



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



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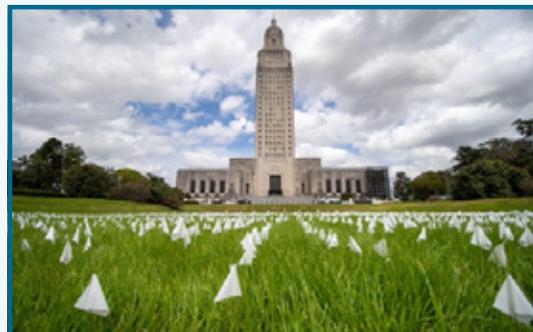
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Coronavirus one year later: Remembering those we've lost to COVID-19

For many of us, March marked a year of having life fundamentally changed. From unprecedented quarantines and lockdowns to social distancing protocols and mask mandates. Sadly, the virus not only affected the day-to-day activities for most but resulted in the loss of life for far too many.

The novel coronavirus was first discovered in the U.S. on Jan. 21, 2020. A few short weeks later, Louisiana reported its first case on March 9. It wasn't until March 11, 2020, that a global pandemic was declared, and Governor John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency in Louisiana due to the virus. Since then, 434,288 more cases have been reported in Louisiana.

Tragically, on March 14, 2020, Louisiana reported its first death due to COVID-19. Over the next 365 days, we would lose 9,860 more of our friends, neighbors, brothers and sisters. On March 8, 2021, Gov. Edwards hosted a ceremony of remembrance at the Capitol. The governor and members of his cabinet and staff planted 9,758 white flags on the front lawn of the State Capitol, one for each Louisianan we have lost to COVID-19 since March 14 of last year.



9,758 white flags were planted on the front lawn of the State Capitol, one for each Louisianan we have lost to COVID-19 since March 14 of last year.

While we grieve those lost, there are signs of hope as advancements in our fight against the virus are made and millions of doses of vaccines are administered daily. Looking back, in August 2020, the death toll from the coronavirus in the United States hit 170,434; it became the third-leading cause of death in the country behind heart disease and cancer, according to the American Journal of Managed Care. Later that month, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted an Emergency Use Authorization for a COVID-19 rapid test. By December, some of the first non-trial recipients received their first doses of the newly approved COVID-19 vaccine from Pfizer.

Now, Louisiana ranks first out of all 50 states at administering second doses of the COVID vaccines within the recommended time frame, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We've come a long way but not far enough. Since the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic, new variants of the virus have been discovered. It is important that we remain diligent in the ongoing fight against the virus.

The numbers, as of March 30, 2021, are staggering: 2.79 million dead and 128 million infected worldwide — including 550,000 dead and 30.4 million infected in the U.S., according to the Johns Hopkins University coronavirus tracking site.

To learn more about the vaccine and where you can get yours, visit <https://dh.la.gov/covidvaccine>.



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Message from the Secretary

Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.

If you live in Louisiana, you talk about the weather. We have hurricanes, tornadoes, freezes, floods and more. Some of those things happen at the same time. In February, we had some freezing weather and rain at the same time – freezing rain. The ice and cold temperatures caused a lot of trouble and damage. It rained, the roads got slick, trucks had accidents, trees lost limbs, electric lines went down and some valves froze. Those conditions can cause releases. LDEQ is ready to respond when that happens. But bad weather is always followed by good weather. The clouds part, the sun comes out, and everything is fine. Or is it?

Weeks and months after the hard freeze, water systems around Louisiana began springing leaks and losing pressure. Some of the pipes had been damaged. The most dramatic example was in Metairie in late March when a 66-inch sewer main ruptured after, you guessed it, another weather event. The pipe had been damaged and repaired during the freeze. However, the influx of water from March rains overcharged the system, and the repair failed. A geyser of rain/sewage water erupted near Lake Pontchartrain. Jefferson Parish reported the event to LDEQ, and our responders went out to the site.

My point here is not to deconstruct this specific incident but to remind all of you to be on the lookout for weather damage. It might be at your own home. Maybe your pipes were frozen and damaged. Look for leaks. Maybe your roof was damaged. Look for drips. Perhaps a limb fell from a tree and hit your home. Be sure to inspect and make sure there is no hidden structural damage. We will have more weather events as the year progresses. Those events may stress earlier weakened spots in structures, roads or trees. Be aware.

