DISCOVER DEQ
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

July 2023 Issue Number: 138

What's Inside?

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CWSRF is LDEQ's premier wastewater project loan program

If you're looking for some funding for a wastewater project for your community, look no further than the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) and its Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program.

The CWSRF is a loan program created with the purpose of providing below market interest loans to finance eligible projects to comply with Clean Water Act (CWA) requirements to protect public health. The program was created at LDEQ in 1987 through Title VI of the CWA.

Funding for the program is given through federal capitalization grants from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), state match funds created from a bond issuance, and the program's loan and interest repayments. Those repayments solidify a stable source for future Louisiana project funding. Additional funding recently became available through the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021. Future project funding is meant to target water quality improvements, thus keeping Louisiana waters clean for generations to come.

There are typically 20 to 30 wastewater projects funded through the CWSRF program each year. The majority of projects cost between $1 million and $8 million. The program provides around $80 million a year to eligible projects. In its 36 years of existence, CWSRF has provided around $1.3 billion in funding for Louisiana water projects.

The program's loan effective interest rate has remained at 0.95% interest since 2009, which makes it impressive compared to competition and a favorite for Louisiana communities seeking funding. The CWSRF program has the lowest rate or loans of any Louisiana state program for wastewater infrastructure improvements.

The CWSRF program isn't popular among Louisiana Municipalities and Consultants only because of its low interest rate, but also because of its dedicated staff. Prior and current consultants have said the CWSRF program is one of the easiest Louisiana funding programs to flow through and the LDEQ CWSRF staff is polite and easy to work with. "The program has seen a number of repeat customers in its history, but that doesn't happen unless everyone is pleased with the experience," LDEQ CWSRF Engineer Manager Scott Templet said.

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What wastewater improvement projects does the CWSRF provide funding toward? The Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014 expanded eligibilities for the CWSRF program which now include:

- Constructing Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW)
- Nonpoint Source
- National Estuary Program Projects
- Decentralized Systems
- Stormwater Management
- Reducing the Demand for POTW Capacity through Water Conservation, Efficiency, and Reuse
- Watershed Pilot Projects
- Reduce Energy Consumption for POTW
- Reusing or Recycling Stormwater or Subsurface Drainage Water
- Security Measures at POTWs
- Technical Assistance for Owners/Operators of small or medium POTWs

So how are projects chosen? The Intended Use Plan (IUP) is created every year to identify the intended uses of the funds available to the CWSRF and to detail how the intended uses support the CWSRF goals. All funds received by the CWSRF during a fiscal year are identified in the IUP as well as the recipients of CWSRF loans. The IUP is open for public comment and review prior to being submitted for EPA approval.

The process of applying for funding from CWSRF is simple to follow. Once you submit your pre-application for CWSRF funding, it is evaluated, scored and placed on the Project Priority List (PPL). Commitments are then chosen from the PPL based on ranking and available funding. After commitment, loans could close in as soon as three months if all requirements are met. These loans must be closed within a year. Typically, most projects take about six months to complete all pre-loan requirements. There's a two-year construction period and a 20-year repayment term for loans and interest acquired from CWSRF.

LDEQ also offers additional funding programs. The Overflow and Stormwater Grant (OSG) program provides grants to eligible entities to address sanitary sewer overflows and stormwater management projects, which could also include infiltration and inflow (I/I) correction projects.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding is the largest federal investment to strengthen the United States drinking water and wastewater systems. The BIL funding will last five years until 2026 and requires that the state must provide 49% of the BIL funding as subsidy. LDEQ plans to award this subsidy to communities based on the state affordability and disadvantaged criteria. This could result in the project receiving 0% to 100% subsidy. The principal forgiveness subsidy forgives the debt at the time of disbursement and is not required to be paid back.

"With the tremendous need in our state to clean up our waterways, CWSRF staff are happy to offer cost effective financing and work hand-in-hand with our borrowers to address their technical and financial challenges," LDEQ CWSRF Program Manager Sierra Templet said. "Our staff is ready to assist you as needed."

If you'd like to learn more about the LDEQ CWSRF, please visit the website at ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/cwsrf***. There's a helpful YouTube walkthrough on how to apply for funding, and staff contact information for any questions. If you'd like to learn more about the additional OSG program or BIL funding, please visit ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/cwsrffunding-options***.

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Message from the Secretary

Roger W. Gingles

LDEQ Secretary Roger Gingles

Amazingly, only a few heat records have yet been broken in Louisiana this summer. On July 20, the high temperature was 100 degrees, a record. The mercury soared into record territory a couple of days near the end of this month as well. We also tied a couple of heat records. But it seems like it has been much hotter than usual. That's because we have had an unbroken string of 90+ degree days with lows that never get below the upper 70s, usually not dropping below 80. It's hot around the clock. It's humid around the clock. It's miserable and dangerous.

