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Protecting the Environment in Louisiana

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and its employees are dedicated to protecting the environment and the citizens of Louisiana. This dedication comes in many forms.

LDEQ's main headquarters are in Baton Rouge, and there are five regional and two ancillary offices located around the state to better serve the citizens. The regional offices are the Acadiana Regional Office in Lafayette; the Capital Regional Office in Baton Rouge; the Northeast Regional Office in Monroe; the Northwest Regional Office in Shreveport, the South East Regional Office in New Orleans, the Southwest Regional Office in Lake Charles; the Kitsatchie Office in Pineville and the Bayou Lafourche Office in Lockport. These offices are strategically located so that LDEQ can offer services to the entire state and promptly deal with emergencies.

In order to properly assess Louisiana's environmental issues, LDEQ has well-trained inspectors, emergency responders, environmental scientists, small business personnel and other personnel located around the state. LDEQ has also acquired up-to-date, state of the art tools with which to monitor the environment.

One of the three LDEQ MAMLs

The LDEQ operates three Mobile Air Monitoring Labs (MAMLs), which can deploy to monitor air quality almost anywhere in the state on relatively short notice. The public can access reading from the MAMLs on the LDEQ website in real-time. For more information on the MAMLs, go to ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/mobile-air-monitoring-lab***.

LDEQ has 39 air monitoring stations positioned throughout the state that analyze ambient air continuously, and these sites are maintained and visited frequently by LDEQ staff. Most monitoring sites are source-specific and are approved by EPA. To see the location and capabilities of each monitor, you can go to the LDEQ website at ***www.deq,louisiana.gov/page/air-monitoring-sites***. Not all monitoring sites have the same capabilities.

LDEQ has acquired unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), also known as drones, to enhance the ability to access difficult sites, conduct mapping projects, help with emergency response, and take high-quality inspection pictures and videos. One

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Two of LDEQ's unmanned aircraft systems

of the larger UAS has a thermal camera and a long-range zoom camera for situations where the pilot has to be farther away. The largest drone has the ability to carry an air analyzer and an instrument for measuring water, as well as equipment to collect air and water samples.

While not all of the equipment has been fully deployed in the field yet, this technology will allow LDEQ to collect data that would have been impossible to capture in the past. These properties will greatly increase LDEQ's ability to assess environmental issues. UAS and pilots are now stationed at most of the regional offices, which are used primarily for emergency response and collecting imagery for inspections.

The Surveillance Division conducts inspections on a regular basis to ensure facilities with air emissions permits are in compliance with department-issued permits, state regulations and federal regulations. LDEQ works with facilities with violations to get them into compliance. Violations can be referred to the LDEQ Office of Environmental compliance for further investigation.

Emergency response, disaster response, radiological preparedness and Chemical Accident Prevention are an integral part of LDEQ's mission. Responding to emergencies to assess environmental damage, monitor the air, work with other authorities to mitigate the damage and oversee the event are other ways the LDEQ works to protect the citizens and environment of Louisiana. The Radiological Emergency Planning and Response Program protects the health and safety of the public and the environment in the event of an incident at nuclear power plants. Nuclear power plants located in Louisiana are River Bend Station in St. Francisville and Waterford-3 Steam Electric Station in Taft. There is also a Grand Gulf Nuclear Station in Port Gibson, Mississippi, which has the potential to affect Tensas Parish in Louisiana. Regular drills and maintaining a response plan are key to that mission. To learn more about LDEQ's Emergency and Radiation responsibilities and functions, go to ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/subhome/emergency-response***.

LDEQ is accessible to the public. If you have environmental concerns, there are many avenues to report them to the Department. You may call the Single Point of Contact Line (SPOC) to file a citizen complaint M-Fr – 8 am to 4:30 pm at 225-219-3640 or 888-763-5424 (toll-free in Louisiana). You can file your complaint or environmental concern on the LDEQ website at ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/file-a-complaint-report-an-incident***. The customer service line is 225-219-5337 or 866-896-5337. LDEQ's public records are available online in the Electronic Data Management System (EDMS) by visiting ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/edms***.

The LDEQ website, the LDEQ Facebook page, Twitter and LDEQ videos on Youtube all provide information for the public.

