



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

Tuesday, December 11, 2012 Issue Number: 15

DEQ participates in radiation drills in Louisiana and Mississippi

With smoke and dust as the more common forms of visible emissions from plants and facilities in the state, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality continues to conduct a bi-annual program with the goal of training air quality technicians on emissions testing, along with the federal and state air quality regulations.

As part of its mission, the DEQ has staffed air sampling technicians, public information officers and environmental scientists in support of drills at nuclear facilities, evaluated exercises and graded exercises that take place on a quarterly basis.

Three nuclear generating stations fall under DEQ's scope of interest: Waterford Steam Electric Station, Unit 3, in St. Charles Parish about 33 miles west of New Orleans; the River Bend Nuclear Generating Station near St. Francisville; and the Grand Gulf Nuclear Generating Station near Port Gibson, Mississippi. Grand Gulf is positioned near Tensas Parish along the Louisiana-Mississippi state line.

Entergy Nuclear operates the three facilities, with DEQ, local-parish authorities and other state agencies participating in frequent drills and graded exercises. The drills are in preparation for evaluated exercises where representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Administration evaluate all participating parties during the course of a scenario. DEQ provides a full complement of environmental staff that retrieve air and soil samples as well as a team of communicators for service at the Joint Information Center. The goal of the communicators is to confer with the environmental staff on the scenario status as well as conveying accurate reports to the media during mock media press conferences held periodically throughout the drill.

Drills include a scenario that will typically involve an upset or unit trip inside the facility. This usually prompts a general emergency at some point during the course of the event. The situation may involve an off-site release that state and local agencies must react to, or it could be an internal event that will focus more on a controlled, technically-based response from the facility itself. DEQ environmental scientists are staged at various locations near the event and in proximity to the air plume, in order to take samples in a highly monitored and detailed, by-the-book manner. Evaluators monitor the sampling methods and the logistical aspects of how those samples are handled and noted.

At the Joint Information Center, public relations contractors or journalism students serve as a media gallery, acting as reporters posing hard-hitting questions to the public information panel. Entergy communications representatives moderate the proceedings, fielding questions with the panel, with DEQ representatives addressing any environmental impact or questions relating to the event.

"These exercises are essential to ensuring DEQ and its local and state partners can rapidly marshal resources on the ground, collect samples, assess those samples and initiate a strong line of communication in the event

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- **DEQ participates in radiation drills in Louisiana and Mississippi**
- **Hurricane Isaac**
- **Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition promotes better air for Louisiana**
- **DEQ Participates in Chem Friends event in Gonzales**
- **DEQ On The Move**
- **DEQ raises more than \$1,800 for the 2012 United Way Campaign**



DISCOVER

DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

Tuesday, December 11, 2012 Issue Number: 15

an actual release or accident should occur at one of these facilities,” said Peter Ricca, DEQ Emergency Response Manager. “Each exercise allows us the opportunity to improve our communications response mechanism while streamlining our environmental testing procedures and fine tuning any logistical issues that may need to be addressed.”

In addition to the periodic exercises at the three nuclear stations, DEQ scientists routinely test the air for radiation at the U.S. EPA’s radiation monitoring stations in Shreveport and Baton Rouge. These periodic tests and participation in the nuclear drills are all part of DEQ’s mission to protect human health and the environment through the monitoring of clean and healthy air as it relates to radiologic materials.

Hurricane Isaac

Hurricane Isaac came ashore near the mouth of the Mississippi River on Aug. 28. The slow moving storm brought a lot of rain and flooding and left in its wake thousands of orphaned drums. Orphaned drums are containers that are stranded, with no one to claim them.

In mid October, DEQ teamed up with the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and FEMA to address the orphaned drum issue. They began by flying over the impacted area to mark “targets” on a map. When the partnering agencies formed teams to go to the targets, there were more than 40. One target could be 10 miles long and contain hundreds of containers of a variety of sizes with each container possibly housing any number of chemicals. Thus far, according to DEQ Scientist Jeff Dausat, most of those that are not empty have contained oil or some kind of hydrocarbon.

