



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



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### **Cow Island area well-water samples back from lab**

BATON ROUGE -- Results from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's water-sampling efforts in the Cow Island area have been returned to the agency. Of the 25 wells sampled during the first week of November, four came back from the lab with readings above the United States Environmental Protection Agency's standard of 10 parts per billion. The highest reading was 60 ppb.

EPA changed its standard for arsenic in public drinking water systems from 50 ppb to 10 ppb in 2001. The federal regulatory agency gave public drinking water systems until 2006 to comply. There are no regulatory standards for individual drinking water wells. Nine wells in the Cow Island area had results between 2 and 10 ppb and 12 wells had less than 1.4 ppb – which is the detection limit.

DEQ took samples from 25 wells in the Cow Island-Forked Island area. The samples were taken as close to the wellhead as possible and the techniques used to obtain the samples followed EPA quality assurance guidelines. A copy of the sample plan is available at [www.deq.louisiana.gov](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov).

The samples were then taken to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals' lab in New Orleans to be analyzed. This DHH facility is a certified laboratory and is responsible for testing all public drinking water supplies in the state.

“The samples were taken by professionals paying close attention to all quality assurance aspects,” said Karen Gautreaux, DEQ's deputy secretary. “The lab we used tests drinking-water samples regularly. I have confidence these results are accurate.”

DEQ called each person who had their well sampled to inform them of the results. DEQ, DHH and other officials will be at a public meeting on Dec. 16 in Cow Island to discuss the results.

#### Results:

1.4 ppb or less: 12 sites  
2 ppb: 4 sites  
4 ppb: 2 sites  
6 ppb: 2 sites  
10 ppb: 1 site  
45 ppb: 1 site  
53 ppb: 1 site  
59 ppb: 1 site  
60 ppb: 1 site

