



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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Evangeline Parish man pleads guilty to illegally burning waste tires

BATON ROUGE - Today, an Evangeline Parish man who was arrested on March 27, for illegally burning waste tires in the town of Basile, pled guilty to state criminal environmental charges in 13th Judicial District Court in Ville Platte.

Leroy Hardy, 70, of Basile, pled guilty to one felony count of disposing of a substance which could endanger human life and health. As a result of his guilty plea on that charge, Hardy was sentenced to five years of supervised probation and fined \$1,000.00. Hardy was also ordered to clean up the property and pay \$960.00 to DEQ for the cost of investigation. The Honorable Judge Thomas F. Fuselier of the 13th Judicial District Court presided over the case.

On March 8, officers with the Basile Police Department originally responded to a tire burning complaint at Hardy's residence at 2348 Guillory Street in Basile, near the Basile Headstart Child Care Center. The findings of that investigation were forwarded to DEQ's Criminal Investigation Division, which led to Hardy's arrest and guilty plea.

Hardy was previously cited in a compliance order issued by DEQ in March of 2012 for similar violations which occurred at his residence over two occasions in 2011.

"The illegal burning of waste tires in Louisiana is a violation of both state law and the DEQ Waste Tire Program, which functions as an effective, environmentally-sound approach to ensuring that discarded waste tires are disposed of properly and remain out of clandestine waste piles," said DEQ Undersecretary Vince Sagnibene. "DEQ-CID, together with its local and state law enforcement partners, will continue to ensure that anyone found to be in violation of the law through illegal dumping or illegal burning will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

The case was prosecuted by District Attorney Trent Brignac and Assistant District Attorney Shelley Deville. Personnel from the Basile Fire Department, and the Evangeline Parish Sheriff's Office also participated in the investigation.

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is to protect the environment and public health. Any persons with knowledge of any spills, releases, odors, fish kills, open burning, waste tires and any other types of environmental incidents may contact the department at 225-219-3640 or 1-888-763-5424.