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### **Governor proclaims May as Air Quality Awareness Month**

**BATON ROUGE** – Gov. John Bel Edwards has declared May as Air Quality Awareness Month in Louisiana. On May 2, 2018, Gov. Edwards announced that the entire state is in compliance with National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone, according to the EPA. Louisiana gained compliance thanks to improved ozone levels in the greater Baton Rouge area, which comprises East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension and Livingston parishes. However, there is still much work to do to maintain that designation.

May is traditionally the start of ozone season, and the proclamation encourages citizens to become familiar with the Air Quality Index, to understand what causes ozone formation and to take voluntary steps to help prevent ozone formation and improve air quality. National Air Quality Awareness week is April 29 to May 3, with the focus being health, wildfires and smoke. National Air Quality Awareness week also concentrates on Air Quality in communities as well as the world and AQ sensors.

Air quality improvement is a cooperative effort. Industry develops air quality action plans and operates under regulations and controls to prevent emissions. But there are also steps the public can take to improve air quality and reduce emissions. Those steps include: walking, biking, carpooling, using mass transit, ridesharing, not using gasoline-powered engines. Not idling and fueling vehicles after 6 p.m., combining errands, bringing lunch to work, walking into a restaurant instead of idling in a drive-thru can also reduce emissions.

Being aware of the air quality is important, and LDEQ offers several ways for the public to get more information. Anyone can access real-time air quality information on the LDEQ website, <https://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov>; access the AQ forecast at <https://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov/forecast>; or receive air quality information automatically by email, text or on a phone app by subscribing to EnviroFlash.

Enviroflash allows citizens to receive daily or on-demand air quality information and ensures that the public receives Air Quality Action Day advisories. To sign up to receive air quality notifications from EnviroFlash go to <https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enviroflash>.

Tune into our Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/LouisianaDEQ/> and Twitter pages, @Louisiana\_DEQ, for more information on each topic and tips what you can do to practice Air Quality Awareness.