

DISCOVER LDEQ

2026
MAY

LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY
NEWSLETTER

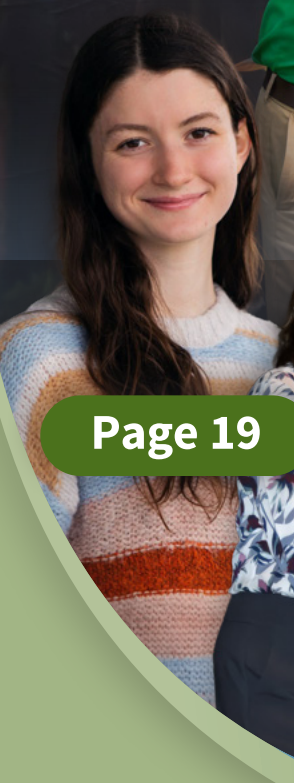
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2025 – The LDEQ Year in Review

BATON ROUGE — Under Gov. Landry's leadership, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) continued to streamline permitting and improve overall processes and procedures in 2025. The agency has been able to successfully carry out its mission to protect the health and safety of all Louisianans and the environment, while helping support strong economic development.



Courtney J. Burdette
Secretary, LDEQ

water quality certifications process and rewrote standards for the use or disposal of sewage sludge and biosolids regulations (Chapter 73); and continued implementation of the Voluntary Environmental Self-Audit Program.

It was a year of superlatives for LDEQ. Here is an office-by-office rundown of LDEQ's significant achievements in 2025.

“*I am proud of the progress we made in 2025 toward improving the quality of air and water in Louisiana. Our agency staff is well trained and motivated to tackle Louisiana's environmental challenges. We look forward to continuing success in 2026 and beyond.*”

– LDEQ Secretary
Courtney Burdette

an air, water or solid waste permitting activity; adopted five new solid waste rules; updated permit application forms and checklists; streamlined the

In 2025, LDEQ successfully submitted two State Implementation Plans (SIPs) to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); LDEQ launched a Waste Tire Pilot Program; expanded its Expedited Penalty Program; held 11 public hearings related to

Office of the Secretary Regulation Development Achievements

The Regulation Development (RD) Section within the Legal Services Division started working on Executive Order JML 25-38 that was issued April 1, 2025, completed the readability study and 20 percent review of rules for Act 192 of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session and completed the readability study to include in the Regulation Development Annual Legislative Report. This process allows the department to review all rules 20 years or older to see if they need to be amended, repealed or are still valid.

Successful Defense of Penalty Assessment

The Department successfully defended a 2019 Penalty Assessment issued to The Demo Diva, LLC, for an amount in excess of \$33,000. The Louisiana Division of Administrative Law (DAL) affirmed the department's penalty assessment against The Demo Diva, LLC March 25, 2024. The Demo Diva, LLC appealed, DAL's decision, and



The **DISCOVER DEQ** newsletter is published quarterly each year by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. Current environmental news, permits, violations, and other news items can be found on our website at <https://www.deq.louisiana.gov>. For your convenience, there are links to quarterly reports on the back page of this newsletter.

the 19th JDC, in its appellate capacity, upheld the DAL's judicial ruling.

This outcome validated legal processes that LDEQ undertook to identify violations of the respondent and formulate the issuance of the penalty assessment amount. In particular, the respondent challenged the authority of LDEQ to cite the alleged violations, issue this penalty assessment and maintain the action based on legal theories previously unchallenged.

Even though each case is different, this particular case dealt with a recurring question regarding abandonment of enforcement actions issued by LDEQ and the department's legal authority to maintain an action against a respondent in spite of lengthy duration of the adjudication phase.

These activities were accomplished in support of defending the formulation and citation of environmental offenses against the respondent within the legal authority of the Louisiana Environmental Quality Act.

Also in the Office of the Secretary in 2025

- The Internal Audit Charter for LDEQ was comprehensively reviewed, revised, and updated to reflect current professional standards, departmental needs, and governance expectations.
- A comprehensive Audit Plan for the LDEQ's 2026 fiscal year was developed and finalized.
- Audit Services assessed \$468,561 and collected \$164,642 in delinquent waste tire fees, late fees and interest, and also assessed \$4,787, credited/refunded \$2,847, and collected \$4,787 in delinquent motor fuel delivery fees and late penalties.
- The Louisiana Environmental Ambassadors Program (LEAP) internship for college students was successfully completed. For 8-10 weeks, LEAP interns gained experience and insight in government and business operations, environmental science, engineering and other related careers.

Office of Environmental Compliance

Expansion of LDEQ's Expedited Penalty (XP) Program

The Enforcement Division through legislative approval (Act No. 492 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session), amended R.S. 30:2025(D) (1) which provides for the assessment of penalties through the use of the XP Program by 1) increasing the maximum penalty for one violation from \$3,000 to \$5,000; and 2) increasing the maximum for two or more violations from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

By raising the maximums for one specific violation or for two or more violations in an enforcement case, LDEQ has greater flexibility to assess environmental penalties utilizing the XP Program.

