



# DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



February 2020 Issue Number: 97

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## LDEQ introduces first all-electric car to vehicle fleet

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has expanded its vehicle fleet to include its first electric vehicle. With the electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure recently added to the Galvez Parking garage, LDEQ continues to work toward energy-efficient investments with the procurement of a Chevrolet Bolt EV. The Bolt EV is an affordable all-electric car that offers an EPA-estimated 259 miles of range on a single charge, nearly 10% more than previous model years.

“We believe electric vehicles (EVs) are the future,” LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Brown said. “LDEQ will always be a leader and set the example in ways to conserve and protect the environment. Using EVs is one way to do this. EV technology is becoming more and more affordable and accessible. We’ve added the Bolt to our fleet as an initial investment but see many more additions in the future.”



Dr. Chuck Carr Brown stands with LDEQ's new Chevrolet Bolt EV.

Electric cars are an appealing option in a world where reducing carbon emissions and pollution is a growing concern. The major benefit of EVs is the contribution they make toward improving air quality. EVs can also reduce emissions that degrade air quality, improving public health and reducing environmental damage.

Another draw for many people who decide to go electric is that EVs are often considered to be one of the most sustainable forms of transportation. Unlike hybrid vehicles or gas-powered cars, EVs run solely on electric power. Depending on how that electric power is produced, your EV can be run 100% on sustainable, renewable resources. For example, charging your EV on renewable energy such as solar minimizes emissions even more.

Currently, the LDEQ and partner agencies are working on making EV charging across the state much more accessible through the addition of EV charging infrastructure along the Alternative Fuels Corridors in Louisiana via the Volkswagen Settlement.

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The interstates initially making up the Alternative Fuels Corridors in Louisiana include I-10, I-12, I-20 and I-49.

While the federal requirement allowing the EV logo to be placed on the signs has yet to be met, there are dozens of charging stations that already exist throughout the state, including in the downtown Baton Rouge area, in New Orleans and at retail centers such as Tanger Outlets, Whole Foods and hotels. To add to the ease of charging, most electric vehicles come with a charging app that can be downloaded onto your smartphone to find charging stations along the way.

LDEQ received the car in January, and after a makeover via a custom wrap, it is ready to hit the road. Be sure to look for us!

Learn more about the efforts to expand EV in Louisiana at <https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/louisiana-volkswagen-environmental-mitigation-trust>.



## Louisiana Environmental Conference coming to the Cajundome in March

This year, the 2020 Louisiana Environmental Conference and Trade Fair will feature an LDEQ Permitting and Compliance Information Center, which will be located in the center of the exhibition hall. Conference attendees will have access to LDEQ staff representing the following areas of the Department:

- Water Quality
- Air Quality
- Solid Waste Management
- Hazardous Waste Management
- Groundwater Management
- Remediation
- Surveillance
- Enforcement
- Radiation
- Underground Storage Tanks (USTs)
- Small Business Assistance

This information center will provide an opportunity for attendees to visit with LDEQ staff and ask questions about a wide range of LDEQ-related activities during both days of the conference. Please stop by and visit with us.

To register for the conference, go to [www.lswa.us](http://www.lswa.us).



## Message from the Secretary

*Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.*

We are approaching the end of February, Black History Month. It is appropriate to take a moment to reflect on the progress African-Americans have made since the Civil Rights era. Much work remains, but a good foundation has been laid. I might start by pointing out the gains African-Americans have made in state employment. The most obvious example is me: I am the first African-American secretary of LDEQ. I am proud of that fact, and I am proud that I was among the first African-Americans to serve as an assistant secretary at LDEQ.

I want our agency to be a place where that kind of opportunity doesn't just exist, but rather it is the standard. Diversity is one of our core values. It should be on display at every level at the agency. Diversity benefits all minorities. It's that commitment to diversity that will continue to shore up the foundation I mentioned and make sure it stays strong and supportive.

On Feb. 13, I flew to Shreveport with two aims in mind: to speak to the Louisiana Police Jury Association and to visit the staff at the Northwest Regional Office (NWRO) in Shreveport.

Getting everyone together for a regional office visit is tricky. Responders have to be out in the field investigating complaints. That takes precedence over even a visit from the secretary. But everything lined up well, and I managed to meet face-to-face with most of the NWRO staff. I went over a few basic things, reiterated our core values and listened to input from the staff. That last thing is invaluable to me. Even though the regional manager was on hand, I'm sure he had not heard some of the things the staff brought up in their give-and-take with me. It was a good visit, and I want to do it again soon.

