

louisiana environmental

update

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quality

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monitor

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**LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT
OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Galvez Building
602 N. Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802
ph: 225.219.3953 f: 225.219.3971

STATE OF LOUISIANA

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
governor

DEQ EXECUTIVE STAFF

Mike D. McDaniel, Ph.D.
secretary

Karen Gautreaux
deputy secretary

Thomas Bickham
undersecretary

Harold Leggett, Ph.D.
assistant secretary
office of environmental compliance

Wilbert Jordan
assistant secretary
office of environmental assessment

Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.
assistant secretary
office of environmental services

Herman Robinson
executive counsel

Darin Mann
press secretary

PUBLICATION STAFF

Rodney Mallett
communications director

Jean Kelly
public information officer

Tiffany Dickerson
public information officer

Josh Carroll
art director/graphic designer

Amanda Bosarge
graphic designer

Stories and layout by the communications section.

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message from the
secretary

DEQ Secretary Mike D. McDaniel, Ph.D.



Since we published the last Louisiana Environmental Update, pre Katrina and Rita, there has been a lot of activity. In an effort to facilitate a little catch-up, I am going to focus this Secretary's message on providing an update of DEQ activities.

It has been more than a year and a half since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated Louisiana. We are still engaged in certain aspects of recovery from the storms, but are now past the largest part of response and recovery. The debris mission for the Rita impacted area is essentially complete. The mission is also largely complete for the Katrina impacted area with the exception that 30,000 flood-damaged structures have yet to be demolished and disposed of.

As you probably have noted in the media, DEQ has been quite active in trying to curtail illegal dumping activities in the New Orleans East area along the Almonaster Corridor. Our employees and those of our federal and state partners have been working hard to try and stem this decades old problem that has gotten worse following Hurricane Katrina.

With the recent help of an Attorney General's opinion and authorizations from local governments, we are now hopeful that we will be able to close out the work on the vehicles and vessels recovery and disposition by the end of this August.

DEQ was invited to testify before a hearing of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works held in New Orleans on Feb. 26. We were asked to focus our testimony on debris management and landfill issues related to hurricane response and recovery. During our testimony, we recommended that the federal government put together an environmental emergencies "playbook" that would build on lessons learned during the recent hurricanes to help those dealing with major disasters in the future. The committee requested that we put together some of our lessons learned and recommendations for such a "playbook" or guidance document. Our oral and written testimony can be found on our website along with our response to the committee's request.

We were fortunate last year to have an uneventful hurricane season, but projections are once again for an active season. We are now well into planning and preparations for this season.

testimony

environmental report

1. BUDGET

DEQ has had a very austere budget this fiscal year, and we were concerned about an even tougher 2007-2008. However, we have had some indication that next year's budget will bring the agency back to a more normal budget level. Although we do not expect to regain some of the positions lost last year, we do feel we will be able to return to a more reasonable level of operational expenditures.

2. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

DEQ has had a number of major accomplishments lately. Here are a few of the more notable:

- Unprecedented sampling effort
- Water quality monitoring and assessment of ambient surface waters impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (including Lake Pontchartrain)
- Expedited permits
- Compliance schools
- Illegal dumping curtailment initiative
- 334 waterbody pollutant impairments came into compliance with water quality criteria during the 2004 & 2006 Integrated Report listing cycles
- Developed CAIR rule with PSC and stakeholders
- Attainment of the one-hour ozone standard for the Baton Rouge area
- 2 years with no monitored exceedance of ambient air toxic standards
- National lab accreditation
- Vastly improved web site
- Implemented new call center
- Employment of new technologies
- Thompson-Hayward cleanup
- Several new Ready for Reuse successes
- Marine Shale settlement

3. DOCUMENTS & REPORTS

In addition to the response for the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works described previously, I'd like to call your attention to several important reports that have recently been completed or are nearing completion and release. These are:

- *Report on results of the Administrative Orders issued to help curb industrial releases of highly reactive volatile organic compounds and ozone attainment*
- *Report on the results of the helicopter-mounted Hawk infrared camera and research done to evaluate emissions from industry and barges*
- *Report on mercury reduction strategies*

These reports are expected to be completed and posted to the DEQ website soon.

