



# DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



March 2022 Issue Number: 122

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## Dignitaries attend Bottle Lofts project dedication

**F**our Corners -- it's a name that evokes wistful images of a tree-shaded small town crossroads. This part of Lafayette was once very like that with a Coca-Cola bottling plant, stores, gas stations, motels, railroad tracks, a movie theater, subdivisions and more. At the heart of Four Corners, a web of streets converged on the area where University Avenue and Cameron Street cross. Area residents found places to shop, to dine, to recreate and to visit in Four Corners.

That was before. Time was not kind to Four Corners. Urban decay hit the area hard, leaving the bottling plant shuttered, the gas stations closed and the old motel a moldering hulk. And these places weren't just old and derelict, they were host to environmental hazards. Asbestos. Lead. Leaky underground storage tanks.

On March 3, dignitaries and guests assembled in that once-dilapidated hub to celebrate the rebirth and renewal of the area. A coalition of developers and investors (HRI Communities, First Horizon Bank), the city of Lafayette, Acadiana Planning Commission, the Acadiana Center for the Arts, state agencies (LDEQ, Louisiana Housing Corporation, Louisiana Office of Community Development) and the residents of the Four Corners area combined to transform the abandoned Coca-Cola bottling building and adjacent warehouse into a 40-unit affordable artist housing property called Bottle Art Lofts.



*Lafayette Parish Mayor/President Josh Guillory and Lafayette Parish Councilman Pat Lewis, left, accept the plaque for Lafayette Consolidated Government from LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, right.*

That was just Phase One.

HRI Communities has also built a sparkling new 65-unit multifamily building, which is the second phase of the Bottle Art Lofts project. These units will have the same affordability components and leasing preference for artists. A ribbon cutting March 3 celebrated the upcoming completion of Phase Two.

"We have taken an area that was very vibrant, that had been distressed, and now we're going to make it vibrant again," Gov. John Bel Edwards said. "Phase One was completed in less than two years – despite the pandemic and numerous natural disasters.

"Phase Two – 65-units mixed-income, one - and two-bedroom apartments – will be finished by the end of March. It was built with resilient features that protect people's lives and protect people's property," he said.

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Phase One of the redevelopment was completed in 2021 with the \$15.4 million restoration of the historic Coca-Cola Bottling facility as a 40-unit affordable housing development with a leasing preference for artists. The facility includes an art gallery, computer lab, and shared studio space for residents/artists. The \$16.1 million Phase II of the redevelopment includes 65 units for low and moderate income households. The amenities at the four-story, 67,000-square-foot newly constructed building include a fitness center, community center and park space, and innovate resilient design features. The project is expected to catalyze revitalization efforts the federal-designated Opportunity Zone.

“These investments are truly transformational. If you put enough of them together, you transform not only the area but the whole state,” Gov. Edwards said.

Bottle Art Lofts is bounded by Midway, Evangeline and Cameron streets and University Avenue. It is the heart of the Four Corners area. LDEQ played a key role in the revitalization project through its Voluntary Remediation Program working in co-ordination with many other agencies including the Acadiana Planning Commission’s Brownfields Program. LDEQ’s Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) facilitates the reuse of vacant and abandoned properties, by providing a Certificate of Completion and Release of Liability for past contamination at the site. In addition, non-responsible parties may be able to employ institutional and engineering controls as part of the cleanup making the remediation more economically feasible while still protecting human health and the environment. The Bottle Art Lofts Project utilized the benefits of the VRP to facilitate the redevelopment of the property.

“A vapor barrier system applied to the existing concrete slab at the site prevents harmful vapors from collecting inside the buildings (engineering control). A conveyance notice was place on the property to restrict the installation of groundwater wells and/or the use of impacted groundwater zones at the site (institutional control). Without the flexibility of the VRP, addressing the environmental concerns would not have been economically feasible and the site would have continued to blight the already distressed neighborhood,” LDEQ Brownfields Director Rebecca Otte said.

As part of the March 3 ceremony, LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown presented plaques honoring four groups for their participation in the Bottle Art Lofts Project. The four groups are: HRI Communities (Developer), Acadiana Planning Commission (Brownfield Program and gap funding), Impetus (General Contractor - formerly known as Palmisano) and Lafayette Consolidated Government (Gap Financing).