LDEQ's real-time Air Quality Information is available online at ***https://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov***. There you will find current AQI data, Air Quality Forecast, Regional 8 hour and hourly ozone dates, individual site data and the ability to sign up for notifications on ozone, Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5) and Sulphur Dioxide (SO2). To sign up to receive Air Quality Advisories go to ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/enviroflash***.

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Message from the Secretary

Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.

After a series of very rainy days, May is finally coming to an end. That means we are approaching the Memorial Day Holiday. Aside from a day off from work on the last Monday in May, this holiday is a time we as a people have set aside to reflect on those who died in the service of our country.

I hope you will pause to reflect on the meaning of Memorial Day and maybe attend a concert or ceremony honoring the fallen. We should give thanks for the sacrifice of those who gave their all. We are blessed to be able to gather for these ceremonies this year. If you haven't been vaccinated for COVID-19 or are in a high risk group, you may want to choose to wear a mask as you attend events that draw large crowds. The people we are honoring died to ensure our right to make our own choices. Wearing a mask is now just that, a choice.

Whatever you decide to do, let it be your choice and not something someone on the Internet told you to do. Look at the facts, assess the risk and make the choice you feel is right. Enjoy the holiday and stay safe.

LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown speaks to a group at the Louisiana Police Jury Association of Louisiana meeting on May 13 at the Crown Plaza in Baton Rouge. In his first in-person speech since the onset of the Covid-19 epidemic, Brown gave attendees a look at current hot topics in environmental regulation, including environmental justice, climate change, air quality and the American Rescue Plan. Brown also filled in the group on what is going on with bills at the Louisiana Legislature that may have an environmental impact.

I mentioned rainy days. There is still high water standing in many streets and roadways, especially to the south of Baton Rouge. Many houses took on water during the last rain event, and piles of soggy belongings, ruined carpet, sheetrock, furniture and personal treasures line many neighborhood streets. It's an unpleasant reminder of what happened in 2016 in Baton Rouge, Denham Springs and surrounding areas, what happened last year in Lake Charles and what happened in New Orleans in 2005.

When you live in Louisiana, you know the threat of flooding is always there. A sudden downpour can flood streets and bring water into homes. Sustained rains like we had this month are a sure recipe for trouble. Now hurricane season begins (June 1). Be ready. Go to the "Get A Game Plan" site and print out a checklist. You can't always keep the water out, but you can lessen the impact on you and your family by being ready with supplies and a plan to get yourself out of harm's way. The site is https://www.getagameplan.org/.

One last thing: I know the elevators in the Galvez Building are starting to be a bit difficult to use. Be patient. The four-person-limit is still in effect.

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Mercury and fish consumption advisories issued for six Louisiana waterways

The Louisiana Departments of Health, Environmental Quality, and Wildlife and Fisheries have issued a series of fish consumption advisories for six bodies of water. These most recent advisories include one new warning and updates to five previously issued warnings. Louisiana issues precautionary advisories when unacceptable levels of mercury are detected in fish or shellfish.

The Department of Environmental Quality conducts fish sampling. LDH then uses this data to determine the need for additional advisories or to modify existing advisories. Each advisory lists the specific fish, makes consumption recommendations and outlines the geographic boundaries of the affected waterways. To view the advisories on an interactive map, visit ***https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/fishing-consumption-and-swimming-advisories***.

Bayou Chene and Bayou Lacassine

- *Includes Bayou Chene from its headwaters near Jennings to its confluence with Bayou Lacassine, and Bayou Lacassine from its headwaters near Lacassine to its confluence with Bayou Misere.*
- Women of childbearing age and children less than seven years of age should consume no more than **one meal per month*** of largemouth bass and bowfin (choupique, grinnel) combined from the advisory area; OR should consume no more than of crappie, freshwater drum (gaspergou), smallmouth buffalo and warmouth combined from the advisory area.
- Other adults and children seven years of age and older: no advisory.

Bayou Nezpique

- *From the headwaters of Bayou Nezpique to its confluence with the Mermentau River.*
- Women of childbearing age and children less than seven years of age should consume no more than **one meal per month** of largemouth bass and bowfin (choupique, grinnel) combined from the advisory area; OR should consume no more than two meals per month of freshwater drum (gaspergou), crappie, and warmouth combined from the advisory area.
- Other adults and children seven years of age and older should consume no more than **three meals per month** of bowfin.

