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LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

ENVIROSCOOL

Understanding Public Participation

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Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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LDEQ in 2021

Office Organizational Chart

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

WATER PERMITS

WASTE PERMITS

AIR PERMITS

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
& PERMIT SUPPORT
DIVISION

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

SURVEILLANCE

ENFORCEMENT

EMERGENCY &
RADIOLOGICAL SERVICES

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

AIR PLANNING &
ASSESSMENT

WATER PLANNING &
ASSESSMENT

REMEDIATION

UNDERGROUND
STORAGE TANK

MANAGEMENT & FINANCE

FINANCIAL SERVICES

INFORMATION
SERVICES

GENERAL SERVICES

HUMAN RESOURCES



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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LDEQ in 2021



Public Participation Database Support Group

The Public Participation Database Support Group (PPDSG) is responsible for issuing public notices and conducting public hearings/meetings associated with permitting and other agency activities.

This is specified under Subtitle II of Title 30 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes RS30:2001, Environmental Regulatory Codes LAC 33 and the Code of Federal Regulations 40 CFR.

Public Involvement

- Public involvement efforts are designed to enable the citizens of Louisiana to be a part of the environmental decisions that affect their lives.
- Meaningful involvement in this process means that:
 - potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health;
 - the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision;
 - the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; and
 - the decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

Public Participation in LDEQ Activities

- Permitting Activities
- Draft Decisions
- Rulemaking Process

****PPDSG also conducts meetings related to different areas in LDEQ such as Remediation, Legal settlements, and other LDEQ issues of interest to the public.*

What information is available to the public?

Information to Review

- Application
- Draft permit
- Statement of Basis/Fact Sheet
- Environmental Assessment Statement (IT Questions)
- Correspondence
- All previous information submitted to or generated by LDEQ, etc.

Accessing the information

The LDEQ's permitting process is an open one.

- Much of the information you would like to see can be found in the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) on our website (<https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/edms>) or by contacting or visiting our public records center.
 - The public records center is located at 602 North 5th St., Baton Rouge.
- Information can be found at public libraries & other repositories
- Public Webpage
- All Regional Offices

Public notification of permitting activities



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Public Notices

- A public notice is a notification by the Agency informing the public of actions such as the receipt of an application, issuance of a draft permit or scheduling of a hearing.
- Public notices related to major permitting activities are required by the State and Federal regulations for the different media.

When is the public informed of permitting activities?

For all of the major permits, the public is informed of the status of the permit at the following stages:

- Pre-application (Hazardous Waste and Solid Waste);
- Application received by LDEQ (Hazardous Waste by Public Notice);
- The permit application is determined administratively complete;
- Draft or proposed permit; and
- Final decision.

Types of Notifications

- LDEQ Public Notices Web Page:
<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/public-notices>
- Newspapers (Biosolids, Solid Waste, and Hazardous Waste only)
- Radio announcements (Hazardous Waste only)
- The LDEQ Public Notice mailing list (hard copy & email)

Public participation in the permitting process

Public Participation

How can the public participate in the decision-making process?

- Review the available material;
- Participate in public hearings and/or public meetings (pre-application, drafts, etc.); and
- Submit written comments during the comment period.

Why participate?

- You may have knowledge that would be important for the Agency to consider as it makes its final decision.

Making Comments

- All comments are considered equally; however, comments relevant to the permit issue will most affect the decision.
- Simply stating your opposition is not as effective as stating the reasons behind your opposition.

Tips for Making Comments

Be specific!!!!

- Explain your interest in the proposed document.
- Clearly identify the document you are commenting on.
 - Include reference numbers and identifiers (AI, PER Number Permit Number).
- Discuss any potential problems with the draft permit.
- Cite statutes, regulations, and guidance documents.
- Attach any documentation that supports your position.



Tips for Making Comments Continued:

- State opinions and propose alternative solutions
 - When possible include data to support your view
- Review the technical reports and data, comment on conclusions or implementation of plans or projects
- Check for omissions, accuracy, and consistency

Tips for Developing Comments

Use your Resources

- Government: Enforcement Officers, Permit Writers, Community Liaisons or local State Environmental Offices
- Technical Assistance Providers
- University Personnel
- Consider requesting a meeting with the permitting authority to resolve the issues or requesting a public meeting/hearing

Sending Comments

- Comments can be sent during the comment period as published in the public notice.
- The comment period is based on the media regulations:

Media Type	Comment Period
Air Permits	Minimum 30 days
Hazardous Waste Permits	Minimum 45 days
Solid Waste Permits	Minimum 30 days
Water Permits	Minimum 30 days

Sending Comments Continued...