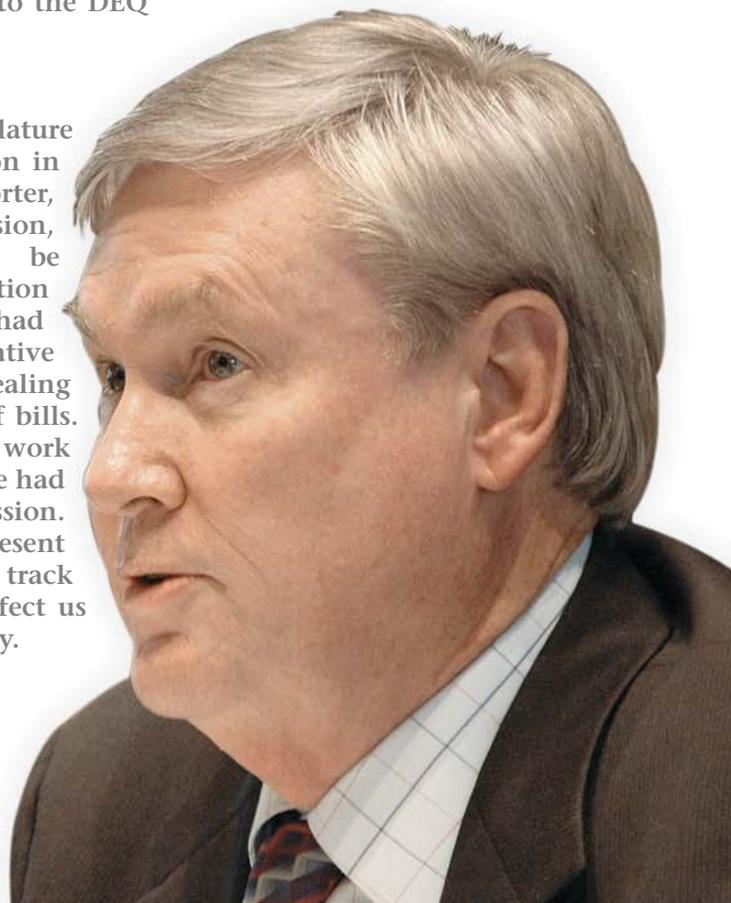
4. LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The Louisiana Legislature began its regular session in May. This will be a shorter, primarily fiscal session, although there will be some non-fiscal legislation brought forward. DEQ had a very aggressive legislative session last year, dealing with a large number of bills. Thanks to a lot of hard work by many of our staff, we had a very successful session. This year we plan to present no legislation, but will track legislation that may affect us and respond accordingly.

5. WATER QUALITY

In October 2004 Governor Blanco set some important water quality goals for DEQ. Programs and strategies were in development but were interrupted by the hurricanes. We are now preparing to renew our efforts on this program.

Things are looking pretty good for our agency as we move forward. As you can tell from the list of accomplishments, our agency and our employees have a lot to be proud of. To all of our employees – thank you for your dedication, your sacrifice, and your good work. Our state and its citizens are better off for all you do.



DEQ Secretary
Mike D. McDaniel
testifies before EPW.

teamwork

community and industry relations

The DEQ Community and Industry Relations staff concentrate on improving the intercommunication between government, local communities, neighboring industries and other stakeholders. Often, low-income and minority communities believe that they bear a disproportionate share of environmental risks. Hostilities can develop between these communities and the industries or facilities located in and around them. Making good-faith efforts to resolve disputes, address concerns and seek solutions is where the CIR group can help, by being a liaison between the groups.

1. PROGRAM GOALS & PROCESS

The goals of the Community and Industry Relations Group are to:

- Aid citizens and neighborhood groups help in regulatory processes
- Serve as the agency contact to address environmental injustice
- Serve as a communications link between communities, industries, and the government agencies
- Ensure that agency programs that substantially affect human health and/or the environment operate without discrimination

- Promote greater use and analysis of demographic information for areas of proposed facilities or sites
- Give greater attention to the environmental and human health conditions of affected minority and low-income communities
- Thoroughly consider all citizens' concerns and handle them fairly
 - Determine the nature of the problems or concerns
 - Identify the parties affected
 - Provide opportunities for input by all interested parties
 - Develop a plan of intervention or mediation
 - Establish communication among all parties
 - Educate affected parties about all sides of the issue
 - Negotiate or mediate mutually acceptable solutions

The CIR program also works to increase the DEQ staff awareness about environmental equity and justice issues.

2. EJ LISTENING SESSION

On Feb. 13 the CIR Group sponsored its first Environmental Justice Listening Session. Staff from DEQ, the Environmental Protection Agency, local governments, citizens and environmental groups met for a day to discuss environmental issues and concerns.

The major goal of the listening session was to allow citizens to voice environmental concerns to DEQ and EPA staff, other concerned citizens and local officials.

Various state environmental representatives welcomed a group of approximately 100 participants and made opening remarks.

The four panel discussions that followed touched on subjects such as defining environmental justice, what the community expects, building trust between industry, federal and state governments and the communities and preparing an emergency preparedness plan before the next disaster. The panels were comprised of communities, groups, industry representatives and others.

The participants were allowed time for public comment on all issues.



Kimberly Gallo, Ph.D.

According to Kim Gallo, Ph.D., head of the CIR group, DEQ has asked for feedback on the sessions and plans to make the session an annual event. For further information, Dr.

Gallo can be reached by phone at 225-219-0877, or by email at kgallo@la.gov.

meet the staff

yanfu zhao

Engineer Manager, Small Business/Small Community Assistance

Yanfu Zhao is the Engineer Manager of DEQ's Small Business Small Community Assistance Program. A native of Beijing, China, he began his career with DEQ in 1993 after graduating with double master's degrees in Chemistry and Chemical Engineering from McNeese University.

He worked in air analysis at the regional office in Lake Charles for four years and then moved on to air permits, where he became a supervisor. In 2005, DEQ promoted Yanfu to engineer manager of the Small Business Small Community Assistance Program.

