



Gwinnett County Government  
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## NEWS RELEASE

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### OFFICIALS CUT RIBBON ON NEW ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE CENTER

(Lawrenceville, Ga., Oct. 4, 2006) – Local and state officials will open the new Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center in a ribbon cutting ceremony this Thursday, Oct. 5 at 11:30 a.m. The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners will be joined by representatives of the Gwinnett Board of Education, The University of Georgia, the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center Foundation, the Gwinnett County Recreation Authority, Gwinnett County Water and Sewerage Authority, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The public got a sneak peek at the new center during an open house held this past Saturday.

The 59,000 square-foot facility, nestled on 233 acres near the Mall of Georgia, houses an array of interactive and science exhibits, state-of-the-art classrooms and theatrical presentations. Outdoor amenities include eight miles of trails, outdoor classrooms, historic mill remnants, greenway corridors, a wetlands area and a rental pavilion.

Permanent exhibits include the “Blue Planet” theatre, a multi-media presentation consisting of high-tech video, motion and lighting effects and a topographical map of North Georgia complete with real rain. *Waterways* allows you to step back in time to recount how humans interacted with the environment. *Water Wise* features interactive stations that inform you if you are using water wisely or wastefully. The center's most interactive exhibit, *Discover H2O*, lets you follow water from your house to the wastewater treatment plant and beyond.

“The center gives both kids and adults a great hands-on learning experience,” said Commission Chairman Charles Bannister. “The exhibits alone are eye opening and give you an idea of just how much our daily actions can impact the environment.

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The center is Gwinnett County's first "green" building, which embraces the practice of creating healthier and more resource-efficient models of construction, operation and maintenance. The building was also given LEED Silver-Level certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. The center was funded by the 2001 and 2005 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) programs.

Key partners in the planned programming of the facility include the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, Gwinnett County Public Schools, the University of Georgia and the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center Foundation.

The center is available for corporate rental with amenities that include a catering kitchen, multi-media conference room and lecture hall, and an outdoor rental pavilion.

The Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center, located at 2020 Clean Water Drive in Buford, near the County's F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center, is open to the public Tuesday through Friday 1 p.m. – 5 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., and Sunday 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. Outdoor trails and greenway are open daily from dawn to dusk. The center is closed Mondays and some holidays.

For admission fees, membership information, birthday and rental packages, and to verify hours of operation during holidays, call 770.904.3500 or visit [www.gwinnettEHC.com](http://www.gwinnettEHC.com).

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