



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



August 2019 Issue Number: 91

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LDEQ routinely inspects oil and gas operations

Oil and gas facilities of all sizes, types and functions can be found across the state. Some are in obscure locations – deep into bayous, at the end of unmarked dirt roads or tucked away in densely wooded locations. Some operate in the middle of a waterway and are accessible only by boat. Nevertheless, all permitted facilities are subject to inspection and need to be observed to ensure their discharges, safety measures and operations are in compliance with state and federal environmental regulations.

One St. Mary Parish facility extracts oil from the ground, where it undergoes a water-oil separation and treatment process. The separated water is then treated and discharged back into the bayou. The oil is subsequently collected, packaged and transported for sale to customers. To avoid environmental issues from oil leaks affecting wildlife and aquatic species, this operation needs to be done appropriately and carefully.



LDEQ Environmental Scientists Andrew Kimmel (left) and Carrick Boffy accompany an oil facility operator on a tour as they inspect the platform's water/oil separation equipment in St. Mary Parish.

Inspectors conduct a document review before they visit a site so they're aware of any concerns or pre-existing issues that may need to be checked during the visit.

"It's important to ensure the facility has a spill prevention and spill cleanup control plan in place," LDEQ Environmental Scientist Carrick Boffy said. Discharge Monitoring Reports, or DMRs, are sent by the facility to LDEQ, which reviews them and enters them into the public record. The DMRs are periodic water pollution reports prepared by the facility with regard to their surface water discharges. Wastewater sample collection and testing are included in the report.

Performance test reports and any air discharge reports, if applicable, are also reviewed by LDEQ staff before conducting the site inspection, so that they have an idea on the site's history and are aware of any concerns or issues that may need to be addressed with the facility representative.

During the physical site inspection, any prior issues, obvious leaks, valve problems, effluent issues and/or the presence of any oil sheen in the water will be noted on the field interview form for correction and follow up by the LDEQ inspector. The facility representative usually discusses the corrective measures or remedies that were undertaken with regard to past concerns.

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If adjustments to work processes have not been corrected, or good faith attempts to correct any deficiencies have been commenced by the allotted time stated, a Notice of Deficiency (NOD) may be issued to the facility. Such a notice communicates that the corrections must be made to achieve compliance. Failure to meet that requirement can result in a formal action and/or penalty being assessed through LDEQ's Enforcement Division, and if warranted, Legal Division. In most cases, however, facilities will make the necessary changes in order to stay in compliance with the regulations.

LDEQ implements new invoice processing procedure

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has transitioned to a new invoice payment process for the regulated community that will expedite the processing of fees. The new process began in July, and will apply to fiscal year 2020 invoices and onward.

Via the new process, Lockbox, a cash management tool serviced by J.P. Morgan in Dallas, will be the repository for handling invoice payments. "This process will streamline the payment posting to a facility's account by having the bank process payments directly in lieu of customers submitting directly to LDEQ," said Theresa Delafosse, administrator of LDEQ's Financial Services Division. "As the customer submits a payment to Lockbox, a confirmation is sent to LDEQ Financial Services, which will record that the payment has been made."

The new process will ensure that payments are posted expeditiously, eliminating some of the delays caused by the processing of large volumes of incoming mail.

Please note that online payments will continue to be accepted at <http://business.deq.louisiana.gov/>.

As LDEQ submits invoices to the regulated community, a return envelope with a Dallas address will be provided (postage not included). The coupon at the bottom of the invoice should be removed and included with payment in the envelope provided. For ease of processing, customers are only to submit one check or money order per invoice, per envelope. Payment processing will be delayed if a single check is sent for multiple invoices or if the coupon and payment are mailed to LDEQ directly.

Please note that this process applies to invoices only – no other correspondence or fee applications are to be submitted to the Dallas address. LDEQ cannot guarantee that such documentation will be received and processed accordingly.

If you have a large number of invoices and you wish to make alternative payment arrangements, please contact LDEQ's Financial Services Division at (225) 219-3865 and someone will discuss options with you.



Message from the Secretary

Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.

Back in the early 2000s, I was an assistant secretary for environmental services here at LDEQ. The governor was a trailblazer named Kathleen Blanco. She was the state's first female governor. She had been in the Louisiana Legislature, the first woman to represent Lafayette in the Louisiana House of Representatives. There were a total of five women in both houses of the state legislature when she served there. Then she ran for the Public Service Commission and became the first woman in Louisiana to be elected to the PSC. After that she was lieutenant governor for eight years before being elected governor in 2003.