*Senior Project Manager Jace Kuhlmann, right, accepts the plaque for Impetus.*



*Monique Boulet, right, accepts the plaque for Acadiana Planning Commission.*



*Josh Collen, right, accepts the plaque for HRI Communities.*



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## Message from the Secretary

*Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.*

### **Not just a conference – LEC was a reunion and a celebration**

It was so good to see so many people at the Louisiana Environmental Conference in Lafayette this month. The last two conferences had to be canceled because of the Covid epidemic. We finally got far enough in front of the virus to start having this kind of public event again. So I am very glad to be in a better place epidemic wise and very glad so many people are there with me.

It was also good to see the Louisiana Solid Waste Association resume its program of honoring exemplary members with awards and recognizing outstanding young students with scholarships. Congratulations to all the honorees who were recognized at the conference this year.

I want to extend a big “thank you” to all LDEQ personnel who gave presentations at the conference, manned booths and helped set up and clean up afterwards. Good job.

### **Covid**

Covid rates are now at their lowest levels since very early in the epidemic. No one knows if this lull is going to last a long time. Most experts say Covid is not finished, but it may be a lesser disease going forward, like the flu. If there is another surge, we all know what to do. We are experts in Zoom meetings. We can social distance and go two at a time on elevators. We still have our masks ready to use. I just don't want us to have to do that.

### **Weather**

Two tornadoes hit in New Orleans and the Northshore March 22. One tornado caused destruction in the eastern part of New Orleans and Arabi in St. Bernard Parish. That storm killed one person and destroyed dozens of homes. The Northshore tornado also caused damage but was in a more rural area.

Storm assessments are ongoing, but so far there are no reports of environmental incidents related to either tornado. It's that time of year. We really focus on hurricanes in South Louisiana, but we need to be aware of tornado threats too. Keep an eye on the weather. Never try to drive through a tornado. You don't want to wind up on YouTube like that poor pickup driver in Texas whose vehicle was overturned, spun in a circle then upright again. Be smart.

### **Core value**

As I said last month, I am going to discuss one of our agency core values each month. I wrote about diversity last month. For March, I am going to expand on our core value that relates to decision making. Our core value: “Make technically sound decisions rooted in science.”

This is often one of the most difficult things to explain to our stakeholders. “Science” means engineering and math, chemistry and physics, biology and geology, analytical sampling and analysis, approved methods and procedures based in law, state and federal. It does not include social sciences. When we say our decisions are rooted in science, we are saying that science is our go-to method for determining a path forward. Once we have that direction, we may also consider other factors that would influence us to make adjustments to that path, but our basic decisions about all questions – permitting, sampling, enforcement, etc. – are rooted in science.

### **Finally**

Stay safe. Look out for each other while you are working.



*I enjoyed a stroll through the exhibits and stopped to visit at the LDEQ booth.*



## Louisiana Environmental Conference returns after two years

Long time no see. After a 2-year Covid hiatus, the Louisiana Environmental Conference resumed in Lafayette’s Cajun Dome March 16. LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, gave a welcoming speech at the opening of the General Session, Thursday, March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day.

“For two years, we haven’t seen each other face-to-face,” Brown told the audience. He told the group he was glad to see them all again, and recounted the challenges his agency had to overcome because of the pandemic.

“In March 2020, we went home,” he said. “We became Zoom experts and learned how to do remote inspections.” LDEQ had a work-from-home policy before Covid, he added. “At any one time, our 100 percent is only 70 percent in the office.” It was not a policy that was designed to handle pandemic staffing needs, he said, but it was something to build on. The epidemic touched everyone at LDEQ, he added. “I had it in 2021 and again in 2022.

“It impacted us at a rate of about 12 percent,” he said. “You’re never fortunate when you have a death, and unfortunately we did have one death.”

The secretary then addressed matters of more immediacy.

Referencing hurricanes Laura, Delta and Ida, Brown said “whether you believe in climate change or not, storms are stronger and more frequent. Sea level is rising.” Brown serves on Gov. John Bel Edwards’ Climate Initiatives Task Force, a panel that recently released a seminal report, Louisiana Climate Action Plan, containing recommendations to limit the severity of climate change while positioning the state to maintain its economic competitiveness in a low-carbon future.

