



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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### **State to unveil Mobile Air Monitoring Lab**

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is increasing its air-monitoring capabilities with a new, high-tech mobile laboratory. The Mobile Air Monitoring Laboratory has advanced air-monitoring equipment that will provide the department with instant data wherever the MAML is located. DEQ rolled out the new equipment at Zachary High School, in Zachary, to show science classes at the school the monitoring capabilities.

There are three main purposes for the mobile lab, according to DEQ Air Administrator Chris Roberie.

“This will enable us to use a proactive approach to air monitoring throughout the state to ensure compliance with our ambient air quality standards,” he said. “We will also be able to respond to emergency events like a train derailment or hurricane and access the situation quickly so first responders can take appropriate action. Another important use for the MAML is special projects. If there is a unique public concern that warrants investigation, we can drive the mobile lab to the location and take air samples and receive instantaneous readings to address public concern.”

The MAML cost approximately \$400,000 and has been paid for using federal and state funds. The 2006 Winnebago was equipped with a gas chromatograph capable of sampling for hundreds of organic compounds. The mobile lab will also have capability of monitoring for the criteria air pollutants ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide. Because of the concerns about mercury in the environment, the mobile lab will also have a special mercury analyzer capable of detecting mercury in air at very low levels. The MAML can also monitor for hydrogen sulfide.

Throughout October, the department will take the MAML to the various regions throughout the state for training purposes and public viewing. The MAML is expected to be placed into full operation shortly thereafter and continue in service throughout the year.

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