The same things go for those of you out visiting facilities. Look for weather damages. Ask some questions if you see something that seems like it might not be just right, even if it is small. Small problems are easy to fix, and left alone, they can grow into big problems.

While I'm at it, let me mention another issue that can be exacerbated by weather. Wind and rain can scatter litter everywhere. It's a major problem. Litter winds up in streams and ditches, where it clogs drainage and causes street flooding. It can be harmful to the environment. It's offensive to the eye too. Trash is trash. No one wants to look at it. So put your trash in a proper receptacle. There's one very near you right now.

Then tell others not to litter. It's expensive. The state spends millions cleaning up litter every year. We don't want to be trapped in an endless cycle of they throw it down, and we pick it up. Louisiana belongs to all of us. It's our home. Don't go in our home and throw down litter. Love the boot, don't pollute.

April is here. Enjoy your Good Friday and other Easter observances. Stay safe.



Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's Secretary, Chuck Carr Brown (center), Deputy Secretary, Denise Bennett (left), and Assistant Secretary of Environmental Compliance Lourdes Iturralde (right) participated in the flag planting ceremony at the State Capitol.



LDEQ's Water Quality Integrated Report map now available via an app

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) Louisiana Water Quality Integrated Report (IR) map is now available as an application (app) for smartphones. The new app, released March 23, is available through Google Play and the Apple Store by entering the search term: "LA Water Quality." You can also find it at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.la.deq.irmap>.

The app mirrors LDEQ's new online, interactive 2020 Water Quality IR map which was released in conjunction with the app. It allows even easier public access to information detailing the water bodies included in the Louisiana Water Quality Integrated Report. The Louisiana Water Quality IR is the current format for the state's biennial reports on the water quality of Louisiana surface waters.

The IR, formerly known separately as the 305(b) Report and the 303(d) List, is a requirement of the federal Clean Water Act. It is developed every even-numbered year and submitted to the EPA for approval of the 303(d) List portion of the report.

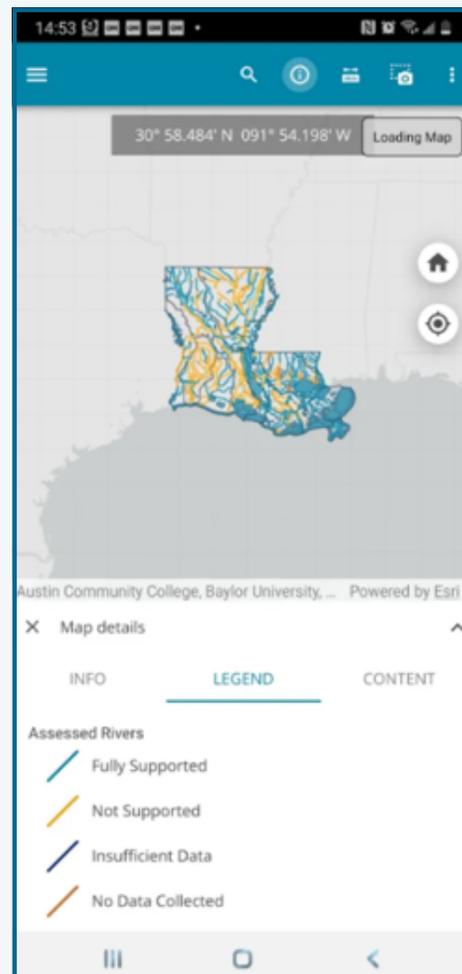
The current IR is the 2020 report, which was approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Feb. 22, 2021. The report data can be viewed in an interactive map format online at <https://ldeq.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=8186b44f9a30453483fedd0df4bad9fa> or via a new app.

The full report, including text, assessments and appendices, can be also viewed online at <https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/2020-water-quality-inventory-integrated-report-305b303d>.

"Every Water Quality Integrated Report is a large team effort for LDEQ, both in the field and in our Baton Rouge headquarters. A great deal of credit goes to the field staff in LDEQ's Surveillance Division who every month diligently collect the ambient water quality monitoring data. It is this data that forms the basis of every IR," said Al Hindrichs, an LDEQ Senior Environmental Scientist in the Water Planning and Assessment Division (WPAD).

The map breaks down the information according to water management units known as subsegments. The subsegments are then given designated uses -- the three primary ones being Primary Contact Recreation (PCR), Secondary Contact Recreation (SCR) and Fish and Wildlife Propagation (FWP). The PCR use is defined as any recreational or other water contact activity involving prolonged or regular full-body contact with the water and in which the probability of ingesting appreciable amounts of water is considerable. Examples of this type of water use include swimming, skiing and diving.

