



State of Louisiana

Department of Environmental Quality



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For Immediate Release
May 26, 2004

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Environmental News

DEQ Announces First Refinery Ready for Reuse in the Nation

BATON ROUGE -- The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are pleased to announce the first Ready for Reuse determination issued to a refinery in the United States. Shell/Motiva will be honored in a ceremony on Wednesday, May 26, at 9 a.m. at its facility in Norco.

A Ready for Reuse determination recognizes when contamination on a property has been cleaned to the extent that the property is safe based on its current or planned future use. It also provides specific information about each site, including the nature and extent of contamination, the cleanup work performed (if needed) and the status of the property with respect to state and federal requirements.

The EPA and DEQ agree that the facility has successfully completed its investigation of the Norco East site. Both agencies have also determined that the environmental conditions at this site are protective of human health and the environment based on its current use and anticipated future use as a commercial/industrial property.

DEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel stated, "This is a significant accomplishment and we are extremely pleased with the hard work by all parties involved to reach this precedent. We have made the Ready for Reuse program an integral part of our remediation process to achieve productive economic and environmental benefits."

EPA Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division Associate Director Stephen Gilrein said, "Today's announcement highlights our newest program to promote the reuse of formerly used industrial properties. We are building on our experience using the enormously successful brownfields program. Our Ready for Reuse determinations clear the way for reuse of valuable natural resources by providing necessary encouragement and assurances to developers."

The facility where Shell and Motiva now reside in Norco has been in continuous operation since 1918 when it was an oil terminal. Shell purchased the property in 1929 and Motiva, a joint venture between Shell and Saudi Aramco, began operating the refinery in 1998. Some of the products produced at the nearly 1,000-acre site include automotive gasoline, diesel, jet fuel, heating oil and building block chemicals such as ethylene, propylene, butadiene and chemical solvents. End products from the process range from items like packaging, bottles, food and drink containers, polyester fibers in clothes, upholstery, carpet, pillows and surgical supplies to antifreeze, paints and household detergents.

For more information about Ready for Reuse determinations, contact Doug Bradford with DEQ at 225.219.3420.