You need to pay attention when you are working in the heat. Drink plenty of fluids – cool water is best. Pace yourself. Avoid the direct sunlight whenever possible and take frequent breaks. Duck into an air-conditioned space occasionally. If you look on the National Weather Service (NWS) map, it will show you the areas that have heat advisories. Those are shown in orange (advisory) or purple (excessive heat warning) colors. Plan around that NWS prediction. The weather service is not always right, but they've been very accurate this summer.

We're in it for the long haul. Remember, it's not yet August. The worst of hurricane season is yet to come, and it could run longer this year if this heat hangs on. It could last into autumn. That would be just one more unusual weather event this summer along with floods in New England, afternoon tornadoes in Chicago, 128-degree highs in Death Valley, 90+ degree water temperatures off the coast of Florida and swelter everywhere you look. The heat index (we have all learned that this is the real measure of how hot it is) reached 150 degrees in the Middle East this month. That's right on the edge of uninhabitable.

Just be careful.

After July 4 comes a long stretch without declared holidays. This is often the period when people take summer vacations. That may mean you are working with fewer people than normal in your area. Anything that happens (an emergency event like a facility accident or weather blowing up in the Gulf of Mexico) further stresses staff on hand. Keep in mind that we have protocols and SOPs that are step-by-step instructions on how to get a job done. Use those, and you will be able to better cope with absences. Also, when things get a bit hectic, stay patient and as calm as you can. We've all been through these things before.

Communications is working on recording another YouTube video. This one will be about the two newer MAMLs. We haven't featured them in a video yet. People from Air Planning and Assessment will be in the video and yours truly, Roger Gingles. The hope is that the public will find the presentation informative and entertaining.

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Hurricanes and disasters – what happens next

Hurricanes and natural disasters usually create and leave mountains of debris and destruction behind. One of the functions of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) is to oversee the removal of that debris. LDEQ pre-certifies debris sites so they can be opened more quickly after an event to take the overflow of debris. Upon the declaration of an emergency by LDEQ, local governments and state agencies may "activate" a pre-approved emergency debris site. There is much that federal and state agencies can do in this process, but it usually starts with the public, homeowner and business owner. Segregation of curbside storm waste and management of debris expedites the process of removing it.

The LDEQ guidance for segregation of curbside debris and debris management is outlined in the Natural Disaster and Catastrophic Event Parish Resource Book available on the LDEQ website. Debris and waste should be sorted by the resident into piles in the following categories, as outlined in the Resource Book, for collection as a result of a natural disaster or catastrophic events:

Electronic Debris - devices or components that contain one or more circuit boards and are used primary for data transfer or storage, communication, or entertainment purposes including but not limited to the following: • desktop and laptop computers including monitors, keyboards, etc. • copying machines • scanners • printers • radios and stereos • televisions • camcorders • video cassette recorders (VCRs) • compact disc players • digital video disc player (DVDs) • MP3 players • telephones (including cellular and portable telephones)

Emergency C&D Debris - construction and demolition debris (C&D) generally considered not water-soluble including but not limited to the following: • metal • concrete • brick • asphalt • roofing materials (shingles, sheet rock, plaster) • lumber from a construction, remodeling repair renovation, or demolition project that is authorized by the government to be necessary for a disaster 11

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) - waste that can catch fire, react, explode, or is corrosive or toxic that is generated by individuals on the premises of a residence for individuals (a household) and composed primarily of materials found in the wastes generated from homes. Wastes generated by commercial/industrial establishments that appear to be the same as household waste are not considered HHW and must follow state/federal hazardous waste regulations. Examples of HHW include, but are not limited, to the following: • paints • cleaners • oils • batteries • pesticides.

Metals – (or scrap metals) are bits and pieces of metal parts that may be combined together with bolts or soldering which when worn or superfluous can be recycled. Examples of metals include, but are not limited, to the following: • bars • turnings • rods • sheets • wire • metal pieces.

White Goods – discarded domestic appliances including, but not limited to, the following: • refrigerators and freezers • freestanding ice machines • ranges • built-in stove surface units and oven units 12.

Vegetative Debris – vegetative matter resulting from landscaping, maintenance, or right-of-way or land-clearing operations. Examples of vegetative debris include, but are not limited, to the following: • trees and shrubbery • leaves and limbs • stumps • grass clippings • flowers.

White Goods – discarded domestic appliances, including, but not limited to, the following: • refrigerators and freezers • freestanding ice machines • ranges • built-in stove surface units and oven units 12 • washers and dryers • air conditioning and heating units • water heaters.