The SCR use is defined as any recreational or other water contact activity in which prolonged regular full-body contact with the water is either incidental or accidental, the probability of ingesting appreciable amounts of water is minimal. Examples of this type of water use include fishing, wading and boating.



Screenshot from the Integrated Report Map App

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The third designated use available on the app, FWP, is defined as the use of water for aquatic habitat, food, resting, reproduction, cover and/or travel corridors for any indigenous wildlife and aquatic life species associated with the aquatic environment. This use also includes the maintenance of water quality at a level that prevents damage to indigenous wildlife and aquatic life species associated with the aquatic environment and contamination of aquatic biota consumed by humans.

The map on the app allows the public to zoom in to view subsegment boundaries and water body names. The public can click on a river or water body in the map for additional information. The water body subsegment will fall into one of five categories: Fully Supported, Not Supported, Insufficient Data, No Data Collected and Not a Use. These are defined as follows:

- Fully Supported – the assessed water body is fully supporting the designated use
- Not Supported – the assessed water body is not fully supporting the designated use
- Insufficient Data – there is insufficient data to make a reliable determination if the water body supports the designated use
- No Data Collected – data was not collected on the assessed water body to make a determination if the water body supports the designated use
- Not a Use – the designated use on the map tab does not apply to that assessed water body.

Louisiana has more than 126,000 miles of rivers and streams, 1,486,650 acres (2,323 square miles) of lakes and reservoirs, 9,602,730 acres (15,004 square miles) of woody and emergent/herbaceous wetlands and 3,203,200 acres (5,005 square miles) of estuaries.

It is the responsibility of the LDEQ to protect the chemical, physical, biological and aesthetic integrity of the water resources and aquatic environment of Louisiana. This responsibility is addressed through use of public education, scientific endeavors, water quality management, wastewater permitting and inspections, and regulatory enforcement in order to provide the citizens of Louisiana with clean and healthy water now and in the future.

The 2020 Integrated Report documents LDEQ's progress toward meeting that goal, and it is produced, in part, to meet requirements of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act commonly known as the Clean Water Act (CWA).

The CWA requires each state to provide, every two years, the following information to the EPA:

- A description of the water quality of all navigable waters in the state
- An analysis of the status of waters of the state with regard to their support of recreational activities and fish and wildlife propagation
- An assessment of the state's water pollution control activities toward achieving the CWA goal of having water bodies that support recreational activities and fish and wildlife propagation
- An estimate of the costs and benefits of implementing the CWA
- A description of the nature and extent of nonpoint sources (NPS) of pollution and recommendations for programs to address NPS pollution

For more information on Water Quality Management in Louisiana, call (225) 219-3189 or email the Water Planning and Assessment Division at DEQ-WWWWaterQuality@la.gov.



Forest High School in West Carroll Parish receives LDEQ funding for wastewater treatment upgrades

Forest High School in West Carroll Parish has its own wastewater treatment plant, but it is in bad shape and needs a lot of expensive work. Thanks to a \$237,240 State Revolving Fund Loan from LDEQ, the wastewater treatment plant will be getting an overhaul.

As a result of a major component failure, the treatment plant is nearly unusable. It operates under a permit from LDEQ, but it is not meeting its permit discharge limits due to the deterioration of the treatment plant. The body of water to which it discharges is impaired, and without intervention, the plant – and most likely the school as well – would have to close.

According to the loan application that the West Carroll Parish School Board submitted to LDEQ's Water Planning and Assessment Division, the funds will pay for a new 20,000 gallons per day (GPD) extended aeration plant with clarifier and tablet chlorine contact chamber. New fencing, site work and electrical upgrades will be part of the project as well.



*Photo courtesy of Forest High School
Current conditions at the wastewater treatment plant at Forest High will soon change thanks to upgrades funded by the State Revolving Fund loan program.*

“We never want to see a public school close because of an environmental concern,” LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown said. “This is just the kind of urgent need our State Revolving Fund Loan program is meant to meet.”

“We knew the water treatment plant had to be upgraded, and we were expecting it to be an extremely costly project. The process was well-coordinated, and all of the agencies involved (McManus Engineers, LDEQ, Boles & Shafto) have been exceptionally helpful. It has been a blessing to Forest High School, our students and staff, and our school district,” said Christy Boyte, West Carroll Parish Schools Interim Superintendent.