Voluntary Self-Audit Regulation Revision

LDEQ's Enforcement Division proposed revisions to the Voluntary Self-Audit Regulations, LAC 33:I.Chapter 70. The revisions include additional definitions, procedural changes and changes to address comments/concerns received during rulemaking for the original rule. The revisions encourage evaluation of applicability of environmental regulations at participating facilities in exchange for penalty mitigation if specific conditions are met. Corrective action(s) and compliance are also required by the regulations.

The revisions are a result of LDEQ's evaluation of the existing program and engagement with the regulated community. The revisions were

published in the Louisiana Register on Aug. 20, 2025, and will tentatively be promulgated in the first quarter of 2026.

Surveillance Statistics

The Surveillance Division conducted a total of 2,737 facility inspections for fiscal year 2025 (FY25). This includes 1,619 inspections completed in accordance with meeting the department's federal and state legislative goals; specifically, 444 air inspections, 143 hazardous waste inspections, 495 water inspections, 435 solid waste inspections, and 102 asbestos inspections. Facilities are selected and scheduled for inspection utilizing procedures outlined in the LDEQ Compliance Monitoring Strategy (CMS).

The Surveillance Division responded to a total of 4,543 environmental incidents and citizen complaints for FY25, including addressing 96% of reported environmental incidents and citizen complaints within 10 business days of receipt of the notification. This provides a timely response to citizen complaints of environmental problems and ensures an acceptable level of cleanup of unauthorized releases. Notifications are received and processed by LDEQ Single Point of Contact (SPOC), then forwarded to the Surveillance Division personnel for investigation.

The Surveillance Division also conducted a total of 1,594 water sampling events and 27 watershed inspections for FY25. Data from water quality monitoring is compared to subsegment specific criteria to determine compliance with State

Surface Water Quality Standards. All ambient water subsegments in the state are sampled on a four-year rotation by selecting specific watersheds each year in each region of the state.

Also in the Office of Environmental Compliance in 2025

- The Radiation Inspection Section conducted 1,988 inspections, including 1,432 X-Ray inspections, 412 Radioactive Material (RAM) inspections, 147 Mammography inspections and 19 Incidents and Allegations investigations.
- The Radiation Licensing Section completed 2,319 licensing actions, including 310 RAM (Radioactive Materials) Licenses, 785 registrations, 599 certifications and 625 Industrial Radiography (IR) Tests.
- The Emergency Response Section responded to 826 spills, releases and incidents and 208 complaints statewide from July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025, providing a timely response to citizen complaints and spills of an emergency nature, and ensuring an effective level of cleanup.
- From July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025, the SPOC (Single Point of Contact for incident reporting) group received 5,146 phone calls, analyzed 20,314 notifications, received and processed 2,268 Seven-Day written reports, processed 2,184 spill notifications, processed 2,607 citizen complaints, received 363 records requests and processed 196 Underground Storage Tank (UST) complaints and notification.



MEMORIAL DAY

H O N O R I N G A L L W H O S E R V E D

Louisiana state offices are closed on **Monday, May 25, 2026**, in observation of Memorial Day. As a legal state holiday, this includes the closure of state buildings, departments, and agencies.

Office of Environmental Services

Air Permit Issuances

Air Permits issued the following items (a total of 1,332 actions) in FY25:

- Part 70 (Title V) initials/renewals/mods/reopenings: 208
- Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) initials/mods: 19
- Acid Rain (Title IV) renewals: 3
- Minor source “site-specific” initials/renewals/mods: 130
- Minor source general permit authorizations: 375
- Regulatory permits: 221
- Other permit actions, including administrative amendments, authorizations to construct, case-by-case insignificant activities, changes of tank service, exemptions, relocations, variances and letters: 376

Promulgation of Revised Freshwater Ammonia Water Quality Criteria and Development of Permit Implementation Procedures

The promulgation of freshwater ammonia water quality criteria provides protection of aquatic life in surface waters while the accompanying permit implementation procedures establish appropriate, site-specific permit limits.

The criteria and accompanying procedures encompass a unique, performance-based approach for the establishment and implementation of water quality standards.

Louisiana is the first state in EPA Region 6 to adopt performance-based criteria.

LDEQ worked closely with both the regulated community and EPA Region 6 to develop the performance-based water quality criteria. Several stakeholder meetings were conducted and a cost/benefit analysis was conducted with information provided by stakeholders. The final rule was promulgated on Nov. 20, 2024.

