



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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DEQ Responds to Emergency Situations

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality issued an emergency declaration to provide emergency relief from many of DEQ’s regulatory requirements. This declaration will expedite emergency response and disaster recovery efforts related to Hurricane Katrina.

The declaration and variances will allow repairs to facilities like sewage treatment plants and drinking water facilities and clean-up efforts such as solid waste, burning debris and animal carcasses without DEQ oversight.

If you would like to report any environmental hazards, you can reach the DEQ hotline at 1-888-763-5424 or locally in Baton Rouge at 225-219-3620. DEQ employees will staff these phones 24-hours a day.

EPA issued an emergency fuel waiver that will be in effect until Sept. 15 and is applicable throughout all 50 states, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia. This waiver was issued under the authority of the Clean Air Act and temporarily suspends specific standards for gasoline and diesel fuels to ensure that the Hurricane Katrina natural disaster does not result in serious fuel supply interruptions around the country. For more information go to www.epa.gov.

“Our primary mission is responding as quickly as possible to this terrible disaster,” said DEQ Sec. Mike McDaniel. “Human health and safety for our citizens is a priority.”

DEQ is currently using an airplane to survey the impacted area. The Environmental Protection Agency is adding support with extra emergency response personnel, a special aircraft that has aerial photo and remote sensing capabilities and lab support. The Texas Commission of Environmental Quality has offered a team of specialists to assist with emergency response. DEQ’s Global Imaging System is assisting with maps and geo-referencing for the areas of concern. Infrared technology, known as Hawk, will be used to detect some air releases that cannot be seen with the naked eye.

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