Gov. Kathleen Blanco and me back on the 2000s.

She had been a schoolteacher after college. I know about that. My wife teaches school. But after a few years, she decided to stay at home and raise her family. She was married to Raymond "Coach" Blanco for 44 years. They had six children, four girls and two boys.

Kathleen Blanco was fearless, someone who backed down from no challenge. It was no surprise to me that she didn't back down from cancer either, battling to the end when she took her last breath Aug. 18. What a loss her death was for this state that benefited from her fierce devotion. She was a proud Cajun, but she loved the entire state, all 64 parishes – every inch of every one of them. She expressed that love in a life of service. We will miss her. I hope we can honor her memory by continuing to pursue her ideals.

I want to mention another loss that touched many who now work at or have retired from LDEQ. On July 30, former LDEQ Secretary Martha Madden died. She was 82. In 1987, Gov. Edwin Edwards named Ms. Madden LDEQ secretary. She served a short two years but had a big influence of the future course of the department. Ms. Madden developed a visionary environmental agenda for LDEQ, and she worked to get Tulane University to create scholarships for LDEQ employees to gain master's degrees in environmental science.

It's almost September in Louisiana. Schools are in session. LSU and Southern are beginning their football seasons. We are all looking at the calendar in expectation of that long-awaited break from the summer heat. Some folks are fitting in a late vacation at the beach.

But don't forget. It's still hurricane season and will be until November. Even as this is being written, a hurricane (Dorian) is moving through the Caribbean. It could make landfall in Florida and push on across that state and into the Gulf of Mexico. Anything could happen then. Once again, I remind all of you to Get A Gameplan. Be prepared. Be ready to respond to storm-related issues at work. Be ready at home. If you need help figuring out what to do ahead of a storm, visit GOHSEP's site, <https://www.getagameplan.org/>.



LDEQ emergency response staff attend training in new radiation dose assessment software



Attendees work through various radiation release scenarios with the RASCAL software in order to obtain accurate dose assessment readings.



John Babin

Radiation dose training is integral for LDEQ emergency responders as they continue to participate in nuclear power point emergency response exercises. The three facilities under the purview of the state are Grand Gulf Nuclear Station in Mississippi; Waterford Steam Electric Station, Unit 3, in St. Charles Parish; and River Bend Nuclear Generating Station in West Feliciana Parish. Training on evaluating radiation dose amounts emanating from a potential accident at such a facility continues to be enhanced as our general understanding and assessment of radiation dosage becomes more sophisticated. New software continues to be developed to streamline and reduce errors in the overall assessment process.

The latest technology in this field is the RASCAL 4.3.3 software. RASCAL, known as the Radiation Assessment Systems for Consequence Analysis, is software that evaluates air releases from radiation accidents. The program is designed to assess dose projections during a radiological emergency response and was developed by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Staff from LDEQ's Emergency and Radiological Services Division attended a class on this new software and a field team back-calculation method that works with it. The class was on July 31 at LDEQ's Headquarters in Baton Rouge. Michael McMahon, an LDEQ environmental scientist, was the presenter. The field team's back-calculation method is known as the Babin Method, which was developed by LDEQ Environmental Scientist John Babin in collaboration with the Radiological Emergency Planning and Response group at LDEQ.

While a great deal of scientific and technological information defines the specifics of the process, in general terms, the software works by inputting data that is known about the facility and event in question. Meteorological information is then added, along with the air monitoring data that's been gathered by LDEQ's field teams, and the facility's air monitoring data. After all of that information is keyed

into RASCAL, the system calculates a dose projection which is used by emergency responders as a tool that helps to better evaluate the response based on what levels of radiation may be in the air during a certain period of time.

The software, available on handheld devices via download, makes the system easier to transport while allowing emergency responders to get a faster, detailed depiction of what may be in the air as it relates to radiation dose. In conjunction with another existing software known as "URI," or Uniform RASCAL Interface (customized programs specific to a given facility), the software is another way in which responders can receive, evaluate and share important data much faster as a radiation emergency event unfolds.



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Registration for the 2020 Louisiana Envirothon is now open!

DEQ has helped host the Louisiana Envirothon for more than 10 years and believes the 2020 competition will be the best yet. The 2020 competition will be held Feb. 15, 2020, at the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens.