Brown touched briefly on some recurring issues at the agency that have been a problem over the last couple of years. He described two waste tire fires the agency has experienced at a soil stabilization project utilizing tire chips and at a defunct tire processing facility where chips and tires were stockpiled. He mentioned the heavy load of permit applications that tax the Office of Environmental Services.

There were also some bright spots in Brown’s speech. He talked about the successes of the department’s Brownfields Program and how it is helping put formerly contaminated commercial properties back in commerce. And the State Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund is a key tool in improving the water quality in Louisiana by helping small and large local governments install and/or improve sewer systems.

Brown said the incoming funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill will aid that effort.

“Between the Clean Water money and the Drinking Water money, we should be able to make changes in this state that will last.”

Brown also discussed landfills, waste tires, food waste, recycling and solar energy.



*LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown addresses attendees at the opening of the Louisiana Environmental Conference in the Cajundome in Lafayette March 17. LDEQ Solid Waste Permits Administrator Yolunda Righteous, left, conference chair for the event, listens to his remarks.*

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The Louisiana Solid Waste Association, event co-sponsor, honored four individuals with awards, some held over from Covid-canceled events. Amanda M. Olson of Waste Management of Louisiana was named the 2020 Bentley Mackay Jr. Award winner for the most outstanding solid waste professional of the year. Rodney Schamerhorn was named the winner of the John A. Koury Memorial Award as 2019 Level A Operator of the Year. And Anthony Garrett Jr. was named winner of the John A. Koury Award as 2019 Level B Operator of the Year.

LSWA also named three recipients of 2021-2022 scholarship awards. Jesse Lane Fudge, West Feliciana High School graduate, was named recipient of the Gordon P. Boutwell Memorial Scholarship. Mich Austin Griffin, graduate of Winnfield High School, was named recipient of the James “Buddy” Veuleman Memorial Scholarship. And Felix Ali Jones II, graduate of Captain Shreve High School, was named recipient of the William “Bill” Mollere Memorial Scholarship.

## Dr. Chuck Carr Brown provides environmental update at Louisiana Police Jury Association meeting in Lake Charles

DEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown shared an environmental update with members of the Louisiana Police Jury Association at the group’s annual meeting in Lake Charles March 10. Brown spent a good part of his talk addressing climate change.

“If you saw the St. John flooding off Lake Ponchartrain from Hurricane Ida, you won’t doubt that sea level rise and stronger storm are occurring,” he said. He said we have to take action on climate change. The threat is real and obvious. “You’re going to look at I-10, and there is going to be nothing below it.”

“We will have to adjust to a water-only society,” he said. He talked about carbon emissions as a driver of change and pointed to the Net Zero Plan approved by Gov. John Bel Edwards’ Climate Initiative Task Force. Brown is a member of that group and participated in the 15-month effort that yielded the detailed call to action Jan. 31. The plan targets a net zero carbon emissions in Louisiana by 2050. It includes 28 strategies and 84 specific actions to reduce GHG emissions across the entire Louisiana economy. One of those recommendations is a transition to clean energy. Not a sudden shift, Brown said, a transition.

“You’re not going to turn the lights off Friday with fossil fuel and turn them back on Saturday with renewables,” Brown said. As we move to more wind and solar power, “natural gas is going to be the bridge fuel,” he said. “It’s not just Louisiana’s problem, he said. “Climate change is a dirty word in Texas,” he said, but for carbon reduction efforts to bear fruit, “the whole region has to get involved.”

Brown advised the jurors that the EPA under the Biden Administration emphasizes environmental justice – EJ – considerations in all its interactions with stakeholders. He described the EPA’s EJ Screen tool which uses 12 factors to provide information about a community’s socio-economic status, and advised them to visit the EPA’s website to try out the tool themselves. Brown also recounted the “Journey to Justice” tour by EPA Administrator Michael Regan in which he visited several Deep South states, but did not meet with most of the Environmental Directors and officials in those states.

“You don’t get the whole story when you only talk to one side,” Brown said. He added that after that questionable initial step, the EPA Administrator and his staff have struck a more conciliatory tone with state regulators.



*LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown speaks at the Louisiana Police Jury Association meeting in Lake Charles March 10.*



## LDEQ's Aquifer Evaluation and Protection Unit assesses Louisiana's water wells

The protection of public water wells within the state involves many working parts. The central part is to identify and locate potential sources of contamination, within an established protection area for each well. LDEQ's Aquifer Evaluation and Protection Unit has that responsibility.

