

49TH ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

OCTOBER 20 - 21, 2025



Day 1: October 20

07:30 AM - 04:00 PM

07:30 AM Registration and Exhibits Open

Breakfast Sponsored by **EDP Renewables North America LLC**

08:30 AM Welcome

Jacqueline Coleman, Lieutenant Governor of Kentucky

08:45 AM EEC Update: Kentucky's Energy and Environment Programs In a Changing Landscape

Moderator: **Kari Johnson**, Environmental Scientist Consultant II, EEC, Dept for Environmental Protection

Tony Hatton, Commissioner, EEC Dept for Environmental Protection

Angie Hatton, Chair & Commissioner, EEC, KY Public Service Commission

Sarah Noble, Executive Director, EEC, Office of Legal Services

How have changes at the state and federal levels impacted programs across EEC?

This session will give an overview of policy and program shifts and the path EEC programs are taking in navigating new rules and regulations.

09:30 AM From Derailments to Drums: Inside Kentucky's Environmental Emergency Response

Mac Cann, Environmental Scientist Consultant, EEC, Emergency Response Branch

The Energy and Environment Cabinet's Emergency Response Team is a vital force in responding to environmental emergencies.

From train derailments to houses with unidentified chemicals, this session will highlight the work done by the agency's first responders and how they work with local officials and regulated entities to protect communities.

10:00 AM Break

Sponsored by **Touchstone Energy Cooperatives**

10:30 AM Concrete Solutions: 3D Printing Homes for Resilient Futures

Eric Wooldridge, Professor, Somerset Community College

If moving out of a storm's path is not an option, the next best option is to build better. This session will highlight the innovative floodbuster project led by Somerset Community College (SCC).

Floodbuster 1 is a first-of-its-kind housing innovation initiative that brings together applied research, advanced construction technology, and regional partnerships to address Appalachia's most urgent housing challenges.

Leveraging a decade of leadership in additive manufacturing, SCC has designed a 3D-printed concrete structure with enhanced resilience to natural disasters—marking a significant step toward rethinking how homes are built in the face of workforce shortages, material inflation, and extreme weather.

11:00 AM MI2 Metals Innovation and Recycling

Moderator: **Louanna Aldridge**, Assistant Director II, Department for Environmental Protection, EEC

Mike Buckentin, CEO, Mi2

Tyler Schroeder, Recycling Manager, Rumpke

Nick Kronsbein, Vice President of Beverage Recycling, Schupan

Brian Osterman, Director, Division of Waste Management, EEC

The Metals Innovation Initiative (MI2) is a Kentucky-based nonprofit that provides collaborative, industry-led executive leadership to attract and promote advanced research, sustainability, commercialization, and talent development in Kentucky's metals industry – and ultimately, to position Kentucky as the preeminent destination for metals innovation.

The Commonwealth's metals industry includes more than 250 facilities, employing over 36,000 people statewide. This session will examine how the organization is advancing the metals industry.

12:00 PM Networking Lunch

Sponsored by **Nucor Corporation**

01:00 PM The Envirome

Dr. Aruni Bhatnagar, Director, Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute

The work being done by the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute at the University of Louisville is garnering international attention. As we begin an afternoon dedicated to some of the groundbreaking research being done in our own backyard, we will hear from the leadership of the Envirome Institute about their future direction.



01:30 PM Next-Generation Hyperscale Data Centers

Moderator: **Dr. Ted Smith**, Director of the Center for Healthy Air, Water and Soil, UofL

Dr. Mahendra Sunkara, Professor- Speed School of Engineering, UofL

Dr. Natasha DeJarnett, Assistant Professor of Medicine, UofL

Byron Gary, Program Attorney, KY Resources Council

The U.S. Department of Energy recently named the former Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant one of four federal sites advancing plans for AI-focused data centers paired with new clean-energy infrastructure—placing Kentucky in the spotlight of a national conversation on computing infrastructure. This panel explores the many factors that converge with next-gen computing to build these facilities here in Kentucky. Many of the speakers have been involved in community conversations about data centers proposed and under development.

Others are part of a new statewide research consortium proposing to address data center siting through a simulation-driven “digital twin” that integrates energy systems, environmental fit, water and cooling, land use, workforce pipelines, and community acceptance. Attendees will hear pragmatic strategies for scaling power and cooling, aligning with utility planning, deploying AI for infrastructure management, and earning durable local support.

02:30 PM Break**03:00 PM Ohio River Basin Restoration Report – “Healthy Waters, Healthy Communities, Healthy Economies” a collaborative plan to restore and protect the waters of the Ohio River Basin.**

Moderator: **Dr. Chris Lorentz**, Professor of Biological Sciences & Director of Biology Field Station, Thomas More University

Jordan Lubetkin, Senior Director, National Wildlife Federation

Forest Clevenger, Executive Director, Ohio River Way

Nick Hart, Water Policy Director, KY Waterways Alliance

This panel focuses on the Ohio River Basin Restoration Plan, a regional initiative aimed at revitalizing the Ohio River Basin through environmental restoration, equitable economic development, and community health improvements.