"My goal is to make more people aware of the program so they can take advantage of the help it offers," said Yanfu. One of the unique services that SB/SCAP offers to the public is contacting newly permitted facilities to help them understand what the requirements are for air and water compliance.

The program recently added five new people in the regional offices to assist with the mission, which is to provide environmental regulatory assistance to small businesses and to provide environmental regulatory information to small communities.

The Small Business/Small Community Assistance Program is designed to help Louisiana businesses comply with complicated environmental regulations and small communities to understand how DEQ and environmental regulation may affect them.

“ My goal is to make more people aware of the program so that they can take advantage of the help it offers. ”

-Yanfu Zhao, DEQ SB/SCAP



GETTING TO KNOW THE DEQ STAFF

SB/SCAP Staff members are available to the public in Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Lafayette, New Orleans, Monroe and Shreveport. Residing in the communities they serve, they understand the problems and challenges of the region.



DEQ Headquarters, Baton Rouge

Contact Number 1-800-259-2890
225-219-3263

Yanfu Zhao *engineer manager*

Patrick Devillier *environmental scientist III*

Diane Hewitt *environmental project specialist III*

Patricia Rogers *administrative assistant III*

Beth Altazan-Dixon *environmental project specialist III*

Acadiana Regional Office, Lafayette

Contact Number 337-262-5584

Ryan Brignac *environmental scientist II*

Mike Savoy *environmental chemical specialist*

Southwest Regional Office, Lake Charles

Contact Number 318-362-5439

Markle Farber *environmental engineer*

Bobby Kingman *environmental scientist III*

Northwest Regional Office, Shreveport

Contact Number 318-676-7476

Ron Gray *environmental scientist II*

Larry Lashley *environmental engineer*

Northeast Regional Office, Monroe

Contact Number 318-362-5439

Cynthia Clark *environmental scientist III*

Southeast Regional Office, New Orleans

Contact Number 504-736-7701

Kurt Wilson *environmental chemical specialist*

My Trinh *environmental chemical specialist*

for more information, visit our website:

WWW.DEQ.LOUISIANA.GOV

THE LaBRANCHE WETLAND WATCHERS

Picture 1: Hurst teacher, Barry Guillot and 8th grade students, Laila Cambre and Brooke McCray accept the NYLC State Farm Youth Leadership for Service-Learning Excellence Award in Philadelphia, PA.

Picture 2: Hurst 7th grader Brittany Steib laughs with visitors as she facilitates a game where visitors try to “feed” the alligator with rubber chickens.



Picture 3: Hurst 7th Graders (L-R) Courtney Cribbs, Chloe Jaramillo, Nash Hymel, and Alisson Rousso prepare cypress trees for replanting. Hurst students gave out 1,000 bald cypress trees to help replace some of the trees lost to the hurricane.

Picture 4: Students from Harry Hurst Middle School analyze water samples and demonstrate their methods at the Audubon Zoo Earth Fest.

watching the wetlands

Hurst Middle School Wetland Watchers Continue Environmental Outreach

The LaBranche Wetland Watchers of Harry Hurst Middle School in Destrehan are participants in a 7th grade service learning program taught by science teacher Barry Guillot.

The group combines public service with science through projects such as water quality monitoring in Lake Pontchartrain, collection and identification of insects, snails and other animals that are indicators of pollution and environmental health, litter cleanups and tree plantings. The group has planted more than 2,500 trees and picked up truckloads of trash and junk.

Guillot and 45 Hurst Middle School 7th graders recently represented the LaBranche Wetland Watchers Service-Learning program at the Audubon Zoo's popular Earth Fest celebration. Hurst 7th graders facilitated a variety of different activities for the 16,000 people that visited the group's booth over the two-day period. Students made arts and crafts with kids, helped visitors use the two-way magnifiers to identify bugs collected throughout the zoo lagoons, played games with the kids and shared information about the wetlands and wetland animals.

As part of the Dow St. Charles Operations Community grant, students also gave out 1,000 bald cypress trees to replace some of the trees that were lost due to Hurricane Katrina. Students learned about planting Louisiana's state tree from Louisiana Agriculture and Forestry agents and then passed on this information to the many recipients.

The Wetland Watchers have received numerous awards since the inception of the program in 1998 and this year they were selected as winners of the National Civic Star Award, which is sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators and Sodexo USA. It brings with it a \$10,000 prize, half of which will go to the St. Charles school district, and half to the school system's scholarship fund.

Guillot was selected as St. Charles Parish middle school teacher of the year and was honored by the St. Charles Rotary as the 2007 Citizen of the Year. The Rotary award is for a citizen that best demonstrates the Rotary Club motto, "Service above Self."

**photos courtesy of the Wetland Watchers*

recovery

private vehicles & vessels

Remediating Hurricane Debris from the Storm-Affected Area

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita worked their way through south Louisiana, the sheer volume of vehicles and vessels left stranded in New Orleans, southeast Louisiana and southwest Louisiana was daunting. They were everywhere. They were on the public right-of-way, in trees, on roofs, in yards, blocking roads and sunk in Louisiana waters.

Even though the responsibility for removal of boats and cars never primarily belonged to DEQ, the agency took on the task about eight months after the storm and continues to coordinate salvage efforts across Louisiana.