Waste Permits Statistics

In 2025, the Waste Permits Division issued four permit renewals, one new permit, four Class 11 modifications, 26 Class 1 modifications, five Class 2 modifications, one Class 3 modification, 30 storage extensions, seven hazardous waste and/or used oil transfer facilities, one NHEM determination, 36 various letters, 59 large quantity generator closures and eight other applications concerning hazardous waste. Additionally, concerning solid waste, waste permits issued three new permits, 19 permit renewals, 11 major modifications, 18 minor modifications and eight beneficial use plans.

Various other achievements include 203 waste tire generator registrations, 424 waste tire transporter registrations, two waste tire beneficial end use project approvals, 218 Certificates of Compliance(s) reviews, 220 groundwater monitoring reports, 32 alternate source demonstrations, two tank certifications, and eight comprehensive performance test/trial burn testing events.

Also in the Office of Environmental Service

- Waste Permits issued 292 one-year extensions of authorization for pre-approved Emergency Debris Sites (EDS), 14 renewals of EDS, four EDS deactivations and 14 State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Certifications.
- Waste Permits reviewed 48 hazardous waste and 171 solid waste financial assurance submittals.
- In fiscal year 2024-2025, the Public Participation and Permit Support Division (PPPSD) completed the following: 304 name, ownership, and operator changes for air, water, hazardous waste, and/or solid waste permits; 46 asbestos management plan activities; 2,941 asbestos accreditation activities; 472 lead-based paint accreditation activities; and 1,683 hazardous waste notification activities.

Office of Management and Finance

Information Technology

The Information Technology section, in conjunction with LDEQ's OTS Agency Relationship Manager (ARM) and other LDEQ staff, has been busy with transitions, purging records, and compliance efforts. TEMPO (LDEQ's permitting software and system of record) has been upgraded to TEMPO Production v.2.13.2025.0807. LDEQ is expected to update its TEMPO Test data, which will allow more accurate testing. A new Tempo Production upgrade is planned for early in 2026.

This division and LDEQ have been collaborating with LDEQ Accounts Payable and OTS AppDM on developing an electronic requisition form. This will help users track the status of their requisitions, as well as continue to help LDEQ modernize its operations.

The division is also working with accounts receivable to setup banking processes for the launch of the online permitting portal within TEMPO, the Regulatory Services Portal (RSP).

DOGE efforts include working on identifying equipment assignments/lost equipment, and identifying email addresses that are not being used.

This section has also been overseeing the correction of documents housed in its Electronic Document Management System (EDMS). These efforts include 17,393 document corrections, 537 AI reviews, and 143 AI merges completed through quarter 3 (CY2025).

Financial Assurance Achievements

The Financial Assurance section conducted multiple meetings with other states to understand how other states' FA functions work and how LDEQ can improve operations. LDEQ staff perform a comparison between LDEQ and different states on the personnel numbers assigned to the review and management of financial assurance across varied programs.

The purpose of financial assurance is to ensure the public is not impacted environmentally or financially by abandonment of solid and hazardous waste permitted facilities.

Office of Environmental Assessment

Strides in SO₂ Attainment

LDEQ's Air Planning and Assessment Division submitted an Attainment Demonstration State Implementation Plan (SIP) to the EPA for Evangeline Parish. The Cabot Plant in Evangeline Parish is one of two nonattainment areas in the state and this SIP is the first step to bring the area to attainment. The EPA has also approved this plan and once upgrades are complete at the plant and verifiable, LDEQ can draft and submit a redesignation request to the EPA for consideration to move the area to attainment.

APAD also submitted an Attainment Demonstration SIP to EPA for St. Bernard Parish. St. Bernard Parish is the second nonattainment area in the state. The EPA is currently reviewing this submittal and has not yet proposed approval.

Exceptional Event Demonstration

LDEQ worked with the Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition and the LSU Center for Energy Studies to draft and submit to the EPA an Exceptional Event Demonstration to justify the exclusion of data for initial particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) designations. In early 2024, the EPA strengthened

the PM_{2.5} NAAQS by reducing the standard from 12 micrograms/cubic meter to 9 micrograms/cubic meter. Monitoring data for the Baton Rouge area showed an apparent exceedance of this revised standard; however, this data was influenced by events beyond the state's reasonable control, namely Canadian wildfires and Saharan dust. The documentation to exclude this data is extensive and has to show a clear impact for these events. The EPA has not yet acted on the request.

Water Planning and Assessment Division Achievements

The 2024 Triennial Review Report of Findings document has been completed. This report extensively documents the LDEQ's status on all water quality standards efforts. This accomplishment was achieved through coordinated efforts with staff of the Water Planning and Assessment and Legal Affairs Divisions.

Quality control data evaluation was completed for 986 lab datasets collected under the Quality Assurance Project Plan for the Ambient Water Quality Monitoring Network. This data is used to evaluate the overall quality of the surface water resources of the state, as well as develop/refine water quality standards as needed in support of the Clean Water Act. The information is made available to the public through an online portal. LDEQ collects ambient surface water data at approximately 125 sites across the state each month.