Big Alabama Bayou

- *Includes the Big Alabama Bayou for its entire length from the boat landing at La. 975 to its southern end near the Atchafalaya River Pilot Channel.*
- Women of childbearing age and children less than seven years of age should not consume flathead catfish. Do not consume more than one meal per month of any other species from the advisory area.
- Other adults and children seven years of age and older should consume no more than two meals per month of flathead catfish from the advisory area.

Little Alabama Bayou**

- *Includes Little Alabama Bayou from its headwaters near East Krotz Springs to its confluence with Big Alabama Bayou.*
- Women of childbearing age and children less than 7 years of age should consume no more than **one meal per month** of bowfin (choupique, grinnel) and largemouth bass combined from the advisory area; OR should consume **no more than three meals per month** of black crappie and freshwater drum (gaspergou) combined from the advisory area.
- Other adults and children 7 years of age and older: no advisory.

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Calcasieu River Drainage Basin

- *Includes the Calcasieu River from Hwy 26 to the Saltwater barrier north of Lake Charles, the West Fork Calcasieu River, Houston River, Hickory Creek, Beckwith Creek, English Bayou and Little River.*
- Women of childbearing age and children less than 7 years of age should consume no more than **one meal per month** of black crappie, largemouth bass, bowfin (choupique, grinnel), freshwater drum (gaspergou), spotted bass, and flathead catfish combined; OR should consume no more than **two meals per month** of other species caught from the advisory area.
- Other adults and children 7 years of age and older should consume no more than **three meals per month** of largemouth bass, freshwater drum (gaspergou), and bowfin (choupique, grinnel) combined from the advisory area.

Old River (Niblett Bluff in Calcasieu Parish)

- *Includes the Old River from its headwaters to the confluence with the Sabine River*
- Women of childbearing age and children less than 7 years of age should **not consume** bowfin (choupique, grinnel) or freshwater drum (gaspergou); and should consume no more than **one meal per month** of any other species from the advisory area.
- Other adults and children 7 years of age and older should consume no more than **two meals per month** of freshwater drum (gaspergou) and bowfin (choupique, grinnel) combined.

** A meal is considered to be half a pound of fish for adults*
*** New advisory*

Screenshot of the DEQ Fish Advisories App

Because of mercury contamination, there are now fish consumption advisories for 49 waterways in Louisiana and one for the Gulf of Mexico.

Louisiana fish consumption advisories are based on the estimate that the average resident eats four meals of fish per month. Consuming more than this from local water bodies may increase health risks.

Mercury is an element that occurs naturally in the environment. Consequently, there are small amounts of mercury in the sediments of streams, lakes, rivers and oceans. Nearly all fish contain trace amounts of mercury. They absorb mercury as they feed on aquatic organisms. Larger predator fish contain more mercury than smaller fish. It is recommended that smaller fish be consumed instead of larger ones.

People are exposed to low levels of mercury throughout their lives. Eating contaminated fish is one way we are exposed to mercury. Health effects from harmful levels of mercury can include nervous system and kidney damage. Young children and developing fetuses are more sensitive to the toxic effects of mercury. Therefore, consumption advisories are issued at lower fish tissue concentrations for women of childbearing age and children under 7 years of age.

The full text for each advisory is posted online at ***www.ldh.la.gov/EatSafeFish*** or by calling toll-free 1-888-293-7020. You may also access the information by downloading the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's new app, which is available through ***Google Play*** (DEQ Fish Advisories) and the ***App Store*** (LA Fish Advisories).

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LDEQ 2021 Natural and Catastrophic Disaster Parish Resource Book now available

Hurricane season is upon us, and it is time to prepare should a storm come our way. Hurricanes and natural disasters bring many problems for first responders and emergency response.

One important piece to the response effort is the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's 2021 Natural and Catastrophic Disaster Parish Resource Book. The book contains information pertaining to disaster/emergency recovery assistance as it relates to permitting and debris collection. LDEQ compiles the book for parish emergency officials, but it is also available to the public online at ***https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/parish-resource-book***. The Parish Resource Book is updated and can be downloaded and/or printed.

