DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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DEQ's Kenner air monitor running, results on web

BATON ROUGE -- The Department of Environmental Quality has a sophisticated ambient air-monitoring program set up throughout the state. Recently, the air monitors in the area impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita were damaged and not operational. However, on Sept. 11, the Kenner monitor began providing data on air quality that is representative of the Greater New Orleans area.

Each day, DEQ will update the information obtained from the site on its home page. Listed on the air-quality chart are the daily maximum readings for particulate matter 2.5, 1-hour ozone, 8-hour ozone and nitrogen dioxide.

The monitor also measures for sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrogen sulfide. Measurements of these compounds have been low and are not listed on the chart. In the event that the monitors show an increase in the concentration of these parameters, they will be included on the chart. This data can also be viewed by visiting our ozone reports link for the summary of parameters by site and selecting the Kenner Site and appropriate date.
http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/evaluation/ozone/edas/ESCSiteSummary.aspx

Particulate Matter 2.5: The fine particles that make up PM 2.5 are from solid and liquid particles suspended in the air. The particles, which are considered a greater health risk than larger particles because they can lodge deep inside the lungs, can be directly emitted from a source or formed in the atmosphere as part of a chemical reaction. PM 2.5 is mainly caused by pollutants emitted when fuel is combusted. Power plants that use fossil fuel and automobiles, particularly diesel, are examples of PM 2.5 sources.

Ozone: Ozone is not emitted directly to the atmosphere. It is formed when pollutants known as VOCs and NOx mix in sunlight. It is considered a lung irritant and can cause respiratory problems. The federal ozone standard is based on an 8-hour rolling average because long-term exposure is more detrimental to a person's health. The 8-hour standard is set at 85 parts per billion. The one-hour standard, which was the federal standard until this year, was set at 125 ppb.

Nitrogen dioxide: Is formed by the combustion of fossil fuels. It is a lung irritant and is a precursor to ozone. The annual federal standard is 53 ppb.

For more information on the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for these pollutants, please visit **http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html**

For more information on sampling in Louisiana, go to www.epa.gov/region6