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DEQ charges man with illegal disposal

BATON ROUGE -- The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality arrested James Early Hebert, 43, of Sulphur on two charges today. Hebert is charged with illegal disposal of a dangerous substance and illegal disposal of hazardous waste.

Inspectors from DEQ's Southwest Regional Office and the department's Criminal Investigation Section found that Hebert had stored several dozen cylinders in a mini warehouse. The materials were incompatible chemicals that included cyanide compounds, toxics and flammables.

"We were concerned about the haphazard way he has mismanaged these materials," said DEQ Criminal Investigations Manager Peter Ricca. "The investigation involved several dozen cylinders that were handled in an unsafe manner."

Hebert faces up to a $100,000 fine, 10 years in prison and $1 million in cleanup costs on the charge for illegal disposal of a dangerous substance. For the illegal disposal charge, he faces a fine of $250,000 and 15 years in prison.

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