The Resource Book contains vital information, such as:

- **LDEQ Regional Office Contact Information and Office Map**
- **Parish Liaison Contact List**
- **LDEQ Regional Offices**
- **Single Point of Contact (SPOC) Notification Procedures and Requirements**
- **Guidance for Segregation of Curbside Debris and Debris Management**
- **Comprehensive Plan for Disaster Clean-up and Debris Management**

LDEQ parish liaisons send the book and information to parish contacts so it will be readily available in case of a hurricane or natural disaster. The book includes the Comprehensive Plan for Disaster Clean-up and Debris Management, which can be an important tool in the aftermath of such an event.

Parishes and the public are encouraged to download and print this information prior to an emergency and to check the website for updates regularly. For emergency information, the public can access information from the Governor's Office of Homeland Security websites ***http://emergency.louisiana.gov*** and ***www.getagameplan.org***.

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Why and when does LDEQ issue Air Quality Action Day advisories?

Ozone season is here. That means the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality will issue Air Quality Action Day advisories when the conditions are conducive for the formation of ozone or Fine Particle pollution (PM2.5). Conditions are more favorable for ozone formation June through September; however, we can experience an exceedance anytime. It is important to be aware of air quality every month of the year. An Air Quality Action Day for ozone means that weather conditions are favorable for the formation of higher than normal levels of ozone. LDEQ issues an Ozone Action Day advisory when the Air Quality Index (AQI) forecast is above 100, categorized as Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups or Code Orange.

To create these advisories, LDEQ works with a forecaster, Sonoma Technology, to look at the weather conditions and other factors to predict when ozone formation is likely or to identify other air quality issues. The factors include cloud cover, the presence of ozone precursors - volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides (VOC and NOx) - and wind speed and direction. These forecasts are listed daily on the LDEQ website and can be viewed at ***http://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov***. Advisories are generally sent out in early to mid-afternoon, the day before the forecast advisory.

In Louisiana, we tend to see ozone advisories more in May through September, when high-pressure systems stall over the area. Ozone advisories are more common on very sunny days with little or no wind for mixing. When sunlight combines with VOCs and NOx, it forms higher than normal levels of ozone near the ground that may cause harmful health effects. Increased ozone levels may cause unhealthy air quality for the general population. Active children and adults, the elderly and people with respiratory diseases, such as asthma, should avoid prolonged outdoor activities.

Ozone is a colorless gas that exists in the earth's stratosphere and protects us from the sun's ultraviolet rays. However, when ozone forms near the earth's surface, it can affect health. When LDEQ issues an Ozone Action Day Advisory, Industry is requested to take voluntary measures to reduce ozone precursor emissions into the atmosphere. LDEQ notifies Industry when the ozone level is predicted to be 90 or above on the Air Quality Index. Industry then takes steps to reduce the level of ozone precursors that are released into the air. Many facilities have Ozone Action Plans.

Individuals can also impact the air quality and be part of the solution by taking voluntary steps to reduce their impact on the air quality, such as:

- Drive Less – Carpool, take public transportation, walk more, bring your lunch to work and combine errands.
- Do not idle your car in carpool lines or use the drive-thru. Turn off your engine and go into the restaurant or business. You create less pollution by stopping and restarting your engine than you do idling.
- Refuel when temperatures are cooler – typically after 6 p.m.
- Mow grass and use other gas-powered lawn equipment and off-road vehicles after 6 p.m.
- Postpone chores that use oil-based paint, varnishes and solvents (that are flammable) to another, preferably breezy day.
- If you barbeque, use an electric starter or a chimney starter instead of lighter fluid.
- Conserve energy in your home. Set your thermostats a little higher when you are not at home to conserve energy and to help reduce the load placed on power producers. Not only will it save you money on your utility bills, but it also reduces the amount of precursor emissions produced by the power company.

If you would like to get free notifications of daily air quality or just get notified when there is an advisory, you can sign up for Enviroflash at ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/enviroflash***. To obtain real-time air quality information, or to sign up for real-time notifications about ozone, PM2.5 or Sulphur Dioxide (SO2) go to ***https://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov***. To see the regional air quality information, go to ***www.airnow.gov***.

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St. Martin Parish Council adopts May as official Air Quality Awareness Month in St. Martin Parish

St. Martin Parish adopted a resolution proclaiming May the Official Air Quality Awareness Month in St. Martin Parish on May 4, 2021. The St. Martin Parish Council unanimously approved the resolution, as they have for many years.