The first Water Quality Trading (WQT) credits in Louisiana have been issued. WQT is an innovative, market-based, cost-effective mechanism to help achieve local water quality improvements. Both facilities and stakeholders across the state benefit from the implementation of projects that reduce cumulative pollutant loading, improve water quality and prevent future environmental degradation of water bodies. LDEQ developed a WQT program that is supported by state legislation, consistent with the Clean Water Act and state and federal law.

The 2024 Nutrient Reduction Management Strategy Annual Report is complete. The strategy supports the goal of water quality protection, improvement and restoration within Louisiana's water bodies and represents Louisiana's contribution to the larger effort to promote and implement activities to address nutrient concerns. Stakeholders across the state benefit from nutrient management that takes into account nonpoint and point sources, as well as coastal restoration activities, in an effort to manage nutrient levels while meeting regulatory requirements under the Clean Water Act. LDEQ collaborated with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana, the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy and the LSU Ag Center.

LDEQ's Clean Water State Revolving Fund (a program that works in conjunction with the Office of Management and Finance) made a commitment to fund 28 projects totaling over \$100 million. Approximately \$17 million will go to qualifying communities as principal forgiveness. The types of projects range from wastewater treatment plant rehabilitation, water meter installation, on-site sewage disposal systems and infiltration and inflow improvements. The success is significant because the non-principal forgiveness portion of the commitments are issued as loans. Improvements to the wastewater systems in the funded areas will result and direct improvement to the environment and water quality of the receiving waterbodies.

This division also received the EPA's approval on Bayou Folsé for Primary Contact Recreation (PCR) use support restoration in the watershed. Bayou Folsé's PCR use was impaired due to high concentrations of fecal coliform bacteria. LDEQ and partner activities aim to reduce nonpoint source pollution, restore support for this designated use, and remove the bacteria impairment.

LDEQ's work with the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP) included water quality sampling, geographic prioritization of activities and home sewage treatment system inspections. LDEQ partnered with BTNEP to perform education and outreach and home system inspections. BTNEP obtained additional funding to cost share for home system repairs/replacements, and NRCS implemented best management practices to restrict cow access to streams. In combination, all these activities helped reduce bacteria concentrations and restore PCR use support.

Quality Control (QC) check and porting of all legacy Nonpoint Source Pollution project data into the LEAU database has been completed, which included nearly 500,000 records. This work allowed Nonpoint data to be shared with the public via the LEAU water quality portal on LDEQ's website, increasing ease of access and usability for the public, and allowing LDEQ staff to access it along with ambient and other water quality data using queries to one database. The general public can now find NPS data along with LDEQ's ambient and special project water quality data all in one place.

Also in the Office of Environmental Assessment

- A total of 1,377 registered Underground Storage Tank (UST) sites (36%) have been inspected for compliance. Inspecting these facilities is crucial for minimizing environmental leaks from UST systems. This compliance rate was achieved through the systematic efforts of UST inspectors, who utilize the LDEQ Compliance Evaluation Inspection checklist to ensure active, temporarily out-of-use and abandoned tanks are inspected at least once every three years and adhere to all regulatory requirements.
- The Underground Storage Tank Division (USTD) compliance evaluation inspection

process demonstrates effective regulatory oversight, yielding the following results: 523 Notices of Deficiencies (NODs) and Notices of Potential Delivery Prohibition (NOPDP), 750 Deficiency Cleared actions, 286 Corrected Deficiency actions, and 40 cases were elevated for enforcement referral.

- The USTD has achieved a 100% review rate for both Investigation Work Plans and Corrective Action Work Plans submitted for UST sites. Additionally, a total of 94 UST sites where releases have occurred have been successfully evaluated and closed by the Division.
- The Remediation Division (RD) conducted 724 remediation inspections during FY25. In addition, the RD reviewed 100% of investigation work plans received and 100% of corrective action work plans received. A total of 128 contaminated sites were closed through evaluation and/or remediation.
- In 2025, meetings and open dialogue between the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors (Licensing Board) and LDEQ's Public Participation and Permit Support Division have allowed the agencies to better understand LDEQ's roles, regulations, processes, and terminology to ensure programs align. This unification has improved the effectiveness of LDEQ's lead-based paint and asbestos programs as contractors must have the required credentials and qualifications to obtain and maintain their Louisiana contractor's license.
- The Louisiana Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (LELAP) successfully retained recognition by the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program. Less than a dozen states have this record. LELAP is the program responsible for assessing and accrediting environmental laboratories that generate data submitted directly or indirectly to the LDEQ.

2025 Community Celebrations, Awareness, and Impact at LDEQ



Breast Cancer Awareness Month

During Breast Cancer Awareness Month, LDEQ employees showed their support and solidarity for those impacted by hosting a Pink Out Day, with a record number of staff participating in this meaningful show of unity.