The Louisiana Envirothon is an environmental problem-solving competition for students in grades 6-12. Teams train and compete by demonstrating their knowledge of environmental science and natural resource management with the hope of going on to represent Louisiana at the North American Envirothon Competition. The competition focuses on five natural resource areas: soils and land use, aquatic resources, forestry, wildlife and a current environmental issue. The current environmental issue for 2020 is Water Resources Management: Local Control and Local Solutions.

Louisiana Envirothon is a success because of the ongoing partnership between academia, state government, and private entities to provide students with the opportunity to experience environmentally oriented activities, enabling them to become environmentally aware citizens. Become a part of our team by spreading the word to potential sponsors and groups of students that share the Envirothon spirit. It is important to promote a desire in young people to understand natural resources and a willingness to work towards achieving and maintaining a balance between the quality of life and the quality of the environment. We hope you'll join us!

Visit <http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/envirothon> for more information.



2019 Envirothon Participants

Get Involved

LEAD: You can get involved with Louisiana Envirothon by organizing a team of five students from the same school or associated with an organized group such as FFA, 4-H or science clubs. The team registration fee is \$50. Download your registration packet now! The registration deadline is 12/13/2019.

ADVOCATE: Share information! Please share this email with any teachers or groups you think may be interested! Follow us on Facebook and share the opportunity via social media. Envirothon is an exceptional opportunity for our youth to get hands-on experience in environmental problem-solving. Help us spread the word!

SPONSOR: Become a Sponsor! Envirothon would not be possible without our wonderful sponsors. Sponsors receive recognition on competition posters, promotional items, LDEQ website, social media and through press releases.



National Bee Day is August 17



Bee hotel designs

August 17 was National Bee Day, and the Capital Area Beekeepers Association and bee enthusiasts want you to celebrate the threatened insects.

National Honey Bee Day is an awareness day where beekeepers, clubs and associations celebrate honey bees while bringing awareness to people all over the United States about protecting these insects. The day is celebrated the third Saturday in August every year, where bee enthusiasts pay homage to these busy bees, and show appreciation for the laborers who ensure the insects are managed and are able to pollinate crops.

Honey bees are a vital part of the environment. They germinate plants by leaving behind grains of pollen on sticky surfaces, allowing plants to be fertile and produce food. These insects pollinate billions of plants each year, including millions of agricultural crops. In fact, pollinators like bees play a key role in one out of every three bites of food we eat. Without them, many plants we rely on for food would

die off. Bees also play a part in the ecosystem. They support the growth of trees, flowers and other plants, which serve as food and shelter for creatures large and small. Bees contribute to complex, interconnected ecosystems that allow a diverse number of different species to co-exist.

Bee associations around the nation say that the goal for the awareness day is to: "Bring together beekeepers, bee associations, as well as other interested groups to connect with the communities to advance beekeeping. By working together and harnessing the efforts that so many already accomplish and using a united effort one day a year, the rewards and message are magnified many times over. We encourage bee associations, individuals, and other groups to get involved. The program is free and open to all."

Steve Payne, a member of the Capital Area Beekeepers Association in Baton Rouge, agrees with this goal. Payne said a lot of people do not think about the bees' importance in pollination. He said that U.S. scientists have noticed a drop in the population of bees, and that there is still work that needs to be done to protect the bee population. "Movement in this direction in the USA and in our region has been slower, but there have been certain efforts by universities as well as beekeeping and gardening associations or clubs. Programs have been presented and brochures have been developed and distributed concerning various pollinator challenges and possible citizen responses," Payne said.

Payne commented on one of the more recent changes to help bees survive and allow them to do their work in the environment. He commented on bee hotels. "Bee hotels have even become something of a recent fad, with many attractive models for these shelters being offered for sale by certain retailers. It might take a bit more reading or research though, for consumers to recognize the difference between some visually appealing shelter designs and backyard shelters that fit effectively the needs of certain pollinators. Many typical bird houses can be converted by filling them with soft bedding and reducing the size of the entry to work well as bumblebee hotels. The designs commonly displayed and offered for sale online can be useful, if adapted slightly, for some native and solitary bees, but many other solitary bees actually live in the ground. For these pollinators, changes in gardening or lawn preparation practices can help provide more and better habitat."

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LDEQ Environmental Scientist Manager Jerry Lang says that there are a lot of ways that the community can help preserve bees and help beekeepers with their dedicated work for the insects. He advised:

- Buy local honey at a local farmers' market.
- If you have bees in your trees, leave them alone. Let them do what they need to do. If there's a beehive at your doorstep, call a beekeeper to remove it. Pesticides and mosquito straying kills them.
- Contact your local bee association to learn more information about preserving bees in your area.