When the teams go out to address a target area, the containers are inspected to see if there are any identifying marks on them. When there are, the responsible party or the owners of the drums are contacted to come and pick them up.

The containers that are not picked up by a responsible party are brought back to a staging area in Belle Chasse where the material inside is tested, then like materials are stored together and recycled when possible.

The majority of the work is centered around the levee system in Plaquemines Parish. When the storm came ashore with intense flooding from rains and tidal surge, loose containers were pushed to higher ground. When the water receded the drums remained on the high ground or lodged in areas where they could not escape. While there are thousands of containers that are needed to be picked up, the numbers are not near what they were for past coastal storms such as Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike, according to Southeast Regional Manager Mike Algero.

“There could be many reasons for there being less containers out there,” Algero said. “One factor could be people are becoming more aware of the potential damage from these storms and are better prepared.”



Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition promotes better air for Louisiana

The Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition consists of local governments, state environmental agencies, businesses, industries, academic institutions and civic organizations committed to improving air quality in the greater Baton Rouge area through voluntary actions and reasonable, effective regulatory actions. The organization's goals are: to improve air quality through voluntary actions; create public awareness and promote individual responsibility through education; and provide credible measures of air quality improvement efforts.

The Coalition was formed more than two decades ago to provide a vehicle for local stakeholder participation in efforts to improve air quality in the Baton Rouge region, and it has been active ever since. Members of the Coalition volunteer their time for outreach events and to help accomplish the organization's goals for clean air for the Baton Rouge area.

BRCAC members are:

- Capital Region Planning Commission
- Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce
- East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension, and Livingston Parishes
- Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
- Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
- Louisiana State University
- LSU Center for Energy Studies
- Louisiana Association of Business and Industry
- Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association
- Louisiana Chemical Association
- Greater Baton Rouge Clean Cities Coalition
- ExxonMobil
- Dow Chemical Company
- Trinity Consultants
- Harris, DeVille & Associates
- Providence Engineering and Environmental Group

As a de facto group, BRCAC offers experience and knowledge on pending issues, discusses air quality issues with legislators and both local and national officials. Because BRCAC consists of a diverse group of local stakeholders, frequently they will offer combined presentations on air issues, which include the experiences of state and local governments, industry, nonprofit and environmental concerns.

Regular meetings are held, usually on the first Wednesday of each month, at the Baton Rouge Chamber Briefing Center, 564 Laurel Street from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. At the regular meetings, members discuss current air quality legislation, ideas, current trends and possible solutions. Special purpose meetings are held as needed. Meeting announcements are posted on the BRCAC web site www.brcleanair.com and Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/BRCAC>. The BRCAC Web site provides air quality information and current events as does the Facebook page.

Along with the DEQ, BRCAC is a sponsor of the local Ozone Action Program, which is a voluntary, community-based program designed to reduce ozone-forming emissions caused by vehicles and other sources during the summer months. Additionally, BRCAC has recently partnered with the Capital Region Planning Commission to represent the Baton Rouge area in EPA's new voluntary Ozone Advance Program designed to develop and implement innovative ozone mitigation measures for the area.



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

Tuesday, December 11, 2012 Issue Number: 15

DEQ Participates in Chem Friends event in Gonzales

For the 16th consecutive year, staff scientists from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality have participated in Chem Friends, a science-based demonstration fair held at the Gonzales Civic Center in Ascension Parish. The event has provided basic chemistry instruction to more than 60,000 sixth graders, with the participation of a wide array of local businesses, facilities and organizations that deal with some aspect of chemistry in their daily operations.

Participants this year included the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Shell Chemical, Honeywell, Motiva, Southern University, BASF, OxyChem, Westlake Chemical, Air Products, Champion Technologies, CF Industries – Donaldsonville Nitrogen Complex, Potash Corporation and the Gonzales Fire Department.

The event is held over a 2-day period, in a science fair setting where demonstration booths from the participants are on display. Students arrive on buses from area schools and are divided into small groups with the assistance of local high school students, who serve as group guides. The students then don protective glasses, and after a brief orientation, proceed to rotate to each demonstration station. Each station is staffed by a business or organization which puts on a specific demonstration that involves an aspect of basic chemical processes in an interactive way that is easy to understand. After approximately 12 minutes at each station, a horn sounds to signal the rotation.