“A project like this and of this magnitude is unprecedented,” said Bruce Hammatt, project manager. “It has taken a coordinated effort from local, state and federal authorities.”

The project started with bidding on contracts to remove the cars and vessels. DRC, Inc. received the contract and began tagging and removing the cars in April 2006. While the removal is still going on, many of the cars are staged and ready for disposal. There were many problems along the way. Some of the vehicles were on private property and a right-of-entry form was needed.

Identification of the owners was difficult and notification was necessary. Many vehicles were claimed by insurance companies and others were taken by individuals. The vehicles that DRC removed were put into staging areas for eventual disposal.

In Cameron Parish, the removal has been completed and any vessels and cars have been moved to the New Orleans area for disposal. There are two staging lots in New Orleans, only one that is actively receiving cars and vessels.

As for the vessels, some were coast guard tagged, some were fishing vessels and some were pleasure boats. In the beginning, floodwaters left some on the highways blocking access. There was a group of vessels at the base of the Empire Bridge in Plaquemines Parish. All of these needed to be removed.

Some parts of the project required special removal and a separate contract, such as the Chris and Shane, a 76 ton commercial shrimp vessel that was grounded in a New Orleans resident’s yard.



DEQ oversees the removal of the Chris and Shane from the property of a resident.

The most recent phase of the clean up is the removal of vessels from the New Orleans Metropolitan Yacht Harbor. It is estimated that there could be as many as 175 vessels and the cleanup is underway. DEQ is also overseeing that project. While there is still more to do, there has been much accomplished and many lessons learned.



air quality solutions for cleaner air

Government regulations, such as the use of Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel, the Clean Air Act and the Clean Air Interstate Rule, are aimed at reducing air emissions. However, individuals can also make a difference.

1. RIDE FOR CHANGE

With the five-parish nonattainment area centered around Baton Rouge, mass transportation could be a solution to improving air quality. The Teens as Leaders group of the Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce recently sponsored the Ride for Change to help introduce the Capital Area Transit System to a wider variety of people.

More than 60 people participated in an afternoon of bus riding. The purpose was to introduce the riders to the benefits of mass transit. Among other things, mass transit would help alleviate traffic jams and would substantially reduce the amount of vehicle-related pollution in the area.

A 31-day CATS bus pass costs \$56.



2. CAR POOLING AND RIDE SHARE

Many people drive to and from work alone. Commuting is costly, both monetarily and to the environment.

The Capital Region Planning Commission sponsors the Baton Rouge Area Commuter Services program that provides ride matching and worksite support services by providing an alternative to single commute. This service will provide help and advice for employers and even organize on-site commuter fairs. For those who want to ride share, start or join a vanpool, BRACS will provide information, carpooling tips and a ride match service to put you in touch with others who want to carpool. For more information call 225-344-RIDE (7433).

3. STRIVE FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Think about saving energy when buying for your home, office or your car. The Home Energy Rebate Program offers a rebate of up to \$2,000 to Louisiana homeowners that build or retrofit their homes to achieve a high level of energy efficiency.

This program, as well as the home energy loan program, is administered by the Department of Natural Resources. There are tax credits on federal taxes for buying hybrid and energy-efficient cars, putting in energy-saving windows and doors and buying Energy Star appliances.

Turning off lights, setting the thermostat at a higher temperature in the summer and lower in the winter and using appliances less means the power companies don't have to produce as much power, which leads to less pollution.

4. USE GAS MOTORS AFTER 6PM

The Louisiana heat and still summer days are perfect partners for the formation of ozone. Ozone can form during such days when nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds mix to cause poor air quality. NOx and VOCs are emitted from gasoline engines, industry and off-road sources. While automobiles now have emission systems to help control these emissions, many gasoline engines do not.

Using a gas-powered mower or leaf blower for an hour may not seem like a major polluting activity. However, in a single hours use, gas-powered gardening machines produce as much air pollution as a passenger car driven the following number of miles:

EQUIPMENT	MILES
RIDING MOWER	20
GARDEN TILLER	30
GARDEN TRACTOR	30
SHREDDER	30
LAWN MOWER	50
STRING TRIMMER	70
LEAF BLOWER	100
CHAIN SAW	200

attaining the one-hour standard

Ozone Attainment in the Five-Parish Area

In 2006, for the first time since federal regulations required it, the Baton Rouge area met the one-hour ozone standard. To celebrate this milestone, DEQ and other groups that were vital to the achievement held a celebration early in 2007.

This attainment required the cooperation of federal, state and local governments as well as industry and community leaders. Although the one-hour ozone standard was recently replaced by a new eight-hour standard, attainment of the old standard demonstrates air quality improvement in the Baton Rouge area.

Speakers attending the celebration in Baton Rouge were Mike D. McDaniel, DEQ secretary, Lawrence Starfield, EPA regional deputy administrator, Kip Holden, East Baton Rouge Parish mayor-president, Stephen Moret, Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce president, Dan Borne, Louisiana Chemical Association president and Richard Metcalf, health, safety and environmental affairs coordinator for Mid-Continent Oil and Gas.