Thanksgiving

Throughout LDEQ's offices, employees gathered to share what they are grateful for over a shared meal in honor of Thanksgiving. These meaningful moments were made possible by the dedication of staff who volunteered their time and effort to coordinate dishes, prepare food, decorate, and organize the event from top to bottom.



Christmas

In 2025, LDEQ staff spread holiday cheer throughout the office and beyond by contributing toy donations, playing key roles in planning annual holiday celebrations, and bringing the Christmas spirit to life with

festive decorations, caroling, and ugly sweater free dress days.

Every effort made a meaningful impact on the community, and the team's generosity and enthusiasm was greatly appreciated.



Mardi Gras Float Roundup

LDEQ let the good times roll during the 2026 Inaugural Float Decorating Contest where employees were given the chance to form 'Krewes' and showcase their creativity.

Winners were selected by an employee-wide vote and were awarded a handmade trophy and a pizza party. Second place won a King Cake of the Krewe's choosing. Check out all 13 floats here:

Krewe de SWRO -1st Place

DEKrewe -2nd place (tie)

Krewe Du Snoop -2nd place (tie)



Krewe of ERSD – 4th runner up

Breathe Easy – 5th runner up



THE MYSTERY MAML



LDEQ Let the Good Air Roll



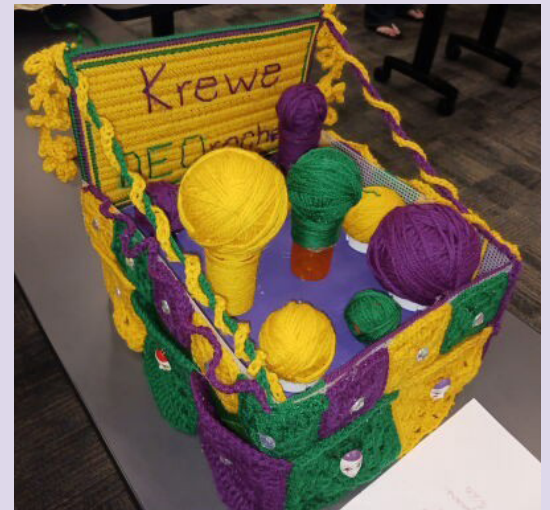
Krewe of Spillumati



Q Krewe



Krewe de Krochet



Fleur de Law



Krewe du Nord-Oest



The Leading Krewe of DEQ



MARDI - GRAS -



Executive Staff

From front left to right, (front) Secretary Courtney J. Burdette, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Services Dr. Amanda Vincent; (second row) Executive Counsel Je'ne Clayton, Press Secretary Meagan Molter, (third row) Undersecretary Theresa Delafosse, Assistant Secretary for Environmental Assessment Scott Guilliams, (back) Assistant Secretary for Environmental Compliance Jerry Lang, Deputy Secretary Nathan McBride

LDEQ Employees Attend Southern Environmental Enforcement Network (SEEN) Annual Conference

The Southern Environmental Enforcement Network (SEEN) held its annual conference Nov. 18-20, in Panama City Beach, Fla. Twelve employees from multiple LDEQ divisions, including Legal, Enforcement, Surveillance, and Criminal Investigations represented the agency at the event.

SEEN provides an opportunity for environmental agencies across the Southeast to connect, fostering a network of professionals who work at the intersection of enforcement, regulation and common law system.

“One of the benefits of the conference is that it creates exposure to practices used in fields outside of one’s area of expertise,” said Mike Daniels, SEEN’s chairperson-elect and attorney for the Capitol Region and Southeast Region at LDEQ. “Folks can learn emerging techniques from different areas and use this knowledge to support their own operations.”



Jason Smith during his presentation: “Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Environmental Work.”

Jason Smith, LDEQ’s Unmanned Aircraft Systems program manager, spoke about “Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Environmental Work.” During his talk, Smith discussed how drones are being used by LDEQ to enhance environmental investigations, improve data collection, and increase safety and efficiency during field operations.



Other agency presentations included speakers from the EPA’s Criminal Investigation Division, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, the Alabama Department of Environmental Management and many others. To learn more, follow SEEN on X and Facebook.

LDEQ employees at the SEEN Conference



The first-place winners, Eco Owls from Kenner Discovery Health Sciences Academy, celebrate their win.

Louisiana Envirothon Brings Students Together for 2026 Competition

BATON ROUGE, LA — The LDEQ, along with other state agencies and university partners, hosted the 2026 Louisiana Envirothon on March 11. Envirothon is an environmental problem-solving competition for 6th – 12th grade students across the state.

The event took place at the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens, bringing together teams from across Louisiana to compete in aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, and a current environmental issue. The 2026 topic, “**Nonpoint Source Pollution: It Begins at Home,**” challenged students to explore how everyday actions affect water quality. Teams delivered oral presentations proposing solutions to environmental problems related to the issue, demonstrating their knowledge of environmental science and natural resource management.