One of the team's missions is to continually update the location of each public water well in the state by mapping the wells via GPS coordinates.

As new wells are installed, other wells may be plugged or go inactive, so the team is continuously updating the database to ensure that every public well in the state is accounted for and has a source water assessment. Source water is surface water (from rivers, reservoirs, lakes, etc.) and groundwater from the state's aquifers extracted through water utilities by way of water wells or intakes. At that point, the water is treated for public distribution as drinking water. The goal is to identify all potential sources of contamination within the protection area that could negatively affect the well.

To identify those potential sources, the team first establishes a protection area around the well. The size of the protection area is dependent upon the depth and age of the well and can be a one mile, half mile or 1,000 foot radius. Any business or operation that uses or stores fuels or chemicals within that area is a potential source of contamination. Typically, this includes automotive body shops, car washes, gas stations, oil and gas operations and various industrial operations. Any business fitting that criteria will be located by GPS on a mapping system known as the SWAP, or the Source Water Assessment Program app.

"The program has moved into an assessment phase where we're going back and re-assessing all wells in the Pontchartrain Basin to align our program with the Non-Point section's priority areas," said Mary Gentry, Geologist with LDEQ's Aquifer Evaluation and Protection Unit. "We have around 638 wells in the basin and have four years to complete the assessments. We are currently into our second year."

The mapping program for LDEQ began in 1991, and has been refined and streamlined over time to be much more user friendly, particularly when working in the field. The team surveys an area first to ensure a well location is accurate using the well registration from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources' Office of Conservation – the agency tasked with water well licensure, drilling and regulatory compliance. As the team visits an existing well or discovers a new or abandoned well, that well's location, depth and other parameters are uploaded to the SWAP app.

In advance of the field visit the team will review the area's water system details on the LDH website. That information is cross-checked against DNR data for the well. Once they verify the data, LDEQ's Aquifer team then adds a current photo of the site to the profile as an added measure to ensure for accuracy.



*LDEQ Geologist Mary Gentry enters data for a water well into the SWAP app.*

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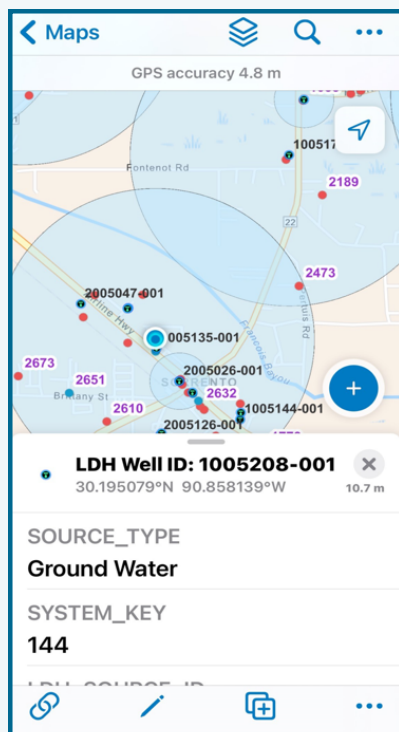
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A calculator program on SWAP will then run an analysis and produce an assessment report, which will include a vulnerability ranking for a particular well. A low risk of contamination is indicated if the well is deep or isolated, whereas a higher contamination risk would apply to a well that is shallower and located in a busier, commercial area where more potential sources of contamination exist. Age is also a factor when it comes to well vulnerability, as there were no construction standards in place before November 1985, so wells drilled prior to that date may not meet current standards.



*As the Aquifer Evaluation team physically checks each well's location, data for each well is entered into a centralized mapping app. A well's location, status (active or abandoned) and potential sources of contamination are each identified by various colored dots on the map.*

While hard copy maps are still used, online mapping systems and the new SWAP app make well tracking much easier than it was in years' past. "It's far more convenient and all automated now," Gentry said.

LDH tests the wells once a month for microbial contaminants and a test for chemicals such as toluene, benzene and the like will be conducted every three years.

So when you hear that a boil advisory is in place, it's precautionary, and typically means that the system has lost pressure and that water should be boiled until further testing can be done to ensure no microbial contamination exists. "The geology will dictate how far a well can be drilled, and 450 feet below the surface is the average depth in the New Orleans and Gonzales area," Gentry noted. "Some aquifers may be anywhere from less than 100 feet to 3,000 feet down, so it varies."