LDEQ Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) eligible projects include construction or repair of publicly owned treatment works (POTW) as well as the implementation of nonpoint source pollution control and estuary management programs. The CWSRF program provides financial assistance to any political subdivision, public trust, agency or commission of the state in the form of below-market interest loans.

For more information about the CWSRF, visit <https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/clean-water-state-revolving-fund>.



EDMS upgrade progressing as planned

The development of the EDMS Redesign Project is moving along as planned, and our production release for June is looking good. The project is being developed and available to our testing groups in segments or “sprints.” Each sprint covers specific functionalities to be designed, developed and tested before rolling it out to the live site.

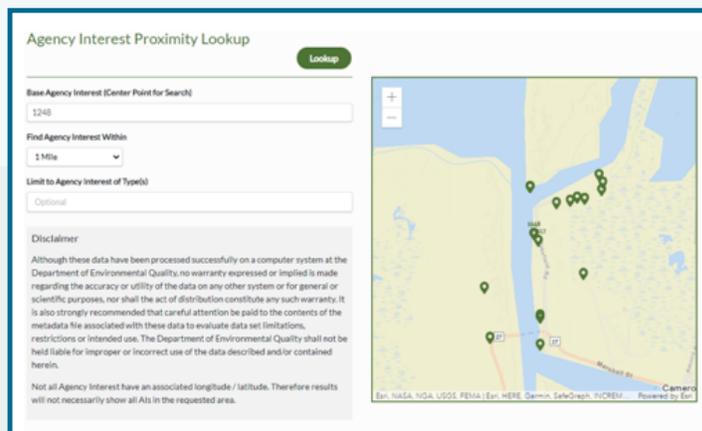
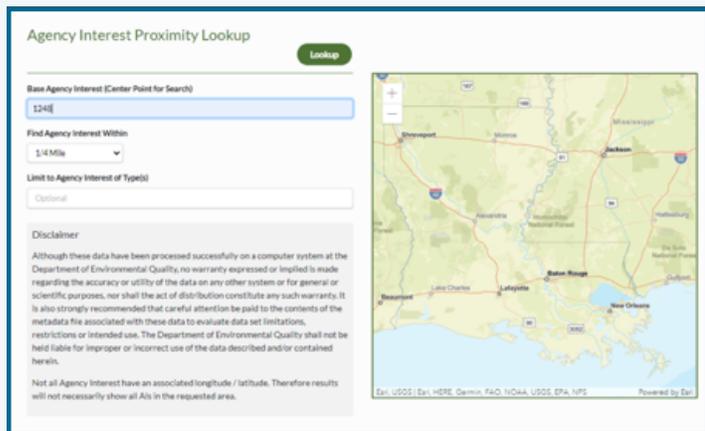
We are currently in Sprint #5, which includes brand new functionality for EDMS, including AI Mapping and Proximity Lookup. These new features will provide the public users of EDMS a more beneficial experience.

The User Acceptance Testing (UAT) for AI Mapping and Proximity Lookup will be conducted by April 1st, and we expect feedback from our testing group by mid-April. This completes the development of all public-facing features of EDMS. When we asked the opinion survey respondents last summer about the potential for mapping features, they provided many positive comments. Here are a few we received:

“This would be a very much welcome feature. If I had to pick one upgrade, this would be it.”

“The mapping feature would be awesome!!!”

“Can be helpful in identifying a specific facility if a company has several locations, or helping identify where an issue may be originating.”



This is an advance look at the screen for the AI Proximity Lookup. You will enter the AI number and indicate the number of miles to include on the map.

The results will be displayed on a map via a pin drop.



Limitless Vistas, Inc. of New Orleans receives EPA Grant for training

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently awarded an Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training (EWDJT) grant to Limitless Vistas, Inc. (LVI). LVI is a small nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization located in New Orleans. LVI's mission is to help young adults obtain the skills and knowledge to become gainfully employed in the environmental industry or conservation field, build a hopeful future, develop civic pride and establish lifelong conservation skills and attitudes.

Established in 2006 in response to a push to provide trained locals to Katrina contractors, LVI has trained over 600 people in environmental and conservation field technician skills. Training has included industry-recognized certifications, skills, knowledge and community service-learning projects used to reinforce classroom learning. LVI's founder, executive director, program manager and instructors all hold geology or environmental science degrees and therefore focus on the STEM aspects of becoming an environmental or conservation field technician.