The Police Jurors were meeting at the Hilton downtown. I enjoy meeting the police jurors, they have a different perspective than city officials often have. I talked to them about the upcoming legislative session and about ongoing hot topics, including water quality trading, complaints and attainment goals. Many of them were very interested in waste tire issues and landfill issues.

You may have seen our news release about the new electric vehicle (EV). I have been out and about in it, and I am impressed with its performance, roominess inside and convenience. Of course it sends a big message about what our philosophy is: EVs are the future.

We didn't want to take the car out on the road until the "wrapper" was in place. It's on now, and the car look great. It's really eye-catching and sport the message "100 Electric, zero emissions." Watch for us around town.

Finally, it was dangerous at Mardi Gras this year, with two deaths in rider/float incidents in New Orleans and two serious injuries there when riders fell from floats. I hope your holiday was safe. Come back to work with a safety mindset, and we will head into the rest of the year with a positive attitude and momentum to serve the people of Louisiana.



*It was good to get the chance to visit the Northwest Regional Office.*





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## EnviroFlash – A convenient way to know about your air quality

The air quality in Louisiana affects everyone in some way, and while it is good, it is important to know about it and how it may affect you and your activities. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has an easy way for you to be informed, and it is called EnviroFlash. EnviroFlash is an automated notification system, designed by EPA and available free of charge. It is a convenient way for the public to receive air quality information, air quality alerts and alerts on how air quality is affected by singular events such as fires and dust. EnviroFlash is a partnership between EPA and LDEQ.

It is easy to receive this information via email or on your phone. You can subscribe to this free service and receive information daily or on-demand at different air quality levels. Once you subscribe, you will receive current information about air quality. When the ozone level is high or if the particle pollution is expected to be high, EnviroFlash sends an Air Quality Awareness advisory with air quality information and actions you can take. The system is also set up to send you notifications of unusual events, such as fires, that might affect your air quality.

To stay better informed about ozone, particulate pollution and other air quality matters, the LDEQ encourages the public to sign up for the EnviroFlash system in their area. You can sign up for forecast emails by visiting [www.enviroflash.info](http://www.enviroflash.info), selecting “LA” from the state menu, then select the forecast area, or you can visit any of the direct links listed below:

<http://batonrougearea.enviroflash.info>

<http://neworleansarea.enviroflash.info>

<http://shreveportarea.enviroflash.info>

<http://alexandriaarea.enviroflash.info>

<http://lakecharlesarea.enviroflash.info>

<http://monroearea.enviroflash.info>

<http://thibodauxarea.enviroflash.info>

<http://lafayettearea.enviroflash.info>

For more information on current air quality, visit <https://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov>. Here you can see real-time data in your area. The interactive EPA website, [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov), provides more regional information as well as local.

Subscribing to EnviroFlash provides you with timely air quality information that you can use to plan your daily activities and protect your health. With EnviroFlash, you have complete control of your forecast subscription. Subscription is fast, easy and free, and you decide which forecasts to receive. You can change or discontinue your subscription at any time through the automated EnviroFlash web page.

You pick the level at which you want to be notified about air quality:

**GOOD - Green**

**MODERATE - Yellow**

**UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS – Orange - An advisory is issued at this level**

**UNHEALTHY - Red**

**VERY UNHEALTHY - Purple**

Persons concerned about small children and people with cardio-pulmonary health problems (such as asthma) usually select to be notified when the air quality is predicted to be UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS. People who work or exercise strenuously may also select this category due to their increased deep respiration. You may also choose to be notified only when the UNHEALTHY air is forecast for the general public. Please visit [www.deq.louisiana.gov/enviroflash](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/enviroflash) for more information.



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## 2020 Louisiana Envirothon held at LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens

For the 15th year, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) partnered with other Louisiana organizations to host the Louisiana Envirothon, an environmental problem-solving competition, at the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens. On Saturday, Feb. 15, nine high school teams participated in the environmental competition that included testing in aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, a current issue and an oral presentation. The 2020 current issue was Water Resources Management: Local Control and Local Solutions.

Winning teams received recognition, plaques, medals and cash prizes. Participating schools included Baton Rouge International School, Caddo Parish Magnet High School, Calvin High School, Live Oak High School, Patrick F. Taylor Science & Technology Academy, University Laboratory School, Vinton High School and Winnfield High School.



All nine teams pose for a group photo commemorating the 2020 Louisiana Envirothon competition.