As soon as drinking water enters a public water works, protective jurisdiction moves to the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), who ensures that drinking water is safe. Should subsequent sampling identify contamination, LDH and LDEQ will work together to investigate and pinpoint any potential source(s).

Partnerships and communication between agencies is key. The LDEQ team may be joined by a sanitarian from LDH who will assist in locating and evaluating certain water wells. As a water well and its potential sources of contamination are identified, a source water assessment will be undertaken to determine the well's susceptibility to contamination. This information is vital in assisting local communities on the implementation of best management practices, adopting local ordinances to protect the well and emergency contingency planning, along with education and outreach.

LDEQ's Aquifer Evaluation and Protection Unit follows up the well identification and tracking process by hosting several educational meetings and community outreach efforts across the state. The goal is to inform the public on how they can play a role in protecting their drinking water sources, while gaining a better understanding of how water systems operate.

For more information about LDEQ's Aquifer Evaluation and Protection endeavors, visit [www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/aquifer-evaluation-and-protection](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/aquifer-evaluation-and-protection).



## Shreveport Green continues its multi-faceted approach to pro-environmental causes

When it comes to improving the environment, changing our behavior is the key. We can all be environmental stewards in our community -- actively involved in litter prevention, waste reduction, tree planting, neighborhood beautification and greening. But we have to make an effort. Engaging citizens in that effort is the objective of Shreveport Green, an organization dedicated to promoting pro-environmental principles across the Shreveport-Bossier region.

Originally launched in 1984 as a part of the city, Shreveport Green assumed the former Keep America Beautiful's Clean Community Commission in 1990 and became a 501 (c) (3). A \$35,000 budget from the city of Shreveport, along with funding from BFI, helped the organization get its operational footing. During the second year, a \$50,000 Community Development Block Grant helped to launch Shreveport Green's citywide beautification effort. "At least five commercials were produced, and we were able to promote several citywide cleanups, recycling collection activities and tree planting initiatives," said Donna Curtis, Executive Director of Shreveport Green. "We started the Neighborhood and Education Program to reach residents in their neighborhoods. Early success propelled us forward."

"We are one of the longest running Keep America Beautiful affiliates in Louisiana, and volunteer-wise, budget-wise, and staff-wise, probably the largest." Curtis noted. "The reason for that is the strong support from the city and parish as well as overwhelming support from the community. At various times, we've had over 12,000 volunteers in one year. We even pre-date Keep Louisiana Beautiful!"



*The Mobile Market operates two vans that conduct scheduled visits to around 80 locations in Greater Shreveport*

Not just an anti-litter organization, Shreveport Green has a hand in several other eco-friendly practices, particularly in promoting a healthy and economically vital community through various public outreach avenues. This includes recycling, tree planting and household hazardous materials collection. Promoting healthy lifestyles is another component of the organization's focus, as Shreveport Green supports more than 20 community gardens, including an urban farm.

With a staff of eight, it's the group's continuing engagement with hundreds of volunteers, who collectively keep the mission moving forward. Two additional staffers work under AmeriCorp's Vista program, which operates a Mobile Market that offers fresh produce to neighborhoods in need.

Through a grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana Foundation, the Mobile Market came to life as a means of delivering fresh fruit and vegetables to people in food desert (?) neighborhoods at a reasonable price, while demonstrating healthy ways in which

to prepare meals. Growing in popularity, the Mobile Market schedules frequent visits to several local Shreveport Recreation Centers, churches and health centers. This is a way to assist local farmers financially, while providing low-cost produce to consumers, the Mobile Market purchases produce from the farmers at \$2.00/lb.; in turn selling to consumers at .50 cents/lb.

Combatting litter, however, makes up a big part of their outreach.

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“The city’s support is vital...from the Mayor’s Office to the Public Works Department to the Property Standards Department. Our close connection with the city reinforces our efforts in litter abatement, as thousands of citizens support the initiative and deserve a clean city,” Curtis said. The organization hosts at least one citywide cleanup annually and an average of 75 neighborhood cleanups each year. “We constantly work with groups, encouraging them to facilitate cleanup events. We also hold eight household hazardous waste collections each year.”