"Congratulations to Limitless Vistas on being awarded additional funding to continue their vital job training activities," said Roger Gingles, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Assistant Secretary for Assessment. "Thank you to EPA for continuing to partner with Louisiana to develop and expand our environmental workforce to further protect human health and the environment."

The \$200,000 grant is being used to train 60 students and place at least 45 in environmental jobs. Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grant funds provided to nonprofit organizations and other eligible entities allow them to recruit and train unemployed and underemployed residents from communities affected by environmental pollution, economic disinvestment and brownfields and place them in environmental jobs. Limitless Vistas, Inc., is targeting dislocated, unemployed, underemployed, low income and minority populations. Key partners include the city of New Orleans, the Urban League of Louisiana, The Corps Network, the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), the Louisiana Brownfields Association, the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, Leaaf Environmental, Neel-Schaffer and Barnes and Ferland & Associates, Inc.

LDEQ partners with LVI and helps in many ways. "We encourage our Brownfields contractors and subawardees as well as local Brownfields Programs to partner with Limitless Vistas to provide training opportunities during Brownfields-funded investigations and to consider hiring Limitless Vistas graduates," Rebecca Otte, Statewide Brownfields Coordinator at LDEQ said. "We also invite them to participate in our Brownfields-related trainings to broaden their knowledge base and provide networking opportunities with consulting firms."

The training program LVI is planning includes 232 hours of instruction, which includes a 40-Hour HAZWOPER (hazardous waste operations and emergency rescue) class, 8-Hour DOT HAZMAT (hazardous material), 10 or 30-Hour OSHA Outreach Safety Training and First Aid/CPR/AED and Blood-borne Pathogens. Other classes include Introduction to Wastewater, Asbestos Inspector, Lead-Based Paint Inspector and Brownfields, Phase I and II Site Assessments (environmental). Other training will include Emergency Preparedness, FEMA Incident Command System, Solid Waste Management and Remediation, Stormwater and Underground Storage Tank Awareness. Students who complete the training will earn up to two state and four federal certifications.

"This grant provides for training to occur during the first two years. The third year will be used to track participants of the program. LVI will offer one 6-month training program for opportunity youth and two 8-week training programs for adults for each of the training years. For the duration of the program, LVI intends to recruit at least 70 participants, with 60 of those graduating from the program," Limitless Vista's Executive Director Sherry Callaway said. "We also plan to have at least 75% of graduates be placed in environmental positions and have 13% pursue further education."

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There are six certificates that will be offered to both the opportunity youth and adults. The list includes:

- 40-Hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response
- Asbestos Inspector
- Lead Inspector
- First Aid/CPR/AED and Bloodborne Pathogens
- Department of Transportation Hazardous Waste Management and Shipping
- OSHA Construction Outreach

While the pandemic has affected all areas of our lives, LVI has adjusted its training and community service-learning projects to keep its participants safe during these trying times.

“Our hybrid approach of virtual and in-person training is needed to meet the requirements of some of the certifications offered. If in-person training cannot be conducted, provisional certificates will be given until the hands-on portion of the training can be completed. Once hands-on training is completed, provisional certificates will be converted to full certificates,” Callaway said.

“While this pandemic is changing the face of programs like LVI’s EPA EWDJT program, LVI wants to ensure that all who would benefit most from our program will be able to participate. Having virtual programming makes it hard for some of our potential participants to attend. Once it is safe to do so, LVI will return to in-person training with limited virtual components.”

LVI was founded in 2006 by Patrick Barnes P.G., who had worked in the New Orleans area with debris removal/remediation after hurricane Katrina/Rita. Barnes saw the need for locally trained people and provided \$300,000 seed money to form Limitless Vistas, Inc., dedicated to training at-risk young adults as environmental field technicians. Limitless Vistas, Inc. (LVI) is now also a 21st Century Conservation and Service Corps and very active with the national environmental conservation movement.

“Philosophically, I have always felt you should give back,” Barnes said. “LVI serves as a conservation corps as well as restoration, planting and a wide range of things under conservation.”

After Katrina, there were many contractors from outside the region involved in the cleanup. “I thought, wouldn’t it be cool if those companies had a training program to involve the community,” Barnes said.

So he started one.