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White goods do not include small household appliances, such as, stand mixers, toasters, blenders, etc.

Woodwaste – examples of woodwaste include, but are not limited to the following: • wood residue • cutoffs • wood chips • sawdust • wood shaving • bark • wood refuse • wood-fired boiler ash • wood ash • plywood or other bonded materials that contain only polyurethane, phenolic based glues, or other glues that are approved specifically by the administrative authority • uncontaminated, untreated, or unpainted lumber/wooden pallets.

Sorting the debris is the first step in getting it removed. For more information, go to ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/disaster-debris-management***.

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Daniel Lambert of Emergency and Radiological Services Division is fifth LDEQ podcast guest

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) Communications Section has released its fifth segment of "LDEQ On Air." The podcast features one guest answering questions about his or her role at LDEQ. The goal of the podcast is to inform the public about how issues are handled at LDEQ, how LDEQ is organized, the people behind the processes at LDEQ and answers to questions about agency issues.

A new podcast will be released every third Thursday of the month. An easy way to remember that is that it's the day after the "Ask the Governor" radio show.

The fifth episode features LDEQ Senior Scientist Daniel Lambert as he discusses LDEQ's role in helping the public before, during and after the event of a hurricane.

Next month, we will release our sixth podcast featuring LDEQ Outreach and Small Business Assistance Manager Marissa Jimenez. She will discuss what the Small Business Assistance Program is about, how assistance is offered and how to refer to the program for assistance.

To listen, visit the LDEQ webpage at ***www.deq.louisiana.gov/podcast***. "LDEQ On Air" is also available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Google Podcasts. If you have any questions or would like to submit question suggestions, please email the LDEQ Communications Section at **SECTCOMMUNICATIONS@la.gov**.

LDEQ shows off Enviroscape model at Scotland Saturdays

On July 15, LDEQ environmental scientist India Ambeau took the Enviroscape model to Scotlandville Plaza's open market to educate kids and adults about different types of water pollution and the way it spreads through runoff.

Environmental Scientist India Ambeau shows off the Enviroscape model.

Scotland Saturdays is a non-profit organization that has been hosting monthly open markets in the Scotlandville Plaza for the past five years. They have hopes of revitalizing a once thriving portion of our great city, as well as providing an opportunity for our community's small business owners to engage with the community members and organizations.

Scotland Saturdays has championed campaigns around health, wellness, food disparities, education and more through grants from the Mayor's office, BREC, Midcity Redevelopment and others. They work hard to cultivate organic opportunities for community development, in the Scotlandville community.

Check out their Facebook page for more information: ***www.facebook.com/scotlandsaturdays***

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Saharan dust makes its way to the U.S.

It's the time of year when there's activity in the Atlantic Ocean. The first thing residents of the South may think of when they hear of Atlantic activity is tropical storms or hurricanes. There are no tropical storms or hurricanes headed toward the U.S. yet, but there's Saharan dust that's already hit Florida and Texas.

The Saharan Air Layer (SAL) is a plume of particulate matter composed of sand and dirt that is carried in the African Waves. It moves westward from the Sahara Desert of North Africa across the Atlantic Ocean. The dust forms in late spring and summer in the Sahara Desert and moves over the Atlantic Ocean every three to five days.

Typically, the SAL forms in mid-June, begins to move across the ocean in late June and continues until mid-August, according to NOAA Hurricane Research Division (HRD). It's late this year because it didn't reach North America until mid-July. The SAL is between 5,000 to 20,000 feet above sea level. Around 180 million tons of dust is carried westward across the Atlantic Ocean each year, according to research from Harvard University. The worst year on record for the SAL was 2020, ever since satellite monitoring began in 1979.

In recent years, severe Saharan dust has lowered air quality for south Louisiana. It can be harmful to your health because the particles can be inhaled and can irritate allergies, asthma or other respiratory conditions. The more dust in the air, the worse air quality will be. Try to limit your time outside while the dust is accumulating over the southern U.S. if you have a chronic respiratory condition.

There is one upside to having the Saharan dust float its way across the Atlantic: it's capable of inhibiting hurricane formation. As the Saharan dust reaches the East Coast, the air becomes drier and sunlight is limited. A hurricane requires moisture in the air and warm water to form, and the Saharan dust does not allow much wiggle room for either. This does not mean that zero tropical storms or hurricanes will form, but scientifically it is a positive for south Louisiana residents.

When the SAL looms over the southern U.S., it will make the daytime skies a hazy gray color. Sunrises and sunsets will be more vivid. If you want to see it more clearly, wear polarized sunglasses and look up into the sky.

If you'd like to learn more about Saharan dust, visit ***www.aoml.noaa.gov/saharan-air-layer***.