### Winners of the 2020 Louisiana Envirothon:

First Place: Caddo Parish Magnet High School (Leah Sullivan, Diya Desai, Ashini Modi, Savannah Green and Olivia Horrell)

Second Place: Winnfield High School – Future Farmers of America (FFA) (Lauren Poole, Peyton Little, Annie Heard, Joy So and Gracelyn Chevallier)

Third Place: Patrick F. Taylor Science & Technology Academy (Olivia Guerra, Merrick Crosby, Emily Kraus, Ella Grindstaff and Ahmed Farhoud)

### Highest Scores in Testing Areas:

Caddo Parish Magnet High School School (Leah Sullivan, Diya Desai, Ashini Modi, Savannah Green and Olivia Horrell) scored highest in Forestry, Current Issue and Orals.

Live Oak High School – Environmental Club (Ariana Milner, Harley Bowman, Ernogene Stringer, Lauren Rogers and Kelsey Overman) scored highest in Soils and Wildlife.

Winnfield High School – Future Farmers of America (FFA) (Lauren Poole, Peyton Little, Annie Heard, Joy So and Gracelyn Chevallier) scored highest in Aquatics.

LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens was a major sponsor of the 2020 Louisiana Envirothon. Louisiana Science Teachers Association and Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts sponsored as patron level sponsors. Louisiana Environmental Health Association and Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association sponsored at the supporter level. Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, The Kolache Kitchen and Bluewing Civil Consulting all sponsored at the friend level. Learn more about sponsorship opportunities by visiting <http://bit.ly/Envirothon2020Sponsorship>.

Louisiana Envirothon partnered with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry, Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, Louisiana Environmental Education Commission, LSU School of Plant, Environmental & Soil Sciences, LSU Superfund Basic Research Program and Southern University and A&M College – Urban Forestry Program to host the competition.

For more information on Envirothon, please visit [www.deq.louisiana.gov/envirothon](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/envirothon) or follow Louisiana Envirothon on Facebook, [www.facebook.com/Louisiana-Envirothon-143476735949](https://www.facebook.com/Louisiana-Envirothon-143476735949).



## Incident Command course provides additional training for emergency responders

Louisiana's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness sponsored a two-day Incident Command System course on Jan. 22-23 at Abdalla Hall in the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Research Park.

Entitled ICS 300 – Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents for Operational First Responders, the course was one of a four-part series in FEMA's National Incident Management System courses under the Incident Command System model. Staff members who participate when an event falls under the Incident Command Structure are required to attend these classes.



*Incident Command System Instructor Stacey Blanchard provides information to the class on how to compose an Incident Action Plan during an emergency response.*

The classes are for emergency response personnel from various disciplines who could serve a role as part of a task force, emergency operations center, command or section staff or response team. The ICS 300 course consists of in-depth emergency planning techniques related to the incident command protocol. The instruction centered on the Incident Command System and the hierarchical elements that comprise a Unified Command during a significant incident (such as a storm, hurricane, flood or major accident) necessitating the pooling of various local, state and federal resources under one umbrella.

Along with nine members from LDEQ's Headquarters, Capital Regional Office and Acadiana Regional Office, the other 18 attendees included representatives from regional law enforcement, fire department/medical personnel and the U.S. Coast Guard.

After a pre-test consisting of questions covered in the pre-requisite Incident Command courses, the class was then divided into four groups consisting of a random mix of representatives from each agency. The purpose was to impart a realistic working situation, as real-life incidents involve several agencies working together under a Unified Command.

Each group was tasked with establishing a Unified Command structure as they divided responsibilities and worked to address a series of simulated incidents from a critical emergency response standpoint. Each incident consisted of identifying and gathering emergency response resources, assigning people to various response roles, preparing an Incident Action Plan and presenting that plan verbally to the class.

The course ended with a final test on the latest principles covered, with attendees receiving credit and a certificate of completion for the course upon conclusion.

Visit <https://deq.louisiana.gov/subhome/emergency-response> to learn more about LDEQ's emergency response division.





## LDEQ participates in American Heart Month with fundraising efforts benefiting American Heart Association

Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) kicked off its annual American Heart Association (AHA) fundraising efforts with a “Wear Red for AHA” day on Wednesday, Feb. 19. All LDEQ employees were encouraged to wear red clothing on this day to show solidarity with the fight against heart disease.

The fundraising campaign began on Feb. 19 and will last through March 28. Among the recurring fundraising activities will be casual dress days. Employees can buy the right to dress casually on Wednesdays and Thursdays, Feb. 19, 20, 26 and 27 and March 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 19, 25 and 26. It’s \$20 for the 12 days. See Emily Barthelmy, 921-01A, to purchase a sticker for casual dress days.