Stopping litter before it occurs is the root of the problem. Engaging young adults to become conditioned to do the right thing is important, and Shreveport Green has built a robust pro-environmental educational program with local schools and businesses to support that mission. The group has given more than 60 presentations a year to businesses, civic clubs and neighborhood groups to provide information on the detrimental effects of litter and how to effectively manage waste.

To further engage younger adults in becoming more pro-active, the national, award-winning ShreveCorps program has proven to be a big step in getting high school and college students involved in environmentally-conscious activities.

In 1992, the city provided \$100,000 in initial funding, which helped launch the program. A component of the AmeriCorps National Service Program, ShreveCorps recruits members from the community. Those who are selected are paid a modest living allowance during a term of service whereby they will engage with the community by promoting nutrition and healthier lifestyles and the building and cultivating of community gardens in local neighborhoods where needs exist.

Members involve youth by visiting schools to promote these projects, bringing diverse backgrounds together under a pro-environmental umbrella. Upon successful completion of the program, members will earn a financial education award, which is intended to facilitate learning, training, and advanced education.

Community gardens are an important part of Shreveport Green’s mission, and grants from Keep America Beautiful, Caddo Parish and the American Heart Association have helped to produce 18 gardens in the Shreveport/Bossier area. In addition to their flagship Urban Farm on Sprague Street in

#### Some of Shreveport Green’s initiatives:

- Cover Your Load for Safer Roads program – messaging via billboards, social media, and DOTD digital signage reminders on the Interstates. Thousands of tarps have been donated to cover truck and trailer loads
- Installation of more than 100 cigarette receptacles to collect butts, with more being placed monthly. Litter receptacles have been placed at bus stops and area parks
- Partnership with the Shreveport Police to obtain cameras to place at popular illegal dumpsites
- A Clean Business Program that assists businesses in maintaining clean businesses
- Worked with the city of Shreveport on litter and illegal dumpsite ordinances
- Brought together Public Works, Code Enforcement, Shreveport Police, and LDEQ to target illegal dumpsites
- Facilitation of eight Household Hazardous Waste collections (including electronics recycling) every year across the city
- Distribution of literature regarding the sources of littering and how to prevent it.
- Assist volunteer groups monthly with litter cleanup efforts
- Holds the Great American Cleanup/Love Shreveport each spring; making presentations in schools and to civic organizations to encourage participation in cleanup and litter prevention efforts
- Promotion of the state litter campaign: Love the Boot, Don’t Pollute!
- Promoting education on stormwater pollution and protection of waterways
- Established 23 Community Gardens at schools, recreation centers, etc., around the city to promote gardening and composting
- Delivers fresh produce to food insecure neighborhoods through the Mobile Market
- Runs a large 3-acre Urban Farm in downtown Shreveport, teaching gardening skills and healthy food preparation, while producing fresh produce for the neighborhood
- Supporting partner of Caddo Parish Clean Parks Campaign
- Stenciled storm drains warning citizens of the dangers of illegal dumping
- Manage the city’s Adopt-A-Street Program (bags, gloves and pickers provided to volunteers)
- Annual NeighborWoods planting in the restoration of urban forests
- The Tree Legacy Program provides a way for you to invest in the future of Shreveport by planting trees
- Recognized as a Tree City USA recipient for the past 24 years
- Shreveport has benefitted from Shreveport Green’s support of Arbor Day and its promotion of tree planting for erosion prevention, air pollution and noise reduction and energy savings (250 trees were given away last fall, sponsored by International Paper)
- Organizes the Love Shreveport citywide cleanup twice a year
- Installed the Regional Growing Station in 1992, which covers almost an acre and is full of native tree species

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*The Hydroponic unit is located along an area slated for development by Shreveport Green as a community farm*



*Shreveport Green's Urban Farm Assistant Coordinator Shanetta Brown indicates how the Tuscan kale seeds undergo the germination process inside the hydroponic unit before they are transferred to the vertical hydration wall (on the right).*

downtown Shreveport, a large community garden was established in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. neighborhood to more closely serve that area. Gardens were created at five Shreveport Public Assembly & Recreation (SPAR) Centers, ten elementary schools, and at the Volunteers of America Lighthouse Center and at Centenary College. The organization hopes to develop more gardens in the future.

At the Downtown Urban Farm, Shreveport Green has a hydroponic growing project underway. Shreveport Green staffers Lauren Jones and Shanetta Brown lead the project and oversee its associated environmental education endeavors. The hydroponic unit is inside a modified 40 foot shipping container that is located at the Urban Farm in a historic part of Shreveport, along what's noted to be the oldest street in the city.

