



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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For Immediate Release
April 15, 2015

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DEQ, LDAF sign agreement to define BMP process

Staff members at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) collaborated and came up with a way to mainstream both agencies' paperwork and regulatory workloads, recycle some valuable assets, stimulate more agricultural production and at the same time, help keep the environment clean and safe for human health.

The agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on April 10 that gives guidelines for participants to get approved to participate in the Best Management Practice Program (BMP). Currently LDAF manages the BMP program in order to allow the management of solid wastes from agricultural and forestry production and processing. The purpose of the program is to require less regulation for wastes that pose minimal risk to the environment if handled properly. In order to enroll in the program, the waste generator is required to develop an individual plan and submit it for approval to LDAF, the Office of Soil & Water Conservation. If the plan is acceptable and approved, the applicant will receive a letter of approval; a copy of this letter will go to the Solid Waste Division of LDEQ to notify them of the facility's enrollment in the program. This letter serves as the operating authority.

If complaints occur, the facility is contacted by LDAF personnel to resolve the problem. Failure to follow the facility plan can result in regulation of the facility by the LDEQ Waste Permits Division, possibly including loss of exempt status, requirements for permitting, and/or enforcement action.

LDEQ and LDAF worked together to draft this MOU in order to give the applicants guidance, and to create an application form available on the LDAF website for clear instruction as to what information both departments need in order to make a determination that each approved facility operates with minimal risk of adverse impact upon human health and environment and that, upon closure, all waste material is removed and the site is restored to usable condition.

With this MOU, LDEQ and LDAF agree upon specific guidance and a form for the facilities to complete where there was previously none. This agreement will ensure that the organic materials will be managed so that they pose minimal risk to human health and the environment. The facilities will now report site-specific information (material, source and quantity), facility information, siting considerations and characteristics, operational plan, closure plan, other environmental permits and any other information deemed necessary.

Louisiana DEQ website:
<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov>

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry website:
<http://www.ldaf.state.la.us/>