EPA’s Brownfields Program empowers states, communities and other stakeholders to work together to prevent, assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfields site is real property, the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant. The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act of 2002, as amended by the Brownfields Utilization, Investment and Local Development Act of 2018, was passed to help states and communities around the country clean up and revitalize brownfields sites. Under this law, EPA provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through five competitive grant programs: Multipurpose Grants, Assessment Grants, Revolving Loan Fund Grants, Cleanup Grants and Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants. Additionally, funding support is provided to state and tribal response programs through a separate mechanism.

To find out more about LDEQ’s Brownfields Program, go to <https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/brownfields>.



LDEQ's Brownfields Program to host webinar on StoryMaps: Promoting your Brownfields Story

Looking for an effective way to communicate your Brownfields Program to community groups, elected officials and other Brownfields stakeholders? Join Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's (LDEQ) dynamic panel discussion with three successful Brownfields Programs that have effectively employed StoryMaps to engage their community and promote their programs.



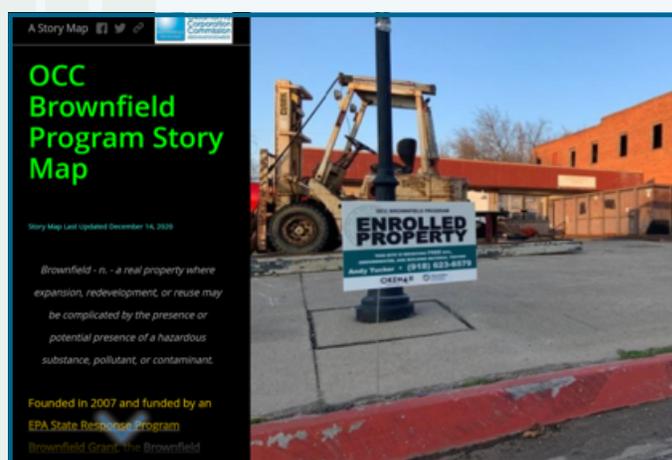
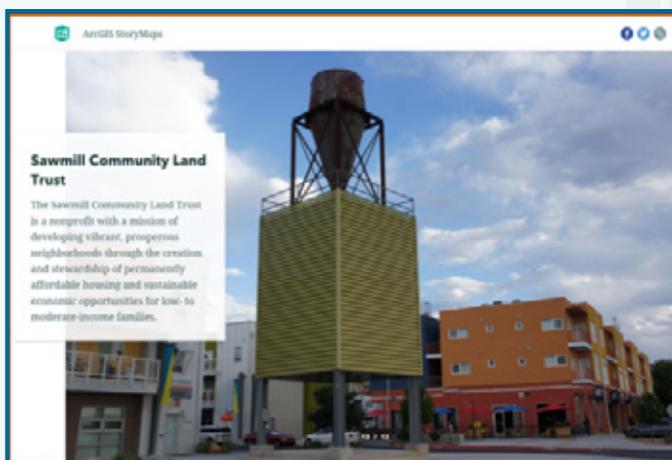
Learn how this tool can help build momentum for your Brownfields Program and market your resources to developers and community organizations to facilitate the reuse of blighted properties.

Featured Panelists:

- Savannah Richards, New Mexico Environmental Department – StoryMap
- Madeline Dillner, Oklahoma Corporation Commission - StoryMap
- Alicia Wiltz, Acadiana Planning Commission

Wednesday April 21, 2021
1 p.m. – 3 p.m. CDT
Via Zoom
Hosted by Rebecca Otte, LDEQ

REGISTER at https://deqlouisiana.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_UKY0xcByQ1GL4LCuolAQ2w
Login information will be sent after registration.





Arbor Day and Earth Day offer many opportunities for environmental service

Each year in April, in communities across the country, you will find tree planting projects, erosion control efforts, trash cleanups and other pro-environmental activities centered around the Arbor Day and Earth Day (or Earth Week) celebrations.

While the observances have become somewhat synonymous, the overall purpose is to promote a call to action to engage the public in environmental activities.

Arbor Day was founded in Nebraska in 1872 by J. Sterling Morton, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture during President Grover Cleveland's second term. The inaugural Arbor Day tree planting endeavor on April 10, 1872, was a success. According to the Library of Congress, Nebraskans planted an estimated one million trees on that day. By the 1920s, every state in the U.S. had passed public laws that stipulated a certain day for the observance of Arbor Day.