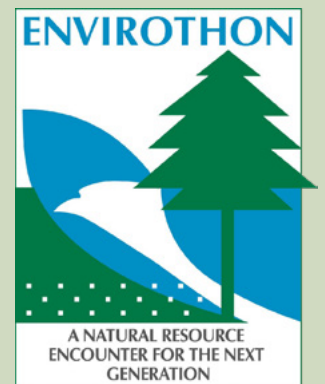
The first-place team, **Eco Owls from Kenner Discovery Health Sciences Academy**, included Jaden Newman, Blair Burd, Gabriella Daneshrad, Bailey Burd and Rand Hashi. The team will represent Louisiana at the **National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon** in Starkville, Miss. in July. Second place went to Soil Sniffers from Baton Rouge Magnet High School, and third place was awarded to Team Gold from Live Oak High School.

“Programs like Envirothon play a significant role in inspiring our next generation of environmental

leaders,” LDEQ Secretary Courtney J. Burdette said. “These students are not only learning about complex environmental challenges, but also developing the critical thinking and problem-solving skills needed to protect our natural resources.”

The event was supported by the following sponsors: LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens, Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts, Fox Pest Control, Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, LSU School of Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences, LSU Superfund Basic Research Program, Southern University and A&M College Urban Forestry Program, and U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service.

For additional information about Louisiana Envirothon, please visit: <https://www.laeq.org/envirothon>. To learn more about the national competition, please visit: <https://envirothon.org>.





Students Hosted for Earth Day Celebration

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) welcomed students, educators, and environmental partners from across the state to the Galvez Building in Baton Rouge on April 22 for a special Earth Day celebration focused on environmental education and stewardship.

The inaugural Earth Day event was launched by LDEQ Secretary Courtney J. Burdette, who shared the importance of protecting Louisiana's unique natural resources and inspiring the next generation of environmental leaders.

Students explored interactive exhibits and hands-on learning stations provided by staff and partner organizations, as they learned about agency efforts to protect the state's air, water, wildlife, forestry, agriculture, and coastal environments. LDEQ was proud to partner with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the LSU School of Plant, Environmental & Soil Sciences, and others to make the event a success.

“Our Earth Day celebration reflects our ongoing commitment to provide outreach and environmental education, while also showcasing the power of collaboration among our many

agencies, educators, and communities,” Burdette said. “We extend our sincere thanks to all participating staff, volunteers, teachers, students, and partner organizations whose enthusiasm and support made the event such a memorable and meaningful experience for all.”



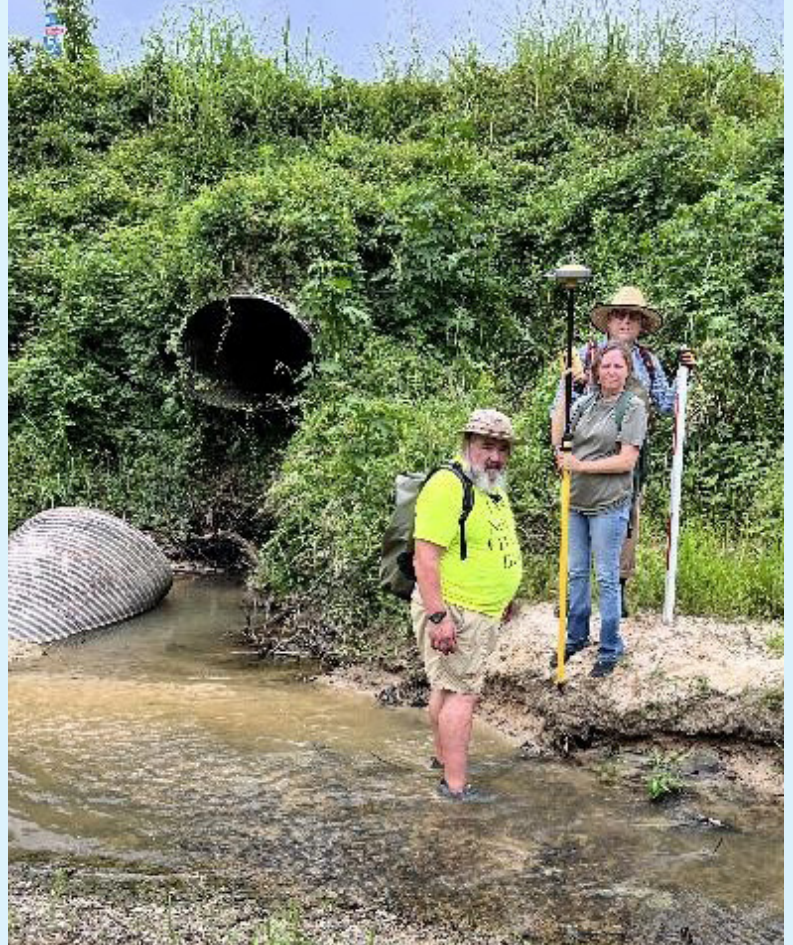
Chuck Berger Works to Solve Complex Problems with Water

Engineers apply science and math to design, build and maintain systems, structures and devices. They tackle complex problems. Chuck Berger is an engineer, but in his LDEQ career, he has learned to go with the flow.