Commuter Krewe Rideshare program offers many benefits

Commuter Krewe of Louisiana is a service for employees and employers. By joining Commuter Krewe, you can take advantage carpooling, vanpooling, biking, walking, using transit and even teleworking. These services promote clean commutes and can help contribute to better air quality, savings in gas and wear and tear on your vehicle. Using alternative transportation plays a part in contributing to reducing traffic congestion.

Commuter Krewe offers you services to help you find carpools, offers emergency rides home, has a dedicated outreach staff and has a website and resources available to you and to your business. Commuter Krewe is offering incentives for using the services. Using Commuter Krewe services will help you lower the cost, time and stress of your commute, and reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

Give Commuter Krewe a try. To find more about the programs offered, to look for a carpool or to set up one for your employees, call 225-344-RIDE or visit ***www.commuterkrewe.la***. Commuter Krewe is a service of the Capital Region Planning Commission, the Acadiana Planning Commission and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

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Keep Louisiana Beautiful introduces new Roadway Litter Survey

For the first time in 15 years, a survey of roadway litter in Louisiana has been conducted. Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser and Dr. Cecile Carson of Carson Consulting presented the results at the Keep Louisiana Beautiful Board meeting in July. The KLB Board also discussed board business, got an update on Love the Boot week and campaign, Let Louisiana Shine and heard educational information.

KLB contracted Carson to survey 137 sites including Interstates, U S Highways, state roads and urban areas to obtain information about the presence of litter. The survey details litter hotspots, how people felt about litter and the cost of litter statewide. The 616,500-square-foot area was surveyed for visible and micro litter, intentional and unintentional. The work was conducted in phases – roadside, perception and cost of litter. In the study, which took more than 6 months, the litter by roadway type garnered a total of 143,873,132 pieces of litter from interstates, U.S. highways and state routes. The category with the most litter was tobacco products at 24.5% and plastic packaging material at 43.1%. Motorists were the most frequent of litter at 53.2%.

As part of the litter study, 537 Louisianans answered questions about litter in a web-based survey. When asked about litter they felt that litter was a problem, contributes to flooding, negatively impacts tourism and decreases business revenue. When asked why they thought people litter, they answered that it is more convenient than to properly dispose of trash; lack of pride and ownership of their community; litterers don't understand its harm to people and animals; and don't know littering is illegal. Support for more litter law enforcement and whether more resources should be available to increase it, 67.65% said yes. Those that did "not agree cited not a good use of public resources," "the ticket would be dismissed," "officer should focus on more serious issues," and "it wouldn't change behaviors."

The study also included a Litter Cost Survey, in which 40 parishes and cities participated. Invitations were sent to parishes, cities and state agencies from January to May 2023. Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser sent a letter, emails and made calls to them. They requested form and data concerning the estimated cost of labor, equipment and maintenance supplies, disposal fees, educational efforts and volunteer recruitment for cleanups and related programs.

The estimated results of the cost survey are:

- Municipal – 36.5% - $33,257,355
- Parishes – 30.5%- $27,921,413
- State Agencies – 19.5% - $17,921,413
- Sheriff's Offices – 11.6% - $10,610,546
- Affiliates – 2% $1,820,250

That make an estimated total cost for cleaning up litter to the citizens and the state of Louisiana of: $91,400,000

Cleaning up the litter in Louisiana is costly in many ways so please, don't litter and take the time to pick litter up so we can **LET LOUISIANA SHINE**.

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Who's Who At LDEQ?

Jessica Mackay – Environmental Project Specialist I, Office of Environmental Services, Permit Support Division

Mackay, a native of Prairieville, graduated with a Bachelor of General Studies from Southeastern Louisiana University in 2011. Mackay says LDEQ is a breath of fresh air because she has previously worked in banking, healthcare and hospitality and most recently worked at a home care agency hiring direct service workers for her clients. She is a jack of all trades.

In her spare time, Mackay loves making art in all forms but mostly painting and taking pictures. She stays busy when she's not working as a mother to one son.

Taylor McCall – Environmental Specialist I, Office of Environmental Service, Waste Permits Division

McCall, a native of Alexandria, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry from Grambling State University. McCall joined LDEQ in June 2023 as an environmental scientist, and this is her first job out of college.

In her spare time, McCall enjoys hanging out with friends and family, reading, shopping and trying new things.

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Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Second Quarter Summaries

Second Quarter 2023 Enforcement Actions:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-actions

Second Quarter 2023 Settlement Agreements:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-division

Second Quarter 2023 Air Permits:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/permits-issued-by-calendar-quarter

Second Quarter 2023 Water Permits:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/lpdes

Second Quarter 2023 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:
http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/waste-permits