In 2006, there were only four exceedances – one each at monitors in Port Allen, French Settlement, Baker and Grosse Tete. While the state had been narrowing the attainment gap in recent years, continued work and cooperation from a variety of groups helped make the 2006 achievement possible.

“There have been a lot of people over the past 20 years who have contributed to the decline in ozone levels,” McDaniel said. “We’ve seen the number of ozone episodes go down, the design values have gone down and the number of hours for increased ozone levels have also declined. It’s a testament to industry leaders, the ozone action coordinators, the public and DEQ employees who all worked for better air quality.”

“This milestone could not have been reached without the extraordinary efforts of the many people who came together to make clean air a reality,” said EPA Regional Administrator Richard E. Greene in a press release. “It marks the first time that the entire state of Louisiana is meeting this important measure and provides great optimism that Baton Rouge is on track to reach the eight-hour standard.”

Attendees included state legislators, former DEQ secretaries, parish presidents from the five-parish nonattainment area, former employees who had worked on air quality and the public.

CELEBRATING THE ONE-HOUR STANDARD

In 2006, for the first time since federal regulations required it, the Baton Rouge area met the one-hour ozone standard. Achievement of the one-hour standard for ozone was a benchmark in the improvement of air quality in Louisiana.



Picture 1: DEQ Secretary Mike D. McDaniel gives his opening remarks at the ozone attainment celebration at DEQ Headquarters in Baton Rouge.

Picture 2: Some of the DEQ secretaries involved with achieving the one-hour ozone standard - Dale Givens (1996-2002), Mike D. McDaniel (2002-Present), Paul Templet (1988-1992) and Kai Midboe (1992-1994).

Picture 3: East Baton Rouge Mayor-President Kip Holden speaks at the one-hour ozone standard celebration at DEQ Headquarters in Baton Rouge.

STEPS OF PROPER WASTE DISPOSAL

Step 1: Contractor segregates waste as it is put out at the curbside or hauled to a staging area. DEQ inspectors are out in the field to ensure contractors are following proper segregation procedures.

Step 2: Waste haulers pick up waste in trucks at either the curbside or staging area. Trucks are supposed to be covered so debris does not fly out.



Step 3: When done properly, trucks drive to a landfill where the waste can be disposed of properly.

Step 4: Once the truck arrives at the landfill, it is inspected from a tower or ladder where inspectors can look down into the truck. Inspectors search for improper waste, such as tire, refrigerators or household hazardous waste. If improper waste is found, it is pulled out of the truck and stored in a staging area where it will be disposed of properly. Many times, this is the step where the driver and landfill owners complete their paperwork. This consists of any financial transaction and logging information on where the waste was generated and where it will be disposed of on the landfill's working face.

Step 5: After the inspection and paperwork is completed, the truck drives on the working face where the load is dumped. The working face is in one area of the landfill. Even if the landfill property covers hundreds of acres that does not mean the working face is that large. The working face is an area where the loads can be dropped, inspected, managed throughout the day and properly covered at the end of the day.

Step 6: Trucks then drive back to an area where there is waste and go through the entire routine.

combatting illegal dumping

Enforcement in New Orleans East

New Orleans East has long been a dumping ground. Before the Department of Environmental Quality existed, people treated this part of the Crescent City as a community-style dump. Everything from cars and household appliances to oil and drums filled with gunk can be found along the infamous Almonaster Corridor.

For years, the department has tried to curtail the illegal dumping by issuing enforcement actions and compliance orders. Several arrests have been made. After Hurricane Katrina, the area became more appealing than ever to those with waste that needs to be discarded. With few options to dispose of the waste in a legal, environmentally sound manner, more and more haulers are taking advantage of illegally dumping the waste in the Almonaster corridor.

After the years of frustration for DEQ and the public, the department started a new, intense crackdown on statewide illegal dumping. Months of prep work, surveillance cameras, on-the-ground documentation and interviews, led to an operation that began on March 19. With DEQ aerial surveillance and New Orleans Police Department and DEQ field staff on the ground, two trucks were seized for illegal dumping.

"The NOPD and DEQ staff were watching a notorious dump site from across the street as the trucks rolled in to dump their load," said DEQ's Jeff Dausat. "When they came out, we stopped them and NOPD seized their vehicles. The second truck presented a problem. He knew we were out there and wouldn't come out." Eventually, NOPD and DEQ went in and got him – and his truck.



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enforcement actions

After the trucks were stopped, word got out about the sting operation and the illegal dumping stopped for the day.

On Thursday and Friday of that same week, teams of DEQ employees teamed with the Public Service Commission, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineer staff, with the National Guard also on patrol, to conduct a property-by-property assessment of Gentilly Rd. The teams inspected 49 sites and found issues with illegal disposal of solid waste, hazardous waste and asbestos as well as several areas of concern for water quality.

“I think we are off to a good start,” said DEQ Assistant Secretary Harold Leggett. “To stop the problem, it’s going to take a lot of work and cooperation among local, state and federal agencies. It says a lot that the NOPD came out on Monday and has plans to work with us in the future.”

“The National Guard came through and helped our criminal investigation unit provide much-needed security. With DEQ surveillance and enforcement staffs working together, we should be able to get any enforcement actions issued quickly.”