The Parish Council consisting of Bryon Fuselier, Carl Jean Baptiste, Tangi Narcisse, David Poirier, Chris Tauzin, Vincent Alexander, Dean LeBlanc and Daniel Richard, Jr. unanimously approved the resolution.

It recognizes the importance of good air quality and the use of the Air Quality Index to gauge the air around you and make decisions about your health.

A motion was made by Carla JeanBatiste and seconded by Byron Fuselier that the following resolution be adopted:

RESOLUTION NO. 21-040-RS

AIR QUALITY AWARENESS MONTH IN ST. MARTIN PARISH, LOUISIANA

WHEREAS, poor outdoor air quality can threaten the health of our citizens; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that one out of every three people in the United States is at a higher risk of experiencing problems from ground-level ozone, a contributor to poor air quality; and

WHEREAS, children, people with lung disease, older adults, and people with heart disease tend to be more vulnerable to outdoor pollution, and it would be beneficial for people to learn more about the effects air quality may have on their health if they fall into one of these sensitive groups; and

WHEREAS, utilizing the Air Quality Index is simple and free of cost; and

WHEREAS, knowledge of the Air Quality Index can help protect our communities health; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and St. Martin Parish are supporting efforts to encourage citizens to utilize the Air Quality Index, understand what causes poor air quality, and make strides to improve the overall outdoor air quality.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the St. Martin Parish Council, in Regular Session convened this 4th day of May, 2021, does hereby proclaim the month of May 2021 as:

OFFICIAL AIR QUALITY AWARENESS MONTH IN ST. MARTIN PARISH.

This Resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS:	Byron Fuselier, Carla JeanBatiste, Tangie Narcisse, David Poirier, Chris Tauzin, Vincent Alexander, Dean LeBlanc and Daniel Richard, Jr.
NAYS:	None.
ABSTAIN:	None.
ABSENT:	Brook Champagne (excused).

And the Resolution was declared adopted this 4th day of May, 2021.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

I, **BROOKE GILLESPIE, CLERK OF THE ST. MARTIN PARISH COUNCIL**, do hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Resolution adopted by the St. Martin Parish Council, in Regular Session convened on the 4th day of May, 2021, at which meeting a quorum was present.

GIVEN UNDER MY OFFICIAL SIGNATURE AND SEAL OF OFFICE, this 5th day of May, 2021, St. Martinville, Louisiana.

Brooke Gillespie

BROOKE GILLESPIE, CLERK
ST. MARTIN PARISH COUNCIL

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The "Modern" EDMS is close to becoming a reality!

Expanded Testing

In the last edition of Discover DEQ, we offered the opportunity to test the new application to any interested public users . We had a lot of interest and sent a link to the modern EDMS to anyone who wanted to be involved. So far, we have received only positive feedback.

We consider the User Acceptance Testing to be a success, with comments such as "it is faster," "easier to use," and "has more functionality." We would like to thank those of you who have been using the new application - your input has been valuable.

Road Ahead

Good news! The modern EDMS will be available (in early release) to everyone in early June. Anyone interested in using the modern EDMS during the early release will be able to click on a link to access it. You will find the link in the top banner of the "classic" EDMS, and keep your eyes peeled for other announcements regarding how to access and use the new EDMS.

If you want to preview what it looks like, you can access these two short overview videos:

1. The EDMS Redesign Video gives you a first look at the screens and functions at a high level: ***https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zh4Yzw8S7rQ***
2. This new EDMS Application Overview Video navigates through the pages and highlights new functionality. It replaces the old EDMS Tutorial Video: ***https://youtu.be/rk0IPzbCWFM***

For more details on how to use EDMS for document searches, there will be detailed Help Videos within the application.

What to Expect During the Transition

As stated above, a link to the new version will be made available to all users in June, accessible on the classic EDMS page. To kick things off, an email with a link to the new EDMS will be sent to DEQ employees, as well as other key users. For those of you who love the classic version, it will be available for a period of time after the modern version is made available. We will communicate in plenty of time before the transition.

We plan to send a survey in the near future to capture your feedback. We look forward to hearing from you and hope you enjoy this new modern version of EDMS!

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LDEQ's Enviroschool to host webinar: Understanding Nonpoint Source Pollution

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's (LDEQ) Enviroschool will host a webinar on Understanding Nonpoint Source Pollution. This session will teach you what Nonpoint Source Pollution is and how you can prevent it.