Berger has a long history of working to solve complex problems with water, specifically watersheds and water quality issues like low dissolved oxygen, acidity, temperature variations, waste contamination, runoff contamination, sedimentation and turbidity (cloudy water) as part of the agency's mission to protect the chemical, physical, biological and aesthetic integrity of the water resources and aquatic environment of Louisiana. Berger is a senior engineer in the Water Planning and Assessment Division of the Offices of Environmental Assessments. He joined LDEQ's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)/Engineering staff in 1996.

Berger said many trees have been removed and streams channelized and modified in Louisiana in an effort to help flood control. As Berger has taken measurements and did his engineering calculations, he has realized he needed more information about how rivers work to understand how engineering changes affect water quality. That's why he traveled to Colorado in 1998 for a class with Dave Rosgen, a professional hydrologist and geomorphologist with field experience in river work spanning 49 years, twenty of which were with the U.S. Forest Service.

Rosgen established a consulting firm and school, Wildland Hydrology, that specializes in training courses that focus on fluvial



geomorphology, watershed assessment and management, river restoration, and monitoring. The training courses are designed to provide hands-on experience for professionals working with rivers and their watersheds. Wildland Hydrology has assessed, designed, implemented, and monitored over 70 large-scale restoration projects throughout North America. Additional projects have been conducted in Africa, Central America, and South America.

“I look at a river differently now,” Berger said. “I was in Mississippi shortly after I took this class, and I started to do the same thing – look at rivers.” What he saw was a revelation, a message written in sediment and water flow.



“One of the big objectives was to preserve the natural functions of rivers,” Berger said.

Berger is pursuing the use of process nature-based corridor design as a form of TMDL alternative. EPA defines a TMDL as “The calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a waterbody so that the waterbody will meet and continue to meet water quality standards for that particular pollutant.”

In an effort to show the benefits of such approaches, Berger and LDEQ have initiated a demonstration project to show that process, nature-based corridor design techniques can be used to restore and protect water quality in streams and rivers.

To further his knowledge and prepare for the project, Berger attended Level I training with Dave Bidelsbach (Five Smooth Stones) and Lee Forbes (Headway Environmental), and followed up with Level II training. Inspired by these trainings and regular attendance at the National Stream Restoration Conference, he now provides education throughout Louisiana regarding process nature-based corridor

design and its associated benefits. Berger developed a presentation that he uses to introduce both experts and non-experts to process, nature-based corridor design/ natural channel design solutions to watershed problems.

“They will think about it (rivers) differently,” Berger said of those who hear his presentation. He said the talk hits the high points about what different natural techniques can do, such as improving flooding, aquatic habitat, water table issues, restoring a floodplain and raising a community’s sense of ownership.

“Work with nature instead of fighting nature is the intent,” Berger said.

He said restoring a water body can lift the spirits of a community and offer recreational and educational opportunities.

Berger is in the middle of a series of talks at locations around Louisiana to offer his ideas to interested parties, especially to people who live near streams and lakes that have water quality issues. He presented “The River and the Why: How Do Rivers Work,” to the Lake Providence Rotary Club, to the Pontchartrain Conservancy in New Orleans, to the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program at Nicholls State University, and to the Joint Engineering Societies Conference in Lafayette.



LDEQ Employee Spotlight

Student Worker Selected 2026 Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Finalist

LDEQ's Communication Division is proud to announce that student worker Lizzy Vise has been selected as a 2026 Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship finalist.

This prestigious National Sea Grant College Program fellowship offers its finalist an opportunity to spend a year in Washington, D.C., gaining hands-on policy experience by working alongside executive and legislative staff at the federal level.

Vise earned her bachelor of science degree in coastal environmental science from Louisiana State University and she is currently pursuing her master's of science degree in environmental science with a minor in wetland science & management. In addition to research, Vise is a passionate science communicator.

Reflecting on her time at LDEQ, Vise emphasized how instrumental the experience has been in preparing her for the year ahead.



“Working in the Communications Division at LDEQ has provided me with a unique opportunity to see how policy, science, and public service intersect,” Vise said. “The mentorship I have received during my time here has helped strengthen my ability to translate complex environmental science into plain language summaries ready for broad audiences. My experience also reinforced my belief in the importance of public service, and I am excited to bring that passion with me to Washington, D.C.”

