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### **Orleans Parish men arrested for illegal disposal of waste tires**

**BATON ROUGE** – Months of investigative work paid off for the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality last week when two men were charged with dumping illegal tires in separate but related incidents in New Orleans East.

On Saturday, Feb. 3, 2018, NOPD officers contacted criminal investigators with LDEQ's Criminal Investigation Section and informed them that Bryant Ballard, 44, and an accomplice, Leonard Patterson, had been arrested for illegally disposing of waste tires in New Orleans East from a stolen U-Haul truck. On Monday, Feb 5, investigators with the LDEQ Criminal Investigation Section traveled to New Orleans and booked Ballard while he was being held in the Orleans Parish Justice Center.

Ballard was booked with four additional counts of illegal waste tire disposal described in the outstanding warrant. Ballard is alleged to have dumped hundreds of tires in the area over the past year utilizing U-Haul trucks.

A task force of investigators from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the New Orleans Police Department, the New Orleans Sanitation Department and the Louisiana State Police have been conducting a months-long criminal investigation regarding the epidemic illegal tire disposal of waste tires in New Orleans East. As the result of this on-going task force investigation and hours of covert surveillance, investigators with the LDEQ Criminal Investigation Section obtained an arrest warrant for Ballard on Dec. 1, 2017. The LDEQ warrant outlined four counts of illegal disposal of waste tires in New Orleans and New Orleans East.

Ballard was also issued a misdemeanor summons for the illegal disposal of waste tires by the New Orleans Police Department on May 10, 2017. On that date, employees with the Louisiana Department of Transportation witnessed Ballard dumping waste tires off of Old Gentilly Road from a rented U-Haul truck and called the police. This case is currently pending in New Orleans Municipal Court. Ballard failed to appear on July 20, 2017, and a \$500 attachment was issued.

In a related matter, Bryant Ballard's brother, Malcolm Ballard, was arrested on Sept. 27, 2017, by Louisiana Department Wildlife and Fisheries agents, NOPD Officers, and LDEQ CIS investigators for the illegal disposal of waste tires from a rented U-Haul truck in New Orleans East. Task force agents questioned Malcolm Ballard who admitted to dumping waste tires near the McDonald's near I-10 and Read Boulevard in New Orleans East in March 2017. As a result, LDEQ criminal investigators added additional criminal charges to Malcolm Ballard's arrest for the illegal disposal of waste tires. Malcolm Ballard pled guilty to the illegal disposal of waste tires last week in Orleans Parish Criminal Court. He is currently awaiting sentencing.

"We are chipping away at this enormous problem," said LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown. "Each arrest we make takes one more illegal tire dumper off the streets and out of the business. We are determined and will continue our efforts to apprehend everyone involved in illegal tire dumping."

“I am so proud of the work of the task force. The beauty of Louisiana’s Sportman’s Paradise and our celebrated natural resources should not be spoiled by a lack of care by a few,” said Jack Montoucet, secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

New Orleans city officials say the tire dumping problem is a top priority and lauded the task force effort. “The city of New Orleans Department of Sanitation is proud to partner with NOPD, Code Enforcement, Safety and Permits, Mosquito, Rodent and Termite Control Board, LDEQ and DOTD in an effort to address the major problem of illegal dumping throughout the city. These arrests are a positive sign that our hard work is paying off. Since 2010 the Sanitation Department has removed over 176,340 tires including over 32,000 last year. While we’ve made progress, more tires are being dumped and it is essential we remain committed to finding and prosecuting those responsible,” said Cynthia Sylvain-Lear, director of the city of New Orleans’ Sanitation Department.

“The NOPD is proud to be working closely with the DEQ in an ongoing effort to curb illegal dumping in New Orleans East. The arrests made by our 7<sup>th</sup> District officers this past weekend were the result of collaborative efforts with our state partners. We are committed to working together to put a stop to this destructive and illegal activity,” said New Orleans Superintendent of Police Michael Harrison.

If convicted in either parish for the knowing illegal disposal of waste tires, both Bryant Ballard and his brother, Malcolm, face possible imprisonment for not more than one year, or a fine of not more than \$25,000, or both. The mission of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is to protect the environment and public health. Any persons with knowledge of any illegal dumping activity, spills, releases, odors, fish kills, open burning, waste tires and any other types of environmental incidents may contact the department at 225-219-3640 or toll-free 1-888-763-5424.

Citizens may also report an incident online by filling out an incident report form at: <http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/file-a-complaint-report-an-incident>.

*An arrest does not constitute guilt in a criminal case and all subjects are presumed innocent. All evidence compiled during the investigation is presented to the area prosecutors who determine if formal charges are warranted.*