When: 10 a.m. Thursday, June 10
Online: Live Webinar Only

Please register by emailing ***enviroschool@la.gov***.

Louisiana's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Program is managed by the LDEQ and is a collaborative effort that includes many partners. NPS is a type of water pollution that is not generated from a discrete conveyance, such as a discharge pipe, but is generated during rainfall events. NPS pollution is the largest remaining type of water pollution that needs to be addressed within Louisiana and across the nation in order to restore designated uses to impaired waterbodies.

Section 319 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) required that the states develop a NPS Management Plan to reduce and control nonpoint sources of pollution from various land uses that contribute to water quality problems across the United States. LDEQ's goal is to educate the public about NPS pollution and best management practices (BMPs) that can be implemented to reduce and control this type of pollution.

The Enviroschool program at LDEQ is the environmental education outreach arm of the agency and provides training for communities, businesses, and other organizations on a number of regulatory topics. The program aims to inform attendees about the environmental regulatory process and to maintain and improve environmental compliance.

The workshops are free and open to the public. If you are interested, please feel free to register for any of our workshops. For more information, go to ***http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enviroschool*** or email Enviroschool at ***enviroschool@la.gov***.

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LDEQ's Emergency and Radiological Services Division's Radiation Section passes recent Nuclear Regulatory Commission audit

The Emergency and Radiological Services Division's (ERSD) Radiation Section passed a recent Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) audit of LDEQ's Radiation Program with flying colors.

The NRC performed a comprehensive Integrated Materials Performance Evaluation Program (IMPEP) review of the Radiation Section between November 2020 and January 2021. An IMPEP team, led by the NRC, conducted the review remotely due to travel restrictions associated with Covid-19, with the exception of in-person LDEQ inspector inspection accompaniments.

The NRC IMPEP team reviewed all aspects of LDEQ'S Radiation Program, compared the program to standard performance indicators and found that LDEQ's Radiation Program met or exceeded those performance standards.

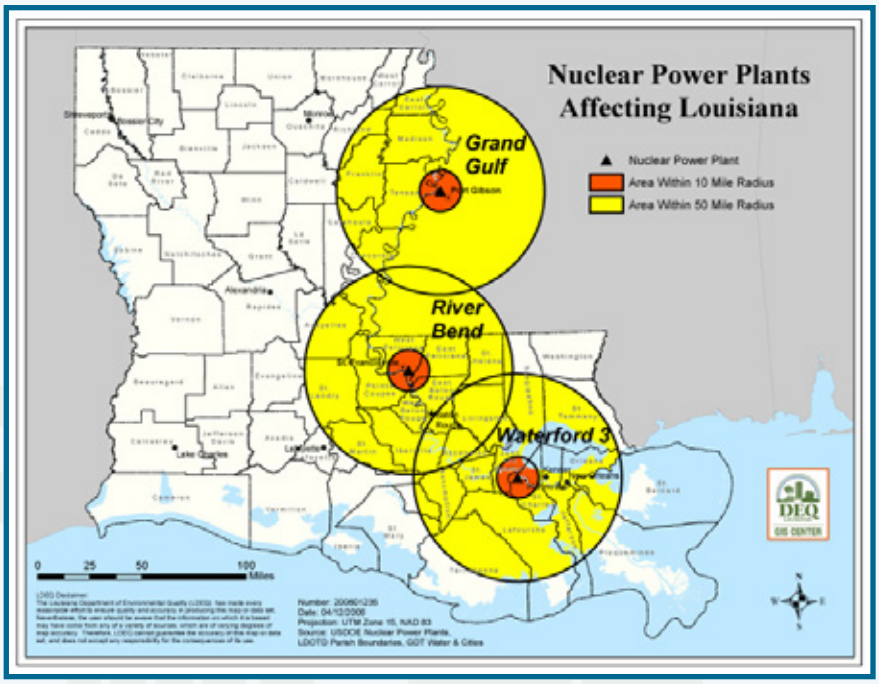
The IMPEP team developed a comprehensive report on the Program audit and submitted the report to the NRC Materials Review Board (MRB) for review. In the report to the MRB, the IMPEP team recommended that the Program be found to be adequate to protect human health, safety and compatible with the NRC's program. The MRB met on April 27, 2021, and after discussion, unanimously agreed with the IMPEP team's findings.

