



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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For Immediate Release

Oct. 12, 2006

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Mobile Air Monitoring Lab visits University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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 the University of Louisiana at Lafayette 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 will be able to respond to emergency situations and have instantaneous air-sampling results at the scene of an incident,” he said. “We will also be able to use the MAML for special projects. The Acadiana is fortunate because the air quality in the region meets all state and federal standards. In fact, Acadiana-Lafayette was recognized by the American Lung Association as one of the cleanest cities for short-term particulate levels. However, if there was a situation that warranted an investigation of any pollutant, we could drive the mobile lab to the location and take air samples and 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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