Most stations include direct involvement where the students get the opportunity to wear safety gear and actively participate in the demonstration.

DEQ's demonstration each year centers on what is known as "Kitchen Chemistry," where various common household products such as Windex, baby wash, fabric softener, baking soda, vinegar, orange juice and others are displayed for students to observe. Boiled



DEQ Environmental Scientist Marissa Jimenez (left) gives a chemistry demonstration to 6th grade students as Minta Canelas, Connie Payne and Judy Schuerman assist

cabbage water is prepared and used as a test model to determine whether a specific household product is a base, acid or neutral. Students are divided into two teams and compete to acquire the most correct educated guesses as each product is tested.

"DEQ is proud to participate in Chem Friends each year, as it provides the students a unique, hands-on understanding of basic chemistry," said Peggy Hatch, DEQ Secretary. "Their active participation at events such as Chem Friends serves to develop their potential further interest in a science-based education, thereby setting the stage for a rewarding career."



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

Tuesday, December 11, 2012 Issue Number: 15

DEQ On The Move



New EPA Regional Administrator Ron Curry, DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch and Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry Mike Strain discussed environmental policy at DEQ Headquarters



Enjoli Muse, Marissa Jimenez, Linda Brown and India Anderson, DEQ staff do demonstrations of PH and help judge the STEM Kenilworth Science fair



Assistant Secretary Sam Phillips, speaking, as Secretary Peggy Hatch and Assistant Secretary Cheryl Nolan look on at the AWMA Conference



DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch speaks at the plenary session of the AWMA Conference



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

Tuesday, December 11, 2012 Issue Number: 15

DEQ On The Move



Marissa Jimenez and Greg Waldron, DEQ Environmental Scientists, demonstrate Walnut Bayou Dynamic River Simulation Model to middle school students at Ocean Commotion



Jesse Means and Tiffani Cravens, DEQ Drinking Water Protection Team members, demonstrate how drinking water gets contaminated at Ocean Commotion at the LSU Marivich Center



Reggie Coleman, DEQ Environmental Scientist, demonstrates Walnut Bayou to Baker Heights Elementary students



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

Tuesday, December 11, 2012 Issue Number: 15

DEQ raises more than \$1,800 for the 2012 United Way Campaign

Employee direct-withdrawal contributions aside, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality raised nearly \$1,800 for the United Way campaign this year through a series of fundraising events.

Various contests were put together by DEQ staff which included Terry Thomas, Terri Coupel, Annette Sharp and many others in order to develop interest and cull contributions for the campaign. Events included a hot dog eating contest won by Kenny Kimball, five year champ, a Halloween costume contest won by Mike Hahn as "Peace and Quiet," a silent auction for donated items, a cupcake decorating contest won by Andrea Huval, a chicken and sausage gumbo cook-off won by Bobby Mayweather, raffles and a talent show known as "DEQ's Got Talent."

"Once again, our imaginative volunteers put together a variety of fun contests in order to make our department's participation in this year's campaign a success," said DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch. "In keeping with our tradition of active participation in the community, DEQ is proud to be a part of the United Way campaign each year in our team effort of supporting charitable organizations across the state and nation."

Prizes awarded to contest winners included restaurant and grocery gift cards, up to one year of reserved 1st floor convenient parking in the DEQ garage in Baton Rouge, and sports-related items signed by LSU head football coach Les Miles.



Food editors from The Advocate, along with DEQ volunteers, sample gumbo entries in the cook-off contest

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY'S THIRD QUARTER SUMMARIES

3rd Quarter 2012 Enforcement Actions:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/225/Default.aspx>

3rd Quarter 2012 Settlement Agreements:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2838/Default.aspx>

3rd Quarter 2012 Air Permits:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2922/Default.aspx>

3rd Quarter 2012 Water Permits:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2899/Default.aspx>

3rd Quarter 2012 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2586/Default.aspx>

If you would like to subscribe to Discover DEQ, send your email to sectcommunication@mail.la.gov