



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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New Mobile Air Monitoring Lab visits McNeese State University

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 visited McNeese State University on Friday to show science classes and professors the new equipment and monitoring capabilities of the MAML.

There are three main purposes for the mobile lab, according to DEQ Administrator Mike Algero.

“The department can use the advanced air-monitoring system for special projects to determine if there are air pollutants coming from a particular area,” he said. “We will also be able to use the MAML in emergency situations such as a hurricane, train wreck or fire. We will also be using this equipment to investigate complaints from local officials when quick, instantaneous air-monitoring information is needed.”

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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