Feb. 19 also kicked-off popcorn, soda and raffle ticket sales. The popcorn and soda sales will continue on the ninth floor of the Galvez Building, 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. every Thursday through March 26. On Tuesdays, March 3 through March 24, healthy and sweet snacks will be sold in the first-floor lobby, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Those paper hearts you have seen decorating different spots in the building will also be on sale for \$1 per heart through Monday, March 25. The office, or regional office, that sells the most hearts will win a Smoothie King party. The winners of the parties will be announced Thursday, March 26, and the parties will be held April 11.

As in years past, each office – Environmental Services, Environmental Enforcement, Office of the Secretary and Office of Finance and Administrative Services – have put together special prize baskets packed with goodies. The offices will compete to see which one can sell the most raffle tickets on the baskets. The baskets will be on display in the first-floor lobby during snack sales each Tuesday and during popcorn sales each Thursday. Tickets are \$1 each and can be purchased during snack and popcorn sales or by visiting designated representatives from each office.

LDEQ employees are also invited to participate in the Baton Rouge Area Heart Association Heart Walk. This year the walk will be held in downtown Baton Rouge at City Hall Plaza on Saturday, March 28.

The Fundraising Finale, where the raffle winners are drawn and heart sale competition winners are announced, will be in the Galvez Building Conference Center break room at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 26. Watch your email for more information.



*LDEQ employees gather in a shape of a heart for “Wear Red for AHA” day at LDEQ.*



## LDEQ On The Move

### LDEQ staff participate at Glen Oaks Park Elementary School Science Fair

On Wednesday, Feb. 12, Glen Oaks Parks Elementary School held a science fair for their students. Approximately 500 children in grades K through five rotated through a series of demonstrations and student science fair projects. LDEQ presented the Enviroscope model on nonpoint source pollution. It engaged students to think about ways they can prevent atypical sources of pollution as demonstrated with the model and encouraging environmental stewardship.

Other presenters included Pennington Biomedical Research Center, East Baton Rouge Parish Library Virtual Reality Department, Urban Restoration, East Baton Rouge Mosquito Abatement Program and the Knock Knock Children’s Museum. Some of the student projects included a Lego Walker and a WAVE demonstration.



Student Science project called WAVES was presented at the Glen Oaks Park Elementary Science Fair.



Perry Fontenot, environmental scientist, explains the Enviroscope interactive display to students attending the Glen Oaks Park Elementary Students.



Students, teachers and LDEQ Environmental Scientist Perry Fontenot are ready to learn lessons from the Enviroscope imparts.





## LDEQ On The Move

### LDEQ joins J.J. Johnson Elementary School's Fun Friday



*The students huddle around the LDEQ Enviroscope model.*

LDEQ Environmental Scientist Ella Barbe and Environmental Chemical Specialist Carolette Wright participated in J.J. Johnson Elementary School's Fun Friday on Feb. 7.

The school's student body of 225 students from Pre-K to second grade stopped by LDEQ's Enviroscope model and Water Cycle display to learn about sources and effects of water pollution and the water cycle. Overall, students were asked to think about the world around them and were challenged to be better environmental stewards.



*LDEQ Environmental Scientist Ella Barbe explains the lifecycle of water via the Water Cycle display.*



*Environmental Chemical Specialist Carolette Wright demonstrates how pollution enters our waterways through the use of the Enviroscope model.*



## Louisiana Clean Fuels celebrates 2019 successes at annual stakeholders meeting

Over 50 stakeholders came together on Friday, Jan. 31, for the Louisiana Clean Fuels (LCF) annual stakeholders meeting. LCF's objective is to advance the nation's environmental, economic and energy security by supporting local actions to diversify transportation fuel options.

As a member of the Department of Energy's Clean Cities Program, LCF strives to achieve its goals by employing a variety of strategies which include: promoting and implementing the use of domestically produced fuels, alternative fuel vehicles, increased fuel economy, hybrid vehicles and idle reduction technologies.

The past year was one of significant milestones for the program. In 2019, LCF stakeholders reported their 2018 activities reduced 9.6 million gallons of gasoline-equivalent (GGEs), the largest GGE reduction LCF stakeholders have ever reported. Additionally, stakeholders reported 4.9 thousand tons more greenhouse gases (GHGs) reduced in 2018 than in 2017.

Also noteworthy is LCF's role in the development of the Federal Highway Administration's Alternative Fuel Corridor in Louisiana. To jump-start the development of an electric charging corridor along Louisiana's interstate system, LCF created the DC Fast Charging Master Plan published in 2019. The plan was produced to create a statewide master plan for a DC Fast Charging network along Louisiana's interstate corridors that also meet the standards for the FHWA's Alternative Fuel Corridors signage.

The program's efforts came to fruition in 2019 when signage for the CNG, LNG and LPG corridors in Louisiana was fabricated and displayed along state interstate corridors.