Rhyshima Parms-Green (l) and Marissa Jimenez, LDEQ environmental scientists, chat with an elementary school student as they host an information booth at the Bayou Vermilion District Earth Day celebration in 2019.

While National Arbor Day is “officially” celebrated every year on the last Friday in April, some states have chosen their own specific date as the event has grown into an annual environmental service tradition. The customary, most common and widely recognized observance is to plant a tree. The Arbor Day Foundation continues to promote this concept, noting that trees add value to your home, provide food for wildlife and regulate the temperature of your neighborhood.

Nearly a century later, into the 1970s, the world saw the event expanding into a broader environmental celebration that involved peace as the encompassing theme.

At the peak of the Vietnam War in 1969, activist John McConnell proposed a day that would honor both the Earth and the concept of peace at the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Conference in San Francisco. McConnell's proclamation, signed by United Nations Secretary General U Thant, sparked a tradition that continues today.

With that proclamation, the U.S. celebrated the first Earth Day on March 21, 1970, the first day of spring in the northern hemisphere. Excitement and a renewed interest in environmental causes quickly followed, with U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson from Wisconsin proposing a plan to hold a nationwide environmental teach-in – an event that took place just four weeks later, on April 22.

Since that first celebration in 1970, Earth Day has embraced the Arbor Day spirit, becoming an annual event that supports environmental protection through education, sustainability initiatives, service projects and outreach activities. Taking place every April 22, the holiday of sorts is celebrated globally by more than 193 countries. Earth Day has even expanded into Earth Week – as many communities recognize a weeklong series of endeavors focused on environmental issues facing the world.

“To us LDEQ employees Earth Day is always an exciting time because we get asked to participate in different kinds of Earth Day celebrations where we see people of all ages show an appreciation and care for the environment,” Marissa Jimenez, LDEQ environmental scientist, noted.

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While the ongoing COVID-19 protocols still promote social distancing and personal health management practices, you can still look for ways to do something positive for the environment while adhering to those practices.

Many Scout units, science departments at colleges and universities, city public works departments, churches and civic organizations are active in a wide array of environmental improvement projects, so check into opportunities in your community and offer to lend a hand.

Don't let the pandemic interfere with your participation in this constructive and productive tradition. Celebrate Arbor Day and Earth Week!

For more information on tips, ideas and projects, visit the Arbor Day Foundation at www.arborday.org.

There are several ways in which you can contribute to the betterment of your neighborhood and environment. Put together a plan, put out a call to volunteers and launch a project that benefits your community. The following are just a few ideas:

- **“Adopt a Highway” and organize a litter cleanup service day along a stretch of road**
- **Create a tree or vegetable garden planting initiative at your church, school or business**
- **Build a landscaping and/or erosion control project in a flood-prone area**
- **Affix “No Dumping” markers at storm drains in your neighborhood (consult LDEQ on how to obtain free markers)**
- **Gather some friends to improve your local trail, park or public space**
- **Promote and support recycling efforts in your city or town**
- **Clear storm drains, roadways, canals, dead ends and drainage ditches of debris**



Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program hosts 10th annual Bayou Lafourche Cleanup

In keeping with its mission to protect and promote the Bayou Lafourche region of south Louisiana, the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BRNEP) recently issued its annual call for volunteers to take part in the cleanup held March 1-15.

With the ongoing pandemic altering the usual protocol, the Bayou Lafourche Cleanup organizers asked volunteers to register online. Registered participants were then sent a data card to use to document their litter collection activity. Everyone who turned in a completed data card to BTNEP received a complimentary Bayou Lafourche Cleanup T-shirt.

Bayou Lafourche, a distributary of the Mississippi River, is a 106-mile waterway that provides drinking water for more than 300,000 residents. It runs from Donaldsonville through portions of Assumption, Ascension and Lafourche parishes, terminating at Port Fourchon, where it empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

Alma Robichaux, education/outreach coordinator for BTNEP, relayed how important these cleanup events can be for the community. "This is a great opportunity to get out of the house and help keep our beautiful bayou free of trash and debris. Hopefully, soon we will all be able to get together to enjoy this natural resource."

The annual cleanup, launched in 2012, has removed more than 170 tons of trash from the region. Litter ranges from the more common paper and cardboard waste, plastic and glass bottles to chemicals, household goods, appliances, toys and automotive parts. Waste tires are a common sight, and BTNEP counted more than 300 tires collected during the 2020 cleanup.

