



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL  
GOVERNOR

HAROLD LEGGETT, Ph.D.  
SECRETARY

**For Immediate Release**  
Oct. 19, 2009

**Contact:** Rodney Mallett  
**Telephone:** 225.219.3964

### **EPA announces DEQ meets air quality standards for PM 2.5**

BATON ROUGE – The Department of Environmental Quality recently received a letter from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency stating that the state meets “the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particles (PM 2.5), measured over a 24-hour period.”

The letter, from EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, was addressed to Governor Bobby Jindal and DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett.

The PM 2.5 particles pose a greater health risk than larger particles because they can lodge deep inside the lungs. Studies have shown that exposure to PM2.5, which are generally one-40th the width of the average human hair, can cause cardiovascular disease, lung disease and asthma attacks.

The fine particles that make up PM2.5 are from solid and liquid particles suspended in the air. The particles can be directly emitted from a source or formed in the atmosphere as part of a chemical reaction. PM2.5 is mainly caused by pollutants emitted when fuel is combusted. Power plants that use fossil fuel and automobiles are examples of PM2.5 sources.

“We appreciate the letter from Administrator Jackson and the recognition from EPA,” said DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett. “The air quality, and the environment overall, continue to improve in Louisiana. It’s significant that EPA recognizes this accomplishment. Even though the air and water quality are the best they’ve ever been, DEQ will continue to pursue a better environment for the citizens of Louisiana.”

--30--

**DEQ COMMUNICATIONS**  
WWW.DEQ.LOUISIANA.GOV