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Monday, April 27, 2026

Page 1

Athens, Tennessee

Farmer Files Complaint Over Leachate Spill Near Athens



An Athens-area farmer has filed a formal complaint with state officials following a reported leachate spill at a local waste facility in late March.

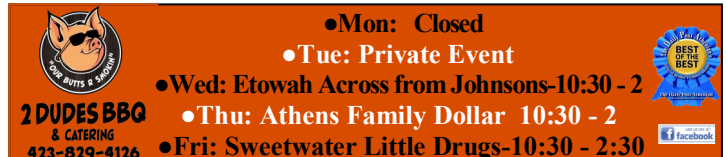
Brian McKinney, lease holder of Dake Farm and owner of McKinney Farms, submitted the complaint to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, requesting an investigation into a March 27 incident at the Waste Connections Reachable Collections facility. According to the complaint, the spill occurred around midnight after a driver reportedly fell asleep, but was not discovered by affected property owners until nearly 12 hours later.

McKinney alleges delays in notification and containment, stating that neither landowners nor downstream residents were alerted prior to his own discovery of the contamination. The complaint also raises concerns about potential impacts to livestock, wildlife, and nearby waterways, including Rogers Creek.

In the filing, McKinney requests a full investigation into the cause and extent of the spill, independent water-quality testing, improved notification procedures, and a public report outlining any enforcement actions and long-term monitoring plans.

State officials have not yet publicly responded to the complaint.

Photo provided by Brian McKinney



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- Mon: Closed
- Tue: Private Event
- Wed: Etowah Across from Johnsons-10:30 - 2
- Thu: Athens Family Dollar 10:30 - 2
- Fri: Sweetwater Little Drugs-10:30 - 2:30

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Monday, April 27, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 2

Athens, Tennessee

Street Closures Scheduled for Election Activities in Athens



The City of Athens Public Works Department has announced several temporary street and parking closures on Madison Avenue in early May to accommodate election-related activities.

Four parking spaces at the courthouse ramp on Madison Avenue between White Street and Jackson Street will be closed Monday, May 4, and Wednesday, May 6, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. In addition, Madison Avenue between White Street and Jackson Street will be closed Tuesday, May 5, from 5:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Officials say the closures are necessary for the McMinn County Election Commission's supply pickup, drop-off, and election returns. Motorists are advised to use caution in the area, watch for signage and pedestrians, and allow extra travel time. For more information, contact Public Works at 423-744-2745.

Source: *Debbie Goins, City of Athens*

Community News You Can Use

- *A Patriotic Fanfare* celebrating **America 250** will be held Tuesday, April 28, at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Etowah. Admission is free, with donations accepted to support local veterans' organizations. See Ad on Page 6
- The "Hand Up" community outreach event will be held May 14 from 9 a.m. to noon at Market Park Pavilion in downtown Athens. The event will offer free haircuts along with free pet vaccinations and services from the Humane Society. Additional resources will include free dental cleaning vouchers from Tennessee Wesleyan University, along with participation from the health department, Coordinated Charities, and 30-40 local service providers.
- The TN Highway Patrol will be conducting a Sobriety Checkpoint on Friday, June 5 on State Route 163 at County Road 850 in McMinn County.
- The Athens Utilities Board Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 28 at 5:00pm.
- Lyla Dunlop was awarded the Athens Optimist Club's 2026 Distinguished Young Woman award along with a \$1,000 scholarship from Tennessee Wesleyan University in recognition of her "high achievements and leadership" in the community.
- **Clarification:** In our reporting in [Friday's Morning Fax](#) of the Athens City Council's regular session last week concerning "Ordinance 1153, establishing the H-2 Historic Overlay District, we stated that it "ultimately failed on a 3-2 vote and was postponed indefinitely." Actually, Ordinance 1153 did not fail, it was merely postponed indefinitely.

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Dana Jaquish, Treasurer

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Paid for by Committee to Elect Michael Hayes Sheriff



Monday, April 27, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 3

Athens, Tennessee

Joint Drug Operation Leads to Arrest, \$60,000 Meth Seizure in Athens



A joint law enforcement operation in McMinn County on Monday resulted in at least one arrest and the seizure of a large quantity of suspected methamphetamine valued at approximately \$60,000.

According to Sheriff Joe Guy and Athens Police Chief Freddie Schultz, the arrest followed a weeks-long narcotics investigation involving the 10th Judicial Drug Task Force, Athens Police Department, McMinn County Sheriff's Office, Tennessee Department of Homeland Security, Tennessee Highway Patrol and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

Authorities said investigators identified a pending delivery of methamphetamine to two locations in Athens and conducted surveillance throughout the day. Once the deliveries were made, officers moved in, arresting at least one suspect and seizing the packages.

Officials said the drugs, believed to have originated in California, were part of a larger criminal operation. After processing, the suspected methamphetamine weighed more than 13 pounds.

Sheriff Guy described the seizure as significant and praised the coordinated effort among agencies. Chief Schultz said the operation highlights the impact of collaboration in removing dangerous drugs from the community.

The investigation remains ongoing, and additional arrests are expected.