JUNE TEENTH

FREEDOM DAY JUNE 19

Louisiana state offices will be closed on **Friday, June 19, 2026**, in observance of Juneteenth Day. The holiday celebrating the end of slavery in the United States is observed as a legal state holiday through gubernatorial proclamation.





LDEQ Employees Participate in “Love the Boot Week” Events Across the State

LDEQ employees across Louisiana joined the Keep Louisiana Beautiful “Love the Boot Week” cleanup initiative again this year, partnering with thousands of volunteers statewide to help reduce litter and beautify communities.

“Love the Boot Week” is Louisiana’s largest litter removal and beautification effort — and one that continues to flourish as residents, businesses, schools, and public agencies in all 64 parishes take an active role in protecting and improving the environment.

LDEQ’s main office and Capital Regional Office (CRO) staff teamed up with employees of the Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy to clean streets and public spaces surrounding Capitol Park in Baton Rouge.



At the same time, each of LDEQ’s Regional Offices organized and participated in cleanup efforts throughout their respective regions, collecting litter, protecting waterways, and promoting environmental stewardship within the communities they serve.

“We are proud to participate in ‘Love the Boot Week’ each year as part of our agency’s continued commitment to protecting Louisiana’s environment and encouraging public involvement in keeping our state clean and beautiful,” said LDEQ Secretary Courtney J. Burdette. “A special thanks goes out to all employees, partner agencies, volunteers, and community members who contributed their time and effort to make this year’s cleanup initiative a great success.”



LDEQ Recognizes Brownfield Achievements at 2025 Awards Ceremony

The LDEQ hosted the 2025 Louisiana Brownfield Awards on Nov. 18 at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette LITE Center. The ceremony recognized EPA Brownfield Grant recipients and successful redevelopment and remediation projects from across the state.



In 2025, Louisiana secured more than \$6.8 million in EPA Brownfield Grant funding. The EPA Brownfield Program provides grants and technical assistance to assess, clean up,

and redevelop properties where real or perceived environmental contamination complicates reuse.

Louisiana's 2025 EPA Brownfield Grant recipients include:

- City of Leesville – \$500,000 Community-Wide Assessment Grant
- Lafourche Parish – \$500,000 Community-Wide Assessment Grant
- DeSoto Parish Police Jury – \$1.2 million Brownfield Coalition Assessment Grant
- Acadiana Planning Commission – \$1.2 million Brownfield Coalition Assessment Grant
- Gulf Coast Housing Partnership Inc. – \$3.49 million Brownfield Cleanup Grant

LDEQ's Office of Environmental Assessment's Remediation Division utilizes the Brownfield Program to guide communities through site assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment. The program helps overcome financial and regulatory barriers that prevent underutilized properties from returning to productive use.



Those projects recognized during the ceremony included:

- Beanlandia, New Orleans
- Tate Etienne & Prevost (TEP) Center, New Orleans
- The Villas at Spanish Court, Minden
- Old Federal Courthouse LLC, Lafayette
- Former Ruston Post Office, Ruston
- CMMC Helipad Improvement Site, Homer
- SporTran City, Shreveport
- Caddo Common Park, Shreveport

LDEQ also recognized projects completing the Voluntary Remediation Program. VRP provides technical, administrative, and legal incentives to encourage cleanup of contaminated sites. Upon completion, participants receive a Certificate of Completion confirming compliance with LDEQ requirements.

These recent VRP completions include:

- Former Johns Manville Plant and Batture, Marrero
- Winn Dixie Phase I, New Orleans
- The Residences at LSU Health, New Orleans
- Burt's Chevron / 7B Partners II LLC, Ruston

LDEQ congratulates all awardees and project partners for their contributions to revitalizing communities and advancing environmental stewardship throughout Louisiana.

LDEQ Quarter Summaries

The LDEQ website, [DEQ.Louisiana.gov](https://deq.louisiana.gov), has lists of all enforcement actions, settlement agreements, air permits, water permits, and solid and hazardous waste permits.

Enforcement Actions



<https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-actions>

Settlement Agreements



<https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-division>

Air Permits



<https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/permits-issued-by-calendar-quarter>

Water Permits

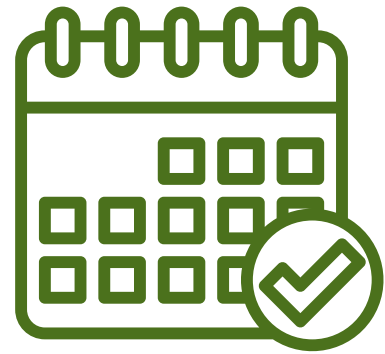


<https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/lpdes>

Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits



<https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/waste-permits>



Important Dates

March 9 - June 1, 2026: Louisiana Legislative Session

May 10: Mother's Day

May 13-14: Louisiana Brownfields Conference

May 25: Office closed for Memorial Day

June 19: Office closed for Juneteenth

June 21: Father's Day

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