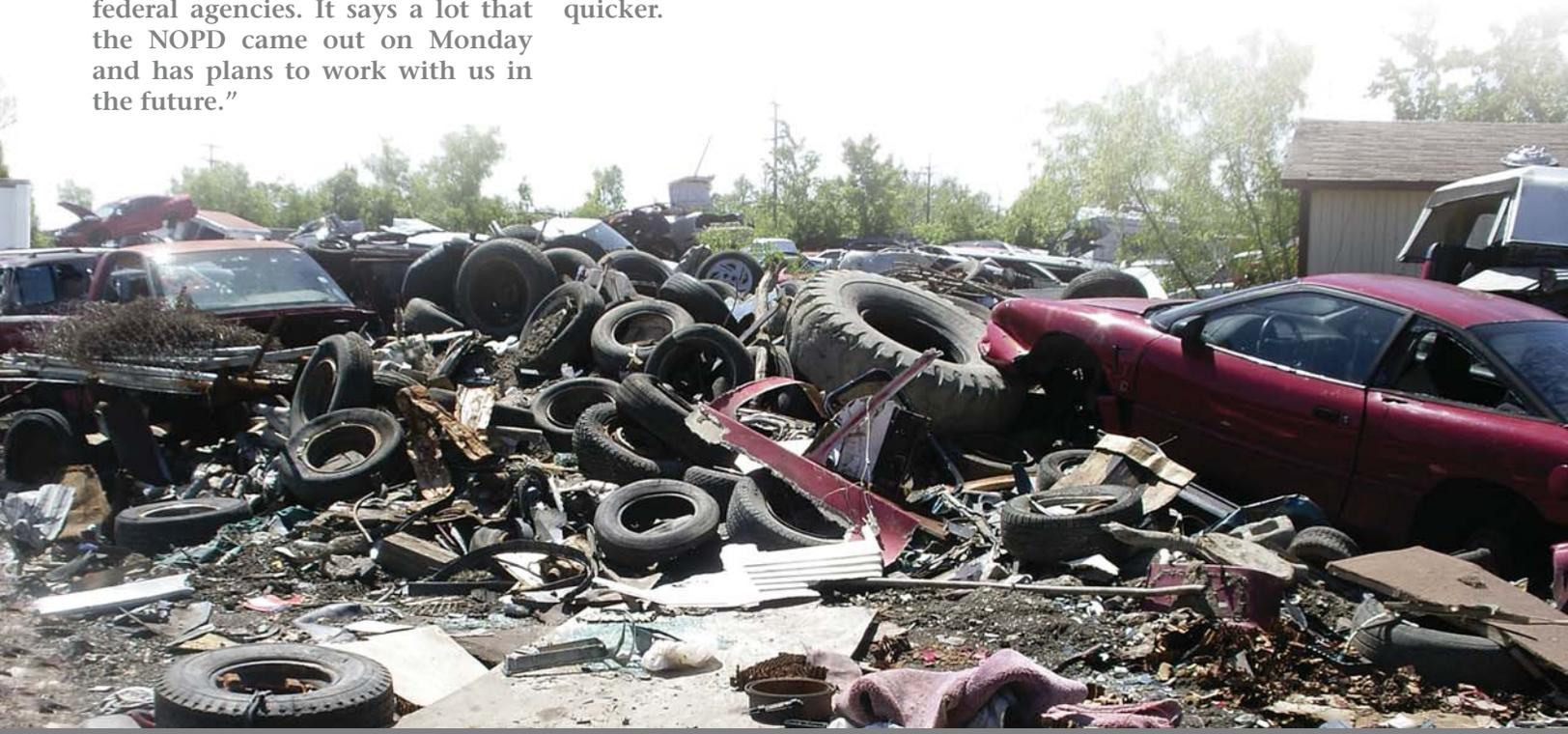
Those found in violation may face penalties of \$32,500 per day per violation. Some people already had compliance orders against them. Those that violated their compliance order may face penalties as high as \$50,000 per day per violation. Some violations will go through DEQ’s expedited penalty program. While the penalties will be significantly lower, the process to issue and collect the penalties is much quicker.

“To stop the problem, it’s going to take a lot of work and cooperation among local, state and federal agencies.”

-Harold Leggett,
DEQ assistant secretary

DEQ Criminal Investigations Division Manager Peter Ricca has been involved in the crackdown on illegal dumping for some time. For example, in 2006 CID arrested two men for accepting illegal waste along Gentilly Rd. This incident highlighted one of the major problems with the curtailing of illegal and environmentally harmful activity that runs rampant through the area.

“There is a financial incentive to accept and dispose of waste illegally,” Ricca said, “especially after the hurricane. What we’re trying to do is to take that incentive away and make illegal dumping as disincentive.”



mobile tech the maml

The DEQ's Mobile Air Monitoring Laboratory, often referred to as the MAML, has been on five projects since it began operations in December. The projects have taken the lab and its crew across the state, from Lake Charles to New Orleans, with stops in Baton Rouge. Phil Frazier is the project manager for the MAML Lab. Their goal is to have 10 major projects a year.

