



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



Kathleen Babineaux Blanco  
Governor

Mike McDaniel, Ph.D.  
Secretary

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**Contact:** Jean Kelly  
225.219.3966

### **DEQ Improves Monitoring and Notification Systems for Ozone**

BATON ROUGE -- As the days get hotter and summer becomes the norm in the Baton Rouge area, ground level ozone becomes more of a concern. In preparation, this summer the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is introducing an improved air-monitoring and notification system.

DEQ has invested more than \$500,000 in new equipment, including 300 new canisters for air sampling and other air monitoring instruments. The improved air-monitoring network incorporates 10 monitoring sites that measure data in 10-minute increments. DEQ will collect almost 11,000 samples of highly reactive hydrocarbons (VOCs) per week and take more than 534,000 samples per month. These improvements will help DEQ notify the public, industry and the media when conditions are ripe for ozone formation. With the early notification, plant personnel can take the appropriate steps to reduce ozone formation. Also, people sensitive to ozone can take measures to protect their health.

“DEQ is taking the additional steps to protect and alert the public,” said DEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel. “The department is working with industry, the community, the media and the public in an effort to reduce the chances for ozone formation. The proactive notification approach will be a positive influence throughout the area.”

The notification system goes into effect when an air monitor registers a significant rise in ozone. When DEQ air quality experts note the increase, industry operations managers will be notified about the conditions. The information could include rate of increase, location, wind speed and direction. The same information will then be sent to the media and to ozone action coordinators who will help spread the word to state agencies, industry and the public.

With the additional monitoring, DEQ will have more comprehensive meteorological and air chemistry data that will help solve ozone problems in the future. The notification system will run June through October, which is the peak ozone season for the Baton Rouge area.