



For Immediate Release

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DEQ announces appointments to executive staff

BATON ROUGE –Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Chuck Carr Brown today announced three appointees to the department’s executive staff.

Karyn Andrews has been named undersecretary of the Office of Management and Finance. The office manages the department’s budget, personnel, contracts and general operational duties. Andrews has lived in Louisiana since her family relocated here when she was in grade school. She has lived in Baton Rouge since moving here from Metairie to attend LSU in 1988. She received a bachelor’s degree in accounting from LSU and went to work for the state after she graduated. She has worked in governmental accounting at the state level for 23 years.

Lourdes Iturralde has been named the assistant secretary for the Office of Environmental Compliance. The office manages inspections of permitted facilities and activities, emergency response and radiological services, underground storage tank and remediation, environmental assessment and environmental surveillance and enforcement activities. Iturralde is a 26-year veteran at DEQ, having gone to work at the agency upon graduation from Texas A&M University. She obtained a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology from Louisiana State University and a Master of Science in Microbiology from Texas A&M University. She has spent over 20 years working in the enforcement program for DEQ, which makes her eminently qualified to head the Office of Environmental Compliance. Iturralde is a lifelong resident of Louisiana; her parents were Cuban immigrants and she is fluent in Spanish.

Bijan Sharafkhani has been named Confidential Advisor to the Secretary. The Confidential Advisor provides administrative support to the secretary and consults with the secretary on a variety of issues. Sharafkhani has over 30 years’ experience in the geoenvironmental related field. For the last eight years, Sharafkhani has been an administrator with DEQ, overseeing the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Program that provides low interest loans to municipalities for wastewater improvement projects, the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program and Small Business Compliance Assistance Program. He worked over 16 years with the DEQ Solid and Hazardous Waste Division, including serving as division administrator. Before entering state service, Sharafkhani was a project manager for Woodward Clyde Consultants, a worldwide engineering firm offering geotechnical and environmental services. Sharafkhani received his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in civil engineering from University of New Orleans.

“These three people - Karyn, Bijan and Lourdes - represent 73 years of experience in environmental fields. They have been and will continue to be assets to DEQ,” Brown said. “I am proud to have them on my executive staff.”