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DEQ closes low-interest loan with West Baton Rouge Parish for sewage repair

BATON ROUGE – Today, the Department of Environmental Quality closed a low-interest loan with the West Baton Rouge Parish Government for \$2 million. The interest rate for the loan is 0.95 percent over a 20-year term.

The loan was awarded through the department's Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program, also known as CWSRF. The program provides financing for wastewater system projects at a below market interest rate.

West Baton Rouge Parish will use this funding to rehabilitate the existing 300,000 gallons per day wastewater treatment plant and locate and repair leaks in the sewer collection system. The leaks in the collection system allow the infiltration of groundwater or rainwater into the sewer causing overloading of wastewater treatment system. Some of the rehabilitation measures to the wastewater treatment plant include surface preparation and recoating all of the internal and external walls of the tanks, replacing the metal access stairs, walkways and handrails, clarifier rake arms, clarifier drive unit, sludge return airlift unit and diffused air bubblers. Additionally, the existing air lines exiting the blower building will be replaced and repaired.

“Wastewater treatment plants and working sewage systems are a big part of quality of life and environmental protection,” said DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch. “With these upgrades, West Baton Rouge Parish will be primed to handle future growth. Sewage system repair is not glamorous, but it is vital to growth, economic development and environmental protection.”

Louisiana's Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund program offers low-interest loans to communities for waste water improvement projects and other water quality improvement projects. The program was created by the Clean Water Act Amendments of 1987 and the first loans in Louisiana were made in 1990. Since then, more than \$600 million in loans have been made to Louisiana communities.

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