A major air-quality project with the MAML is a week-long, 24-hour-a-day ordeal. The staff must man the lab and its equipment continuously during the time they are stationed.

For example, the staff's first mission consisted of parking the lab outside of the Pioneer facility in St. Gabriel. For the week, Frazier, Finley and Augustine took shifts to monitor the air quality in the area around the facility.

The labor-intensive week didn't produce any information that would lead to an enforcement action, none of the five projects has, but the time was beneficial to learn more about the air quality in the St. Gabriel area.

"All the projects have been learning experiences for the three of us," Frazier said. "We have not seen anything that would warrant an enforcement action, and that's good. With air quality issues, we learn something new every day."

One important lesson Frazier and his crew has learned is to be prepared and alert at all times. "When you're dealing with air quality, especially as close to the fencelines as we are, there are safety issues," Frazier said. "Because of that, the MAML staff member on duty always has a get-away vehicle. There are respirators on board. With the real-time air monitors, we can see any changes in air quality, alert the emergency response people and get to safety."



Crewmembers of the MAML, DEQ's mobile lab: Patrick Augustine, Phil Frazier and Charles Finley

The MAML cost approximately \$400,000 and was paid for using federal and state funds. The 2006 model Winnebago includes a gas chromatograph capable of sampling for hundreds of organic compounds.

The mobile lab can monitor 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 also has a special mercury analyzer capable of detecting mercury in air at very low levels. The MAML also monitors for hydrogen sulfide.

The MAML will be deployed throughout the state to provide valuable data directly relating to a multitude of air quality issues. Its first priority is to provide a proactive approach to improving Louisiana's air quality by ensuring compliance with the air standards and to identify areas of concern before any serious problems arise.



quality research

The Largest State-Owned Environmental Laboratory in Louisiana

The Laboratory Services Division of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality operates the largest state owned environmental laboratory in Louisiana. The Laboratory conducts and oversees all of the chemical analyses and analytical testing activities for the agency. The Laboratory is a “2007 National Laboratory of Excellence,” is accredited by the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Institute, and is one of only 14 national TNI accrediting bodies.

The staff of the DEQ laboratory have reason to be proud. They will receive another accreditation indicating the quality of their work. Accreditation means that the DEQ lab has met the same set of high standards achieved by every other quality lab in the country. State and federal labs are not required to be accredited but the Environmental Protection Agency encourages all labs to seek accreditation.

The DEQ lab is an accrediting authority but the technical side of the lab had never been accredited. So DEQ sought an outside authority to come in and analyze the methods and procedures that are used. Recently, a team from Florida, with a National Environmental Lab Accreditation Institute Program audited the DEQ lab’s operations, analytical methods, applicable standard operating procedures and the performance of the laboratory staff. Methods, including air organics, semi-volatile, volatile, air toxics, general chemistry, metals and standard operating procedures will be approved once the final reports are submitted.



NEWLY ACCREDITED LABORATORY

The newly accredited 47,000-square-foot lab is equipped with state-of-the-art technology. Located behind the Department of Transportation and Development, at 1209 Leesville Avenue in Baton Rouge, it is home to more than 50 employees.



Of the accreditation process, DEQ laboratory administrator Melvin “Mitch” Mitchell said, “This team followed the samples from where they were received at the back door, through all of the processing, to the final testing, data reduction and validation. Our methods were audited, our quality systems evaluated, and our data analyses packages and records were verified and validated. This means that the air organics section of the lab will be NELAP (TNI) accredited for ozone precursors and air toxics for the first time ever.”

While impressive in size and nature, the functions of the lab are made possible because of the staff. They perform a battery of analytical, research and evaluation of data collected from areas across the state of Louisiana.

Tours of DEQ’s laboratory are available. For information call Melvin “Mitch” Mitchell at 225-219-9800.

DEQ ON THE MOVE

Picture 1: Don Weinell, a scientist with DEQ, takes a water sample from Dawson Creek near Kenilworth Parkway in Baton Rouge in April.

Picture 2: Amanda Vincent, DEQ environmental scientist, demonstrates Walnut Bayou, a display that shows how rivers meander, to a group of people and children at Earth Day.



Picture 3: John Calvin of the Southeast Regional Office gave out information at the DEQ booth at the Audubon Earth Fest, Audubon Zoo, New Orleans

Picture 4: DEQ employees joined community leaders and citizens on the Chamber of Commerce's Teens as Leaders, Ride for Change.

