back trail along Unicoi Lake. Participants assume all risks associated with uneven terrain, shared-use trails, and variable conditions. Please wear high-visibility or reflective clothing, bring a headlamp, and wear sturdy trail shoes. All participants should ensure they are physically fit to take part, and ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN A WAIVER PRIOR TO THE EVENT.

2. Participation in the Young Professionals Axe Throwing event at Unicoi Lodge is voluntary and involves inherent risks, including the handling of sharp objects and proximity to moving axes. All participants must follow facility rules and staff instructions at all times. Closed-toe shoes are required, and participants should ensure they are physically able to safely take part. By participating, you agree to assume all risks associated with the activity and ALL PARTICIPANTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN A WAIVER PRIOR TO THE EVENT.