One of BTNEP's core missions is litter prevention and informing the public on recycling, properly disposing trash, and donating used/unwanted items. Taking an active role in these environmentally beneficial activities is always a great way to make a dent in what goes into landfills while ensuring that our streams, rivers and bayous aren't negatively impacted.

Most paper and plastic can be recycled, and used items can be sold privately, repurposed or donated to charities or thrift stores. Also, note that Lafourche Parish, and many parishes throughout the state, hold a periodic household hazardous materials collection day. These are designated days where residents can simply drive up to the collection location and drop off electronics, appliances (i.e., oven ranges, refrigerators, washers, dryers and dishwashers, etc.), used motor oil, paint, used tires and other items. Some collection events do not accept certain items, so be sure to check ahead.



*Photo courtesy of BTNEP
Tons of waste, most of which are items that can be donated or repurposed, are retrieved from the bayou each year.*



*Photo courtesy of BTNEP
Waste tires are a common site collected each year during the Bayou Lafourche cleanup.*

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For an example of what a Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day entails, the East Baton Rouge government page has general information: <https://www.brla.gov/893/Household-Hazardous-Materials>.

For information about waste disposal in Lafourche Parish, visit www.lafourchegov.org.

To volunteer or get more information on upcoming Bayou Lafourche Cleanups, visit www.btnep.org, or contact Alma Robichaux via email at alma@btnep.org or call (985) 447-0868.

To report illegal dumping activity, contact Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's Single Point of Contact line at 1-888-763-5424, or report an environmental incident online at www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/file-a-complaint-report-an-incident.

Household Hazardous Material Collection Days to be held in Ascension and EBR Parishes

Ascension Parish is holding a Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day at Lamar-Dixon Expo Center from 9 a.m. to 1 pm, Saturday, April 3 for Ascension Parish residents only. You must have an ID. For more information, call Citizen Service Center at 225-450-1200.

East Baton Rouge Parish is holding its Spring Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day at LSU Touchdown Village, Saturday, April 17, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for East Baton Rouge Parish residents. Masks and IDs are required.

The event entrance will be located across from Engineering Lane next to LSU Patrick F. Taylor Hall. Residents should enter the event on South. Quad Drive of Highland Road. Residents are asked to remain in their vehicles and wear a mask while being assisted.

For more information, call City-Parish Recycling Office at (225) 389-5194.





Who's Who At LDEQ?



Von Magee – Environmental Scientist III, Office of Environmental Compliance/Surveillance Division, Southeastern Regional Office

A Covington native, Magee graduated from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond with a bachelor's degree in biological sciences. He was recently rehired by LDEQ and rejoined the department in his current position after working within the oil and gas industry for the last seven years out of Lafayette.

Magee returns to his previous position, working out of LDEQ's Southeastern Regional Office in the Office of Environmental Compliance/Surveillance Division – a position he held for over six years from 2007-2013.

Stephen Baudean – Environmental Scientist, Office of Environmental Compliance/Surveillance Division, Kisatchie Central Regional Office

Baudean is the middle of five boys and from Folsom. He graduated from Covington High School in 2011 and earned a bachelor's degree in biological sciences from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Miss.

During his time in Hattiesburg, he worked at Southern Prohibition Brewery as a bartender, lab technician and in packaging. Baudean also volunteered over 500 hours at the fisheries research facility in Grand Isle. While volunteering, he worked aboard their boat, catching and tagging different species of bony fish and sharks.

In his downtime, Baudean loves to hike and explore new areas, whitewater kayaking, playing soccer and SCUBA diving.



Daniel Cristina, Jr. - Environmental Scientist Staff, Office of Environmental Compliance/Surveillance Division, Southeast Regional Office

Cristina is a New Orleans native who graduated from Southeastern Louisiana University with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology before joining LDEQ's Waste Enforcement Division. He eventually returned home and joined LDEQ's Surveillance Division in New Orleans. He was recently promoted to Environmental Scientist Staff in the Surveillance Division under the Office of Environmental Compliance.

Cristina enjoys hunting, fishing, fantasy football, spending time with family and friends, and exploring the outdoors with his wife Victoria and chocolate Labrador Samuel.



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



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Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Fourth Quarter Summaries

Fourth Quarter 2020 Enforcement Actions:

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

Fourth Quarter 2020 Settlement Agreements:

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

Fourth Quarter 2020 Air Permits:

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

Fourth Quarter 2020 Water Permits:

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

Fourth Quarter 2020 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

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