The hydroponic unit, donated by the Energy Power Research Institute and the Southwestern Electric Power Company (SWEPCO), serves as a research, outreach and educational tool. As part of the agreement with the donors, the team is currently growing Tuscan kale for the research project. The kale seeds planted in the seed troughs, germinate for three weeks before being transplanted into the wall strips where they will grow for another four weeks until first harvest. The plants will be harvested up to three times before needing to be replaced. The plants receive hydration through vertical troughs that transport recycled water and liqued nutrients along the lines of seedlings. Hydration is conducted through a timed system, run and regulated by LED lighting and a CO2 sensor. The project's goal is to monitor the amount of harvested food with electric and water usage versus traditional farming techniques. Upon successful completion and evaluation of the project, the team may be afforded the opportunity to expand their vegetable growing options.

While the focus of the project is experimental and practical, the team hopes it's an educational one as well. Since the hydroponic unit and the farm are located next to a newly built apartment complex, the researchers hope that curiosity will be sparked, as new tenants see the unit and may want to get involved. "The tenants can get an

opportunity to realize the benefits of the hydroponic farm, as it will be a daily visual sight," said Lauren Jones, Shreveport Green's Urban Farm Coordinator. "Getting adults and children involved will be a benefit as they get familiar with how hydroponic farms can positively impact their community."

And getting everyone involved and excited about environmental improvement is what Shreveport Green is all about.

"Changing behavior to be more ecologically mindful and environmentally conscious are the key points of our mission here at Shreveport Green," Curtis said. "If we can help ignite everyone to do their part to prevent litter and participate in sustainable practices, we can spread those ideals to our future generations and begin to see clean cities nationwide."

For more information about Shreveport Green's pro-environmental initiatives, please visit [www.shreveportgreen.org](http://www.shreveportgreen.org).



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## LDEQ Employees Love the Boot Statewide

LDEQ employees at headquarters and around the state are participating in Love the Boot Week to help clean up our state. Employees in Baton Rouge plan a cleanup event downtown on April 19, and the LDEQ Regional Offices in Lafayette, Lake Charles and Pineville are also participating. You can be a part of this statewide effort too.

April brings Earth Day, and this year Keep Louisiana Beautiful (KLB) will present Love the Boot Week, April 18-24. It is a weeklong Earth Day initiative, supported by our governor and Lt. governor, to clean up our communities and spread awareness for the litter problem Louisiana continues to experience.

You can organize a cleanup or beautification project or sign up to volunteer at [www.lovetheboot.org](http://www.lovetheboot.org). The Love the Boot events map allows you to visualize where Love the Boot events are occurring. Whatever you want to do to help -- join in the movement. We can do this!

“We must change our behaviors and attitudes when it comes to litter in Louisiana,” said Susan Russell, Executive Director of KLB. “Love the Boot Week is a call to action for all residents of Louisiana, from state leaders to individual citizens. Sportsman’s Paradise won’t be litter-free overnight, but by coming together during Love the Boot Week, we can bring awareness to the issue and take steps toward achieving a more beautiful Louisiana.”

Following the conclusion of Love the Boot Week, KLB will release an outcomes report summarizing the collective impact of the registered cleanup and beautification events. This report will include the total number of events, volunteers, bags of trash collected, pounds of trash collected, and other pertinent statistics.

Below are some ways you can help:

### Love the Boot as a Family!

People of all ages can show how much they Love the Boot during Love the Boot Week! There are many ways to get involved:

1. Organize a family-friendly cleanup in your neighborhood.
2. Volunteer at a Love the Boot event happening near you.
3. Talk to your kids about litter.
4. Read a book from *Rocksey’s Reading List* about taking care of the environment.
5. Take photos of how you #LovetheBoot and share on social media.



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## Louisiana Clean Fuels presents a free outdoor vehicle expo in April

Louisiana Clean Fuels invites you to join us this April in Baton Rouge for a free outdoor vehicle expo featuring a variety of light, medium and heavy-duty plug-in work trucks and charging equipment. The event is free to attend but Pre-Registration is strongly encouraged. You can register at [louisianacleanfuels.org/meet-reg1.php?id=110](https://louisianacleanfuels.org/meet-reg1.php?id=110).