Comments can be submitted by:

- Mail: Public Participation Database Support Group
P.O. Box 4313
Baton Rouge, LA 70821
- Fax: (225) 219-3309
- Email: deq.publicnotices@la.gov
- Online: <https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/public-notices>

New Comment Feature

deq.louisiana.gov/public-notice

Employment & HR | DEQ Intranet | Home - LEO | EDMS | LOUISIANA... | Beth Altazan | Opta... | Optavia Connect | Louisiana.gov | Crosses Archives -...

Village of Hall Summit - Sewerage Treatment Plant AI 51328 Activity PER20200001 Permit Number LA0064611 Subject LPDES Draft Water Permit Media Surface Water	9/29/2021	11/03/2021	View Attachments (*) Comment URL
Louisiana Regional Landfill Co-Timberlane Landfill AI 52277 Activity PER20200004 Permit Number 0060-00063-V7 Subject PROPOSED PART 70 AIR OPERATING PERMIT RENEWAL/ MODIFICATION Media Air Quality	9/24/2021	10/28/2021	View Attachments (*) Comment URL
LDEQ Permit Public Notices for St. Charles Parish Subject EXTENSION OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD DUE TO HURRICANE IDA Media Solid Waste	9/23/2021	9/27/2021	View Attachments Comment URL
Lakeshore Subdivision Sewerage District #1 AI 42245 Activity PER20200001 Permit Number LA0047341 Subject REVISED DRAFT WATER DISCHARGE PERMIT Media Surface Water	9/22/2021	10/27/2021	View Attachments (*) Comment URL



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Hearings vs. Meetings

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- Formal and structured as per the Statutes
- **Not** a question and answer session
- Transcribed & become part of the official administrative record

PUBLIC MEETINGS

- Less formal
- No formal time limits on statements
- The facility or the permitting agency usually answers questions
- Do not become part of the record

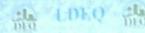


Public Hearings

- Public Hearings provide a formal opportunity for the public to present comments and oral testimony on a proposed agency action.
- The oral testimonies given during the hearing are transcribed by an official court reporter.
- The Hearing is not a question and answer session.



Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality



is conducting a public Hearing
this evening

Thursday February 21, 2008



Requesting A Public Hearing

How can I request a public hearing be held?

- You can add your request to your comments **during** the comment period.
- Include the reason for your request for the hearing.
- Identify who you represent (self, group, community, etc.).

Public Hearing Approval

The approval by the administrative authority for a public hearing is based on:

- The basis of the request; and
- If there is a significant degree of public interest in the proposed action.

The state administrative authority may also hold a public hearing at his or her discretion, whenever a hearing might clarify one or more issues involved in the action.

Public Hearing Approval Continued...

Who approves the request for a public hearing?

- Some public hearings are required by regulations while others are granted on a case-by-case basis.
- The Assistant Secretary of the Office of Environmental Services (OES) has the authority to approve or deny the request for a hearing.

Public Hearing Documentation

Public Hearing Packet Includes Copies of:

Public Notice	Requests for Final Decision
Court Reporter Transcript	Exhibits Received
Hearing Officer Report	Public Hearing Maps – EDMS Doc #s
Speaker Registration Forms	

Access through Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) on our website (<https://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/edms>) or by contacting or visiting our public records center.

Public Meetings

- Public Meetings may be requested to clarify information related to an Agency action.
- Public Meetings may be requested by contacting the responsible Administrative Authority related to the particular site or issue.
- Requests can also be made through the Public Participation Group.

How are the comments used?

- Upon receipt of comments, the Public Participation Group sends original comments to the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) and a copy is forwarded to the permit writer.
- The permit writer reviews the comments and uses any appropriate additional information in updating the draft permit.
- The commenter's name and information is added to the Commenter Database.

How are the comments used?

- A final draft of the permit and the response to the public comments is prepared and forwarded to the OES Assistant Secretary for final approval.
- Upon the issuance or denial of the permit, a postcard with the final decision and instructions on how to access the basis of decision and response to the comments is mailed to:
 - All those who made comments;
 - All those who requested to be notified of the decision; and
 - The applicant / petitioner.

