



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ijams River Rescue Removes Tons of Trash from Area Waterways **April 15**

During the 34th annual Ijams River Rescue on April 15, 700 volunteers removed 1,172 bags weighing an estimated 19,364 pounds (9.7 tons) of trash from 39 sites in Knox, Anderson and Blount counties. That doesn't include the weight of 73 tires and large items such as household appliances and car parts.

In addition to typical finds, such as plastic and Styrofoam, volunteers found items such as a deflated bouncy house, two full cans of paint, the back seat of a car, a beer keg, office chairs, a mailbox, two kiddie pools, a Maytag Volt-Wattmeter, an ultrasound picture, a Dwight Yoakam cassette tape, a PlayStation 3 console, a truck bed liner, a sink, a toilet, multiple couches, a dishwasher, and a \$20 and \$5 bill. Perhaps the most unusual find of the day was a sealed box of cremated human remains with paperwork (it was returned to the funeral home).

"This community-wide annual cleanup is one of many hosted by area nonprofit organizations and neighborhoods to keep our community clean," Ijams Development Director Cindy Hassil said. "When you have 30 volunteers cleaning up an area that was addressed by another group just weeks before and they remove an additional 1,700 pounds of trash and six tires, you know there's a problem with illegal dumping.

"It's really frustrating to see trash reappear so quickly," Hassil said. "Our community is very fortunate to have residents who care and are willing to clean up after others. I wish everyone would do their part to protect the beautiful place we all call home, and I truly appreciate everyone, including local partners, for their help with this event."

The 34th annual Ijams River Rescue is made possible by Tennessee Valley Authority, Allmade, City of Knoxville Stormwater Engineering, Dow, Nothing Too Fancy, Dominion Group, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Vulcan Materials Company, Commercial Metals Company, Knoxville TVA Employees Credit Union, Old Sevier District, Tailwater Properties, and Waste Connections of Tennessee. Other supporters include CAC AmeriCorps, Responsible Stewardship, Thompson Engineering's Thompson Foundation, and Water Quality Forum.

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NOTE: Event photos are posted in a Facebook album at <https://www.facebook.com/ijamsnaturecenter>.