The discussion will explore how multi-jurisdictional partnerships and federal investments are shaping a future in which the waterways are not only a natural asset but a driver of sustainable economic opportunity, recreation, and resilience. Experts from planning, public health, environmental justice, and civic engagement will highlight case studies, lessons learned, and emerging strategies to strengthen the social, ecological, and economic fabric of communities throughout the Ohio River Basin.

04:00 PM Close of Day 1

Everyone is invited to join faculty and staff from the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute for drinks, light snacks, and networking in the Lower Atrium. In addition to chatting with the event host about the Envirome Institute and its groundbreaking work, conference attendees can check out posters created by students from Kentucky's universities highlighting research and collaborations with the cabinet.



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Day 2: October 21

07:30 AM - 04:00 PM

07:30 AM Registration and Exhibits Open

09:00 AM Welcome

EEC Secretary, Rebecca Goodman

09:10 AM Reviving Mine Lands with Renewable Energy

Sandy Slayton, Vice President, Environmental, Rye Development

Brianne Wilson, Vice President Development, Rye Development

Rye Development is one of five organizations awarded a share of \$81 million through the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Lands.

The Lewis Ridge project, located in Bell County, Kentucky, will be the first pumped storage hydropower facility built in the U.S. in over 30 years. Sited on former coal mining land, the facility will provide up to 287 MW of power with eight hours of energy storage capacity. This session will give an overview of the project and the plan to be operational by 2031.

09:40 AM From Waste to Wealth: Unlocking Energy & Opportunity from KY's Organic Byproducts

Moderator: **Hailey Mattingly**, EEC, Federal Program Specialist

Eduardo Santillan-Jimenez, Associate Director, University of Kentucky, Center for Applied Energy Research

Derek Smith, Environmental Superintendent for the Hawesville Operations, Domtar

Matt Yarger, US General Manager, Grissan Renewable Energy

Auden Kaehler, Senior Vice President, WSP

This panel will explore how Kentucky is finding new value in organic byproducts by turning materials once considered waste into useful energy. From distilling to agriculture, biofuel technologies like renewable natural gas, sustainable aviation fuel, and combined heat and power are opening the door to new business models, infrastructure investment, and job creation.

10:40 AM Break

Sponsored by **Deloitte Consulting LLP**

11:00 AM Partnerships to Build Stronger Communities

Moderator: **Dr. Brian Storz**, Environmental Scientist Advisor, EEC, Division of Water

Debra Cotterill, Mayor of Maysville, KY

Kristie Dodge, Buffalo Trace Area Development District

Curtis Rosser, Local Champion

Ken Woodard, USACE

Kiersten O’Leary, Federal Program Coordinator, EEC, Brownfield Program

Local leaders frequently face complex environmental challenges. This session will highlight the challenging circumstances and innovative solutions that Maysville, Kentucky, has implemented to address flooding, brownfields, and community revitalization.

12:00 PM Finding Our Lenses: Catalyzing Human Experience Innovation

Dr. Serenity Wright, Senior Executive Director for Innovation, Community Health, and Social Impact, UK Innovate

Perspective informs practice. Learning to leverage individual perspectives to advance personal and professional development takes time and commitment. It requires you to focus on the needs of the person over your own.

If we flip the mental model to focus on Return on Impact, it will lead to enhanced Return on Investment. This allows not just for growth of the bottom line, but also for growth of individuals, organizations, and communities. This session will provide practice guidance for how to see differently to spark creativity, trust, and innovation.

12:30 PM Networking Lunch

01:30 PM Permits, Plans, and Protection: GIS for Mapping a Sustainable Future

Sunny Fleming, Director of Environment, Conservation, and Natural Resources Solutions, ESRI

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools are increasingly empowering communities and stakeholders to make smarter decisions across planning, permitting, and disaster response.

This session explores how mapping, visualization, and GIS are being used to forecast flood risks, streamline permitting, respond to disasters, and strengthen resilience strategies.

02:00 PM Break



02:30 PM Nuclear Panel Update

Moderator: **Kenya Stump**, Executive Director, EEC, Office of Energy Policy

Chad Eaton, Director of Government Affairs, Nucor Corporation

Joshua Ball, Chief Operations Officer, SOAR

Nima Ashkeboussi, Vice President, Government Relations and Communications, Global Laser Enrichment

Benjamin Reinke, Senior Vice President, Global Business Development, X-Energy

Mercedes Trent, Manager, Government and International Affairs, Westinghouse

Nuclear energy is a growing part of the energy conversation with technological advancements. This session will cover perspectives from fuel to reactor siting, and discuss the opportunities around supply chain and workforce development.

04:00 PM Conference Concluded