PUBLIC NOTICE EXAMPLE

PUBLIC NOTICE
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (LDEQ)
3-G ENTERPRISES, INC./ GRIFFIN'S SEAFOOD
DRAFT WATER DISCHARGE PERMIT

The LDEQ, Office of Environmental Services, is accepting written comments on a draft Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) permit prepared for 3-G Enterprises, Inc, Griffin's Seafood, P.O. Box 640, Golden Meadow, Louisiana 70357. The facility is located at **24225 Highway 1 in Leeville, Lafourche Parish.**

The principal discharge from this existing source is made into Bayou Lafourche, waters of the state classified for primary contact recreation, secondary contact recreation, propagation of fish and wildlife, and oyster propagation. Under the SIC Code 5146, the applicant proposes to discharge shrimp unloading tank wastewater, fish unloading tank wastewater, treated sanitary wastewater, and dock washdown wastewater from an existing dockside seafood packing facility.

During the preparation of this permit, it has been determined that the discharge will have no adverse impact on the existing uses of the receiving waterbody. As with any discharge, however, some change in existing water quality may occur.

Comments and requests for a public hearing or notification of the final decision can be submitted online on the public notice webpage (<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/public-notices>), via personal delivery, U.S. mail, email, or fax. **Comments and requests for public hearings must be received by 4:30 pm CST, Tuesday, November 9, 2021.** Delivery may be made to the drop-box at 602 N. 5th St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802. U.S. Mail may be sent to LDEQ, Public Participation Group, P.O. Box 4313, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4313. Emails may be submitted to DEQ.PUBLICNOTICES@LA.GOV and faxes sent to (225) 219-3309. Persons wishing to receive notice of the final permit action must include a complete mailing address when submitting comments.

Please see additional instructions for comment submission, hand delivery and information regarding electronic submission at <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/the-public-participation-group> or call (225) 219-3276.

If LDEQ finds a significant degree of public interest, a public hearing will be held. LDEQ will send notification of the final permit decision to the applicant and to each person who has submitted written comments or a written request for notification of the final decision.

The application, draft permit, additional information and statement of basis are available for review at the LDEQ, Public Records Center, 602 North 5th Street, Baton Rouge, LA. Viewing hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (except holidays). **The available information can also be accessed electronically on the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) on the DEQ public website at www.deq.louisiana.gov.**

Inquiries or requests for additional information regarding this permit action should be directed to Ardrene Logan, LDEQ, Water Permits Division, P.O. Box 4313, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4313, phone (225) 219-3203.

Persons wishing to be included on the LDEQ permit public notice mailing list, wishing to receive the permit public notices via email by subscribing to the LDEQ permits public notice List Server, or for other public participation related questions should contact the Public Participation Group in writing at LDEQ, P.O. Box 4313, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4313, by email at DEQ.PUBLICNOTICES@LA.GOV or contact the LDEQ Customer Service Center at (225) 219-LDEQ (219-5337).

Permit public notices including electronic access to the draft permit and statement of basis can be viewed at the LDEQ permits public notice webpage at <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/public-notices> and general information related to the public participation in permitting activities can be viewed at <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/the-public-participation-group>.

All correspondence should specify AI Number [19543](#), Permit Number LA0072397, and Activity Number PER[20210001](#).

Scheduled Publication Date: Tuesday, October 5, 2021 – LDEQ Website

Resources

- Public Participation Database Support Group Website

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/the-public-participation-group>

- EPA Guidance: Public Involvement in Environmental Permits

<http://www.epa.gov/permits/publicguide.pdf>

- EPA Public Involvement Website

<http://www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/index.htm>

Frequently Used Terms & Acronyms

- AI Number:** Agency Interest Number. This is a number that helps LDEQ track a facility. Having this number will make it easy to find information on a particular permit.
- Activity Tracking Number:** A tracking number assigned to a specific permit action for a company/facility. Use of the activity number helps link all the documents and information involved in that action. A sample activity number is PER20030001.
- Permit Number:** A facility specific, media specific identifier that indicates a permit has been applied for or issued.

Definitions

- **Public Notice:** Notification by the Agency informing the public of actions such as the issuance of a draft permit or scheduling of a hearing.
- **Public Comment Period:** The time allowed for the public to express its views and concerns regarding an Agency action.
- **Public Hearing:** A formal meeting where the Agency hears the public's views and concerns about an action or proposal. The Agency is required to consider such comments when evaluating its actions.

LDEQ in 2021

Contact Information

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- Tommie Milam
Environmental Scientist Supervisor
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Email: tommie.milam@la.gov

www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/the-public-participation-group

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