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MCMINN COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT CLERK

Monday, April 27, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 4

Athens, Tennessee

**Mutual Aid Response to Vehicle Fires at
Madisonville Copart Lot**



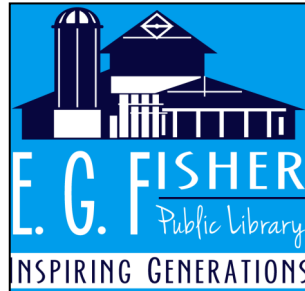
Multiple fire departments responded Thursday evening to a vehicle fire at the Copart facility on Highway 411 in Madisonville.

Authorities say mutual aid was requested shortly before 7:30 p.m. after two parked wrecked vehicles became engulfed in flames. Responding agencies included Gudger Fire, Madisonville City Fire, Englewood Rural Fire, Christianburg Fire, and the Monroe County Sheriff's Department.

Gudger Fire Chief Chris Hicks was in command of the scene. No injuries were reported.

Source: Lynn Ingram, Englewood Rural FD

**Job and Resource Fair Set for
April 29 in Athens**



Job seekers in McMinn County are invited to a free Job and Resource Fair on Wednesday, April 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at E.G. Fisher Public Library.

The event is being hosted by the Division of Rehabilitation Services in partnership with the Athens American Job Center and local community organizations. It is designed to connect residents with employers who are hiring, as well as job training programs, career pathways, and support services.

Attendees will also receive information on vocational rehabilitation services and workplace accommodations.

See Ad on Page 5

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- Completed 4 bridge construction projects
- Paved 312 miles of County Roads over 10 years
- Upgraded equipment and facilities

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It has been an honor to serve the citizens of McMinn County the past 12 years and I am excited about continuing that service to the best of my ability. Your vote and support will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you

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Monday, April 27, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 5

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

April 23, 2026

Keith Grubb, 59 of Athens, charged with DUI, violation of interlock device, and driving on a revoked license, Bond \$5,000.

Nicole Walker, 34 of Athens, charged with failure to appear for driving on a suspended license, simple possession casual exchange of schedule II fentanyl, drug paraphernalia, and vandalism, Bond \$23,000.

Lisa Long, 58 of Englewood, charged with DUI, violation of implied consent, driving without a license, and failure to have a tail light on equipment.

Bailey Locke, 22 of Athens, charged with state violation of probation for two counts of forgery.

Christina McAllister, 42 of Etowah, charged with DUI, and violation of implied consent, Bond \$1,000.

Edwin Foster, 47 of Riceville, charged with burglary, theft of property, and violation of probation, Bond \$12,919.

Brock Anderson, 36 of Niota, charged with domestic assault.

Lily Irokel, 26 of Athens, charged with assault, Bond \$8,000.

Michael Massengill, 34 of Englewood, charged with domestic assault, attempted aggravated burglary, and vandalism, Bond \$17,000.

Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.
Information gathered using public sources.



Job & Resource Fair

Connect with local employers from a variety of fields and industries.

About the Event
Job seekers in McMinn County are invited to attend a free Job and Resource Fair hosted by the Division of Rehabilitation Services in partnership with the E.G. Fisher Library, Athens American Job Center and community partners throughout the Athens area.

This event is designed to connect individuals to meaningful employment opportunities, training programs, and valuable community resources.

What to Expect:

- Meet local employers who are actively hiring
- Learn about job training and career pathways
- Connect with community agencies and support services
- Get information about workplace accommodations and vocational rehabilitation services

When:
April 29, 2026
10 a.m. - 2 p.m. EST

Where:
E.G. Fisher Public Library
1289 Ingleside Ave
Athens, TN 37303

For More Information:
Contact Ronald Hanners by email at Ronald.Hanners@tn.gov

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Public Library

AmericanJobCenter
TENNESSEE

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[TN.Gov/HumanServices/Disability-Services.Html](https://www.tn.gov/HumanServices/Disability-Services.Html)

Tennessee is not responsible for the participation of any advertised employers at our hiring and resource events. We solicit their participation in good faith, but acknowledge that unexpected events may occur that could prevent their attendance.



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Monday, April 27, 2026

Morning Fax®...Today's News This Morning Page 6

Athens, Tennessee

McMinn County Arrest Reports

April 24, 2026

Kyler Stevens, 27 of Athens, charged with DUI.

Trevor Coleman, 35 of Decatur, charged with violation of probation for driving on a revoked license, Bond \$868.

Russell Rouse, 43 of Athens, charged with evading arrest, reckless endangerment with deadly weapons, vandalism over \$2,500, and state violation of probation for possession of meth for resale. Bond \$9,000.

Audreona Downing, 34 of Etowah, charged with multiple counts of child support, Bond \$15,500.

James Katko, 22 of Sweetwater, charged with failure to appear.

Those accused are considered innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Information gathered using public sources.

Obituaries

Elizabeth Ann "Betty" Keirn, 97 of Athens, passed away on Wednesday, April 16. She was a life-long member of Sweetwater Presbyterian Church. She received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee and her Master's degree in Physical Education from Florida State. For years, she worked at multiple higher education institutions. Then, Betty found Tennessee Wesleyan College (now University), where she taught for 28 years and from where she eventually received an Honorary Doctor of Public Service Degree. A Celebration of Betty's life will be held at Spring Arbor (formerly Dominion Senior Living) on Tuesday, April 28 at 10:00 o'clock. Smith Funeral & Cremation Services of Athens is honored to serve the family of Elizabeth Ann "Betty" Keirn.

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METCC Kids

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