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Governor recognizes groups for voluntary environmental efforts

BATON ROUGE – On Aug. 15, Governor Kathleen Blanco recognized the voluntary efforts of more than 20 members of the Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program. The eighth annual Governor’s Environmental Leadership awards highlighted facilities that went above and beyond regulatory compliance to substantially improve the environment. The ceremony was held at the state capitol.

Blanco applauded the efforts made by the groups in protecting Louisiana’s environment.

“Communities and local governments that promote environmental improvements are helping to secure a cleaner Louisiana now and in the future,” Blanco said. “These projects reflect creativity, technical innovations, conservation of resources, enhanced efficiency and production. Companies that institute voluntary pollution prevention and waste minimization programs show a willingness to be good neighbors.”

DEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel assisted in presenting the awards. He conveyed the commitment of these groups to the value of good cooperation utilizing a non-regulatory approach.

“We all share responsibility for the stewardship of our environment,” McDaniel said. “When waste is reused, reduced, recycled or eliminated, these actions result in strategies that lead to environmental benefits. This program works to enhance the quality of the state’s environment.”

The Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program began in 1995 and has grown to more than 90 members. The program is a cooperative effort between DEQ and participating facilities in the state. Any company, federal facility, parish or municipal government organization committed to improving the quality of the state’s environment is eligible to join.

Before joining the program, a facility must commit to a set of environmental principles and standards and submit a pollution prevention plan containing voluntary waste reduction goals to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, administrator of the program.

A list of award recipients and a summary of their projects are available at www.deq.louisiana.gov.