Who should attend: Public and private fleets of all kinds, such as state agency fleets, municipal fleets, schools, drayage, transit agencies, refuse, universities, ports and more.

The event will be held April 6 and 7, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) headquarters, 1201 Capitol Access Road, Baton Rouge. It is being presented as a part of Clean Transportation Awareness Week in an open house style so you can come and go as your schedule permits.

The Exhibitors at this time are:

- Ross Bus/Blue Bird Electric School Bus
- Orange EV T-Series Electric “terminal/yard” truck
- Mack LR Electric Garbage Truck LRE64 BEV
- Peterbilt Motors 579EV
- GreenPower Motor Company EV Star Mini E-Bus
- XL Fleet GMC Sierra 2500 Plug In Hybrid
- Danner Mobile Power Stations 4.0
- Gerry Lane Chevrolet Bolt EV
- Enterprise Holdings
- Evercharge/EV Power Pods Mobile Charging Solutions

## Experts will Discuss Coastal Resiliency Initiatives with Environment and Health Council of Louisiana

The Environment and Health Council of Louisiana (EHCL) is hosting its annual conference on April 21 at Pennington Biomedical Research Center in Baton Rouge. This year’s conference theme is “Coastal Resiliency—Louisiana Initiatives” Each year, EHCL hosts an annual conference in support of its mission to provide factual discussions on environmental, health and economic development topics. The most recent conference focused on Medical Marijuana in Louisiana. Other conferences have explored the topics of Living a Better Life in Louisiana, Effective Water Management, Diabetes, a Report Card 2 years later on the 2010 Oil Spill, Alzheimer’s Disease and Obesity in Children.

The 2022 conference will feature Charles Sutcliffe, Chief Resiliency Officer for the state; Chip Kline, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Chair; and Ramsey Green, CAO and Resiliency Chief in the Mayor’s Office New Orleans. They will discuss Coastal Governmental Initiatives. A review of Coastal Resiliency Research Initiatives will be led by Dr. Traci Birch; LSU School of Architecture and Dr. Nina Lam with LSU Environmental Studies.

Providing a perspective on Local Initiatives to manage the coast will be provided by Archie Chaisson, President of Lafourche Parish. Wrapping up the conference will be a discussion of the History and Culture of Coastal Resiliency. Dr. Mike Pasquier of LSU Religious Studies and History and Dr. Craig Colten of the Water Institute of the Gulf will lead that discussion.

The Conference begins at 8 a.m. and adjourns at 2 p.m. EHCL conferences are free and open to the public. Pre-registration is urged via the EHCL website at [www.ehcla.org](http://www.ehcla.org). The first 200 registrants prior to April 19 will receive a complimentary lunch.

The Environment and Health Council of Louisiana is a nonprofit organization founded in 1983 to facilitate independent, balanced and factual assessments of health issues related to the environmental and economic well-being of Louisiana. The organization is governed by a voluntary board of directors representing business, government, academic, industry and nonprofit organizations. For more information, registration and a complete agenda visit our website at [www.ehcla.org](http://www.ehcla.org).



## Who's Who At LDEQ?



**Melissa James – Criminal Investigator 3, Criminal Investigation Section, Office of the Secretary, Northwest Regional Office**

James formerly worked for the Shreveport Police Department, where she began in 2009. In 2016, she transferred to the Property Crimes Investigations office. While in Property Crimes, she became the Pawn Detective for the department before moving to the homicide unit in 2021. James recently came aboard as a Criminal Investigator 3 in LDEQ's Northwest Regional Office.

**Christopher Pickett – Environmental Scientist, Air Analysis, Office of Environmental Assessment**

Pickett is from Des Allemands. He graduated from the University of Louisiana at Monroe with a Bachelor of Science degree in atmospheric sciences in 2006. Pickett comes to LDEQ from the insurance business with Security Plan.

Pickett does sports officiating for flag football, volleyball, basketball, baseball and softball. He is a certified Louisiana High School Officials Association softball umpire with New Orleans Softball Umpires, and serves as secretary of the association.





# **DISCOVER** DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



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

### Fourth Quarter 2021 Enforcement Actions:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2021 Settlement Agreements:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2021 Air Permits:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2021 Water Permits:

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

### Fourth Quarter 2021 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

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