"The NRC thoroughly reviewed every aspect of our Radiation Program over a period of several months and found the Program to meet the highest level of performance – 'Satisfactory'," said Karen Burgard, manager of the Radiation Section.

The NRC will meet with the Radiation Section of LDEQ's Emergency and Radiological Services Division again in 2023 for a periodic review of the Program, and another full IMPEP audit will be conducted in 2025.

"The Program was able to demonstrate marked improvement since the last IMPEP audit in 2016, and we are very proud of the hard work of the Radiation Section staff to achieve this standard of program excellence," ERSD Administrator Jeff J. Dauzat said.

To learn more about LDEQ's Emergency and Radiological Services Division's Radiation Section, visit ***https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/radiological-emergency-planning-and-response-repr***.



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LDEQ staff participate in emergency response exercise hosted by Chevron

Members of LDEQ's emergency response and public information staff participated in an emergency response exercise hosted by Chevron May 19-20. Held predominantly in a virtual environment due to the various locations of the participants and to abide by COVID-19 social distancing measures, the exercise consisted of an emergency response scenario involving a drillship operating in the Gulf of Mexico. Under the scenario, the ship lost power and subsequently triggered a release of oil from a subsea well. As required by emergency response protocol, a Unified Command was established consisting of Chevron, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office.

LDEQ's role in the event was to support the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office in their effort to address containment of the oil while ensuring protection of human health and the environment. Since a majority of the exercise was held in a virtual format, Microsoft Teams was the online communications platform used by the responders during the two-day exercise.

Established as a training tool designed to test Chevron's readiness in the event of an emergency, the exercise drew together various partners to quickly respond to a scenario. During the exercise, each participant was assigned to an area of expertise in order to marshal resources, prepare action plans and secure the accident as rapidly and efficiently as possible.

Throughout the exercise, the participants could virtually move from room to room with the click of a mouse within Microsoft Teams receiving information and adding their voices as needed. The rooms, or channels, consisted of various operational locations, such as the Joint Information Center, Logistics, Unified Command, Finance, etc. The setup was akin to physically being in a large facility where one could walk from room to room to participate in a discussion and/or receive information from a respective operational area. This format allowed everyone an accessible way in which they could stay informed as the response unfolded.

The exercise concluded with a "hotwash," or post-drill critique, where the participants were given an opportunity to provide any positive and/or negative takeaways. The training successfully fostered communication among various roles, added a layer of experience to handling an emergency and taught valuable lessons – all of which are tools that can be applied to strengthen the overall response in the event of an actual emergency.

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State Employee Recognition Week 2021

LDEQ Secretary Chuck Carr Brown and executive staff members present employees with a letter of appreciation from Gov. John Bel Edwards recognizing their outstanding work as part of State Employee Recognition Week 2021.

LDEQ Secretary Chuck Carr Brown presents Assistant Secretary Lourdes Iturralde with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Under Secretary Kayrn Andrews presents Human Resource Specialist Dawn Dufrene with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Assistant Secretary Elliot Vega presents Environmental Division Administrator Yolunda Righteous with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Assistant Secretary Roger Gingles presents Environmental Scientist Manager Amanda Vincent with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Assistant Secretary Elliot Vega presents Environmental Division Administrator Bryan Johnston with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Press Secretary Greg Langley presents Public Information Officer Jean Kelly with a letter of appreciation.

State Employee Recognition Week 2021

Continued

LDEQ Assistant Secretary Roger Gingles presents Environmental Scientist Manager Bob Bailey with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Secretary Chuck Carr Brown and Deputy Secretary Denise Bennett present Attorney Courtney Burdette with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Assistant to the Secretary Bijan Sharafkhani and Environmental Scientist Manager present Environmental Scientist Marissa Jimenez with a letter of appreciation.

LDEQ Assistant Secretary Lourdes Iturralde presents Environmental Scientist Daniel Lambert with a letter of appreciation.

DISCOVER DEQ
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

May 2021 Issue Number: 112

Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's First Quarter Summaries

First Quarter 2021 Enforcement Actions:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-actions

First Quarter 2021 Settlement Agreements:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-division

First Quarter 2021 Air Permits:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/permits-issued-by-calendar-quarter

First Quarter 2021 Water Permits:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/lpdes

First Quarter 2021 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/waste-permits