

Georgia's 2018

CLEAN WATER HEROES

Southwire

LITTLE TALLAPOOSA RIVER

Carrollton Manufacturer Going "Beyond the Fences" to Improve Community

INTRODUCTION:

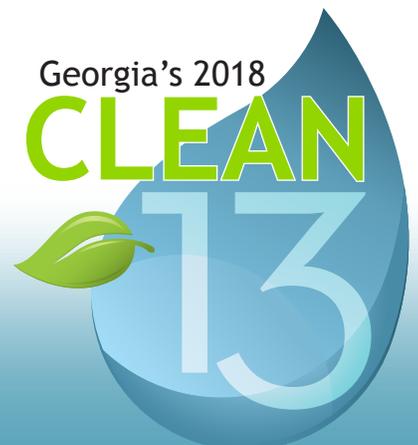
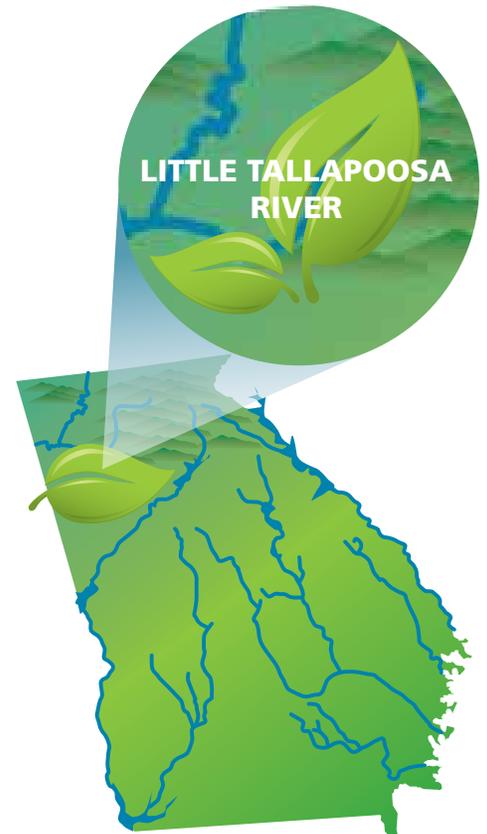
When it comes to wire and cable, it doesn't get much bigger than Southwire. Half of the wire and cable used to distribute electricity in the U.S. is produced by the Carrollton-based company, and half of the world's copper rod is processed using equipment created by the company. With such a large footprint, the company's potential to impact the environment is vast. In recent years, the company, with some 7,500 employees worldwide, has actively pursued sustainability goals and in 2017 signed on to the United Nations Global Compact, an initiative for companies to align their strategies with, among other things, environmental stewardship. In its hometown, the company is going "outside the fences" to improve the community through solar power initiatives and to protect local natural resources through stream restorations and efforts to reduce waste and energy consumption.

THE WATER BODY:

For Southwire's Carrollton operations, water is essential. Locally, the company uses some 100 million gallons a year, much of it supplied by the City of Carrollton and the Little Tallapoosa River. Additionally, Buffalo Creek, a tributary of the Little Tallapoosa River, flows through the heart of the company's manufacturing facilities, a close relationship that has made managing the company's stormwater runoff critical to keeping pollutants from the industrial activities out of the creek and the river downstream. In Georgia, the Little Tallapoosa provides drinking water for Carrollton, Temple and Villa Rica before flowing into Alabama where it feeds Lake Wedowee.

THE CLEAN:

Like many global companies, Southwire has, over the past two decades, changed its philosophy when it comes to environmental stewardship. Where once, environmental regulations fell under the category of "compliance" and regulatory agencies were kept at arm's length, today Southwire and others have environmental and sustainability teams that seek to work collaboratively with regulators and their local community. Meanwhile, waste reduction initiatives along with energy and water efficiency efforts are not only protecting natural resources, they are improving the company's bottom line.





“At one time, there was a mentality that our relationship with the community ended at the fence line,” said Paul Sims, senior director of remediation and public affairs, who has worked with Southwire for 26 years. “We realized that was not a good long-term philosophy. Now, we’re looking to engage beyond the fence line.”

Along with other local business leaders, the company has recently become engaged with the Solarize Carrollton-Carroll County project, a program that allows multiple commercial and residential property owners to invest in solar power and benefit from volume purchases and installations.

Southwire already has solar-powered electric vehicle recharging systems on its campus and is evaluating plans to build an additional solar complex that is expected to offset 25 percent of energy used by the company’s Thorn Customer Solutions Center. “It helps us and it helps the community,” Sims explained of the Carrollton-wide solar collaborative.

Southwire is also reducing its load on local landfills. Since the end of 2017, none of the company’s Georgia manufacturing plants have sent any manufacturing waste to landfills, and through a partnership with Keep Carroll Beautiful, Southwire has sponsored multiple events allowing local residents to drop off used electronic equipment for recycling.

When it comes to water, the company’s innovative projects have helped protect Buffalo Creek, which courses through the Carrollton manufacturing facility while also reducing the amount of water the company needs from the Little Tallapoosa.

A recently completed five million gallon stormwater collection pond in combination with other existing stormwater collection infrastructure collects all run off from their copper rod manufacturing site during rain events and keeps pollutants out of the creek. The collected water is then reused in the manufacturing process or treated before being released downstream. Now, nearly 50 percent of the water used at the company’s Carrollton facilities is “recycled” stormwater. Through these measures, coupled with a \$10 million remediation project, the company has been able to right a legacy pollution problem on Buffalo Creek created by a now-closed secondary copper refinery.



Top: Southwire produces half the wire and cable used to distribute electricity in the U.S. and half of the world’s copper rod is processed using equipment created by the company. Left: A community electronics recycling day is one way Southwire has invested in eliminating waste going to local landfills. Since the end of 2017, the company has sent no manufacturing waste to local landfills. Above: Southwire has taken a lead role in the Solarize Carrollton-Carroll County project, an effort to encourage local businesses and residents to install solar power. The company already includes solar-powered electric vehicle charging stations at its Villa Rica Plant.



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