a perspective on global warming

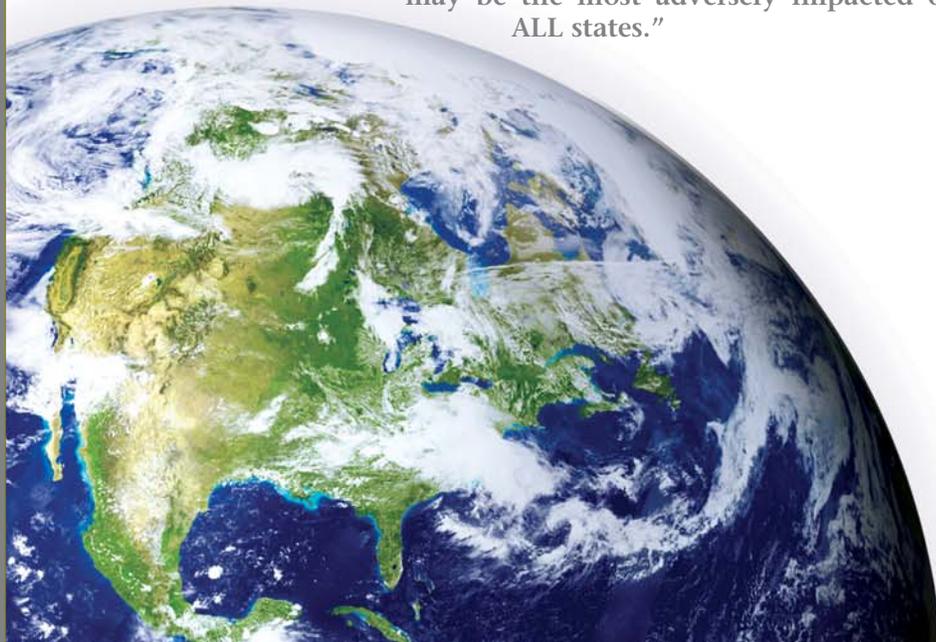
Climate Change with WAFB Chief Meteorologist Jay Grimes



With climate change becoming a prominent topic in local and national media, DEQ invited Jay Grimes, WAFB-TV chief meteorologist and LSU climatologist in the Dept. of Biological & Agricultural Engineering Dept. of Geography & Anthropology, to talk to staff about climate change.

Grimes' presentation, Global Warming 'Fact' or 'Fiction' – One Guy's Perspective, was a balanced view of what is happening climate-wise on a world scale and how that would affect Louisiana. Is climate change a scientific reality or an unproven hypothesis? It is a fact that 11 of the last 12 years were among the 12 warmest on record worldwide. Over the past 100 years night has warmed more than day, summer more than winter and the warming was greatest nearest the poles, he said. During the years 1900 to 1940, there was significant warming; 1940s to late 1970s "cooling trend" and the late 1970s to present significant warming. There are many factors that impact climate change of which we have limited understanding; natural versus human, greenhouse gases, landscape change, impacts of aerosols, the sun's activity and much more. What is the answer? Continued awareness and study are required.

Louisiana has much to lose and there are varied opinions about man's impact on climate change but Grimes sums it up this way; "Even if the threat of global warming/climate change is being overstated, the most 'modest' of impacts could have dire effects on Louisiana, Louisiana may be the most adversely impacted of ALL states."



the public eye media forums

Louisiana and Climate Change: *The Heat is On*, was the subject of a lively discussion on the Louisiana Public Broadcasting monthly public affairs program, Louisiana Public Square.

DEQ Deputy Secretary Karen Gautreaux was part of a panel of experts that included Barry Keim, state climatologist and LSU professor of geology, and Dr. Charles Reith, environmental and energy management consultant and adjunct professor, Tulane University.

According to LPB research, the world is warming and governments, private institutions and businesses around the globe are trying to determine what they can do to mitigate or adapt to the coming changes. In North America, the Mississippi River delta will be the area that will feel the greatest impact from global warming.

What can or should the state be doing to prepare for - or help avoid - some of the possible social and economic effects of global climate change?

The program host, Craig Freeman, professor at the LSU Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs, moderated and LPB President Beth Courtney was the co-host. Audience members discussed their views on climate change and then asked questions of the panel.

LPB, with shows such as Louisiana Public Square, provides venues for DEQ to help educate the public about current news and subjects of concern and interest. Media outlets that use an interactive format, where the public can comment and ask questions, are valuable.

The Louisiana Public Square program is a monthly program with an interactive format. For the first half hour of the show, there is a background video on the subject and randomly selected audience members discuss the issue. After that, a panel of experts answer questions from the audience.

DEQ personnel have appeared on the Jim Engster Show and the Karen Henderson Show on WRKF, public radio in Baton Rouge. Both shows afford listeners a chance to ask questions. In New Orleans, the Garland Robinette Show, the Tommy Tucker Show and the Spud McConnell Show on WWL offer an interactive format. I-News on WWL-TV allows the public to interact by emailing in their questions.

These types of shows, which allow discussion, are helpful in finding out what the public is thinking and how DEQ can better fulfill the public's needs.



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AIR QUALITY INDEX	0-50	GOOD	NO OZONE PRECAUTIONS
	51-100	MODERATE	UNUSUALLY SENSITIVE PEOPLE SHOULD LIMIT PROLONGED OUTDOOR EXERTION
	101-150	UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE PEOPLE	SENSITIVE PEOPLE AND CHILDREN SHOULD LIMIT PROLONGED OUTDOOR EXERTION
	151-200	UNHEALTHY	EVERYONE SHOULD LIMIT PROLONGED OUTDOOR EXERTION
	201-300	VERY UNHEALTHY	SENSITIVE PEOPLE SHOULD AVOID ALL OUTDOOR EXERTION; EVERYONE ELSE, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN, SHOULD LIMIT OUTDOOR EXERTION