LCF's work has just begun. The program's goals for 2020 include:

- Encouraging investment in renewables through education with ongoing projects like the program's "Waste to Fuel" Curriculum initiative
- Increasing the efficiency of public and private fleets through programs such as their Green Fleets Certification program and Light Duty EV Readiness Fleet Analysis
- Supporting their legacy Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) fleets by conducting "Listening Sessions," hosting technical training and collaborating with members on Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA) proposals
- Improving fueling infrastructure by utilizing the LCF EV Charging Corridor Master Plan and hosting regional AFV infrastructure meetings
- Supporting and empowering our first responders by continuing to offer safety training to Louisiana's first responders for handling an alternative fuel vehicle at the scene of an accident.

More information on Louisiana Clean Fuels or to get involved, visit [www.LouisianaCleanFuels.org](http://www.LouisianaCleanFuels.org).



## Louisiana Environmental Education Commission accepting proposals for grants

The **Louisiana Environmental Education Commission** (LEEC) is now accepting proposals for its 2020-2021 grants program. The submission deadline is Monday, April 6, 2020, at 5 p.m. CDT. Applications will be accepted via electronic submission only.



Grants are available in four different categories. See descriptions and links to the application guidelines below.

**Educator Grants** – These grants support projects based on sound scientific principles, have an environmental focus and are designed to directly impact Louisiana students. All accredited K-12 Louisiana schools are eligible. The maximum award is \$2,500.

**Green Schools Grants** – These grants support projects designed to reduce a school’s environmental impact, reduce health disparities that can aggravate achievement gaps, and engage students in hands-on learning. Proposals must align with pillars found in the **U.S. Department of Education’s Green Ribbon Schools Program**. All accredited K-12 Louisiana schools are eligible. The maximum award is \$5,000.

**Professional Development Grants** – These grants support professional development projects based on sound scientific principles, have an environmental focus, and are designed to directly impact pre-service and/or in-service educators in Louisiana. Louisiana schools, colleges, universities, government agencies and 501(C)(3) nonprofit organizations are eligible. The maximum award is \$2,500.

**University Research Grants** – These grants support post-graduate research with a focus on environmental issues. Students attending Louisiana colleges or universities and who are working toward a Masters, Ph.D., or conducting Ph.D. research are eligible to apply on behalf of their school. The maximum award is \$2,500.

When you’re ready to apply, follow the links in the guidelines, or go directly to the applications: **Educator Application, Green Schools Application, Professional Development Application, University Research Application**

For questions, please contact [environmentaleducation@la.gov](mailto:environmentaleducation@la.gov).





## Who's Who At LDEQ?



**Shondet Garner – Administrative Assistant, Remediation Division, Office of Environmental Assessment**

Garner is a Baton Rouge native who holds a bachelor's degree and is currently pursuing a master's degree. She started her career in state service in 2005 and always worked in the legal area. Deciding it was time for a change, Garner recently joined LDEQ's Remediation Division as an administrative assistant.

She enjoys reading, traveling, cooking, art and helping others.

**Bryn Ray – Environmental Scientist, Emergency Response Division, Office of Environmental Compliance**

Ray is from Houston, Texas, where she was raised on Astros baseball, NASA and Buc-ee's gas stations. She received a Bachelor of Science in marine biology with a minor in chemistry from Texas A&M University, Galveston Campus, in 2018. After having worked a little over a year with a small company in the Houston oil and gas sector, she moved to Baton Rouge and came aboard as an environmental scientist with LDEQ's Chemical Accident Prevention Program in 2019.

"I'm enjoying learning all about my new home here in Louisiana. I take my two dogs on adventurous walks through downtown Baton Rouge and try a new restaurant almost every week because the food is amazing."



**Taylor Alexander – Environmental Scientist, Remediation Division, Office of Environmental Assessment**

Taylor was born and raised in Baton Rouge. She received a bachelor's degree from LSU in biology with minors in chemistry and sociology. After graduating, Taylor worked at LSU in "The Crab Lab" assisting graduate students with their research studying the use of alternative blue crab bait made from shrimp industry waste as well as the prevalence of diseases in blue crabs along the Louisiana coast.

She also worked as a research assistant at the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, studying the effects of BP oil exposure on juvenile menhaden. Taylor began working at LDEQ in 2014 in the Water Enforcement Division. In 2018, she transferred to the Remediation Division and now assists with the investigation and cleanup of sites with contaminated soil and groundwater.



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## Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Fourth Quarter Summaries

### Fourth Quarter 2019 Enforcement Actions:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2019 Settlement Agreements:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2019 Air Permits:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2019 Water Permits:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2019 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

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

