



**For Immediate Release:**  
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### **Exide Baton Rouge site added to EPA National Priorities List**

**BATON ROUGE** – Exide Baton Rouge was a once thriving lead smelter and refinery site located in north Baton Rouge. Operations at the Exide site ceased in 2009, and demolition of all process buildings was completed in 2014. High concentrations of antimony, arsenic, lead, manganese and zinc have been found in groundwater and soils on the site, with unlined waste piles and open surface impoundments contributing to discharges of contaminated ground and surface water. An onsite wastewater system is in place to collect and treat contaminated leachate. Recently, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the Exide Baton Rouge site will be added to the National Priorities List (NPL). Each year the EPA only selects a few sites for its priority list of hazardous waste sites in the United States. Once selected, these sites become eligible for long-term remedial investigation and remedial action financed under the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, also referred to as the Superfund program, which provides relief and reduces financial burden on communities for cleanup. Acceptance onto this list is the first formal step towards addressing the environmental contamination at the Exide Baton Rouge site and returning it to beneficial use.

The National Priorities List includes over 1300 sites with 17 active sites in Louisiana. In late 2023, the EPA added Capitol Lakes to the NPL, which was referred in 2021 for its decades of contamination resulting in fishing advisories since 1983.

Due to the challenges of the Exide Baton Rouge site, the state of Louisiana referred it to the EPA to avoid any interruption in the continued operation of the wastewater treatment system. The EPA temporarily took over the operation of the wastewater treatment plant on April 11, 2023.

“The resources necessary to continue treating the water coming from this site were more than the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) could provide,” LDEQ Secretary Aurelia S. Giacometto said. “In order to prevent any further contamination to the environment, we sought an NPL listing.”

Under the Superfund, the EPA is responsible for locating, assessing and cleaning up uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites. Within one year after a site is added to the NPL, the EPA determines whether potentially responsible parties will assess the site contamination or whether the assessment is to be conducted with federal funds. The EPA will also assess whether a quick response to prevent releases from the site is needed within three months after listing and open communications with the community to explain the Superfund and restoration process for the site.

EPA Regional Administrator Dr. Earthea Nance stated, “Sites like Capitol Lakes and Exide Baton Rouge are getting the focus they deserve to prevent harm to people’s health and the environment.”

LDEQ is committed to working closely with the EPA throughout the process and providing updates on future activities at the site.

Updates to the NPL are available on the EPA website: [www.epa.gov/superfund-national-priorities-list-npl](http://www.epa.gov/superfund-national-priorities-list-npl).