Chris Simms retires from LDEQ after 30 years of service

After more than 30 years of service to the state, Chris Simms, an environmental scientist in the Office of Environmental Compliance, retired Aug. 9.

During a retirement party at LDEQ Headquarters, Simms received a plaque, along with an embossed copy of House Bill 162 denoting his military deployment and service. He was also presented with a workout smart watch as an appreciation gift from some of his closest colleagues.

After graduating LSU with a degree in environmental health in 1988, Simms worked with the Department of Health and then joined LDEQ, serving for the next three decades in the hazardous waste, radiation and mixed waste areas.

In addition to his tenure with LDEQ, Simms is a decorated Army National Guard veteran, having served in various assignments and deployments since 1984. He was awarded the Bronze Star for his service as an interrogator and senior intelligence analyst in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, and earned an Army Commendation Medal while participating in more than 230 combat missions as a military policeman in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Recounting Simms' Army service as well as his history of wearing multiple hats and serving in several areas while at LDEQ, former supervisors and colleagues addressed the attendees.

"We can all make everyone better around us by polishing up behind them – making the final work product better," Simms told the attendees. He said he is proud of the people he met and what he accomplished in his time at LDEQ.

In his parting remarks, Simms reiterated how there are endless opportunities to make a difference during our daily tasks. "I also encourage you to achieve and maintain an attitude of gratitude. A cheerful heart is like medicine to the bones."



Chris Simms



LDEQ On The Move



Jeff J. Dausat, administrator of LDEQ's Emergency and Radiological Services Division, presents a Certificate of Recognition to Environmental Scientist Manager Karen Burgard.

At their annual meeting Aug. 20, the Organization of Agreement States (OAS) presented a Certificate of Recognition to Karen Burgard, radiation section manager with LDEQ's Office of Environmental Compliance, Emergency and Radiological Services Division.

Louisiana has been a member of the OAS since 1967, and LDEQ is Louisiana's agency representative. Burgard was recognized for her participation as Louisiana's representative in a group that worked on medical equipment identified as "Xcision GammaPod and Masep Infini Gamma SRS."

"Karen's active participation in this working group allowed the group to utilize her knowledge and years of experience in the Radiological field. Karen's participation also allowed the State of Louisiana and the LDEQ to share information in a collaborative format with other states and federal entities in this unique space. We are proud of Karen and her national recognition!" Jeff J. Dausat, administrator of LDEQ's Emergency and Radiological Services Division, said.



Who's Who At LDEQ?



Wendy Trunch -- Environmental Scientist, Air Field Services, Office of Environmental Assessment

Trunch is originally from Folsom, but moved to Baton Rouge to attend LSU. She earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and is currently working on her master's degree in environmental science and policy with Geographic Information System (GIS) certification. She joined LDEQ in 2016 after working in infectious disease research. She was recently promoted to Environmental Scientist IV.

In her spare time, Trunch enjoys baking, gardening and reading.

Brian Gold – Environmental Scientist, Surveillance Division, Office of Environmental Compliance, Southeast Regional Office

Gold is a native of North Carolina and moved to Texas in 1998. He completed his Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife biology in 2014 and his Master of Science in wildlife ecology in 2017, both from Texas State University.

After earning his bachelor's degree, Gold worked for the U.S. Forest Service in Oregon, where he surveyed White-headed Woodpeckers in the Malheur National Forest. He then returned to Texas to work at the U.S. Army installation at Fort Hood, where he surveyed birds, vegetation and pollinators for the University of Illinois-Urbana. Most recently, he worked on salmon, striped bass and steelhead projects for the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington and Oregon.



Ashley K. Plunkett – Attorney, Permits Section, Legal Division, Office of the Secretary

Plunkett grew up in Mandeville, moving to Baton Rouge in 2008 to attend LSU. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from LSU in 2012, as well a minor in both English and environmental engineering. She then earned her Juris Doctor from LSU in 2015.

After earning her degree, she lived in Lake Charles and worked with the Calcasieu Parish Public Defenders' Office. She recently returned to Baton Rouge to join LDEQ, and will be working in the legal division with the permits section.

Plunkett enjoys LSU football and walking around University Lake.



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Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Second Quarter Summaries

Second Quarter 2019 Enforcement Actions:

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

Second Quarter 2019 Settlement Agreements:

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

Second Quarter 2019 Air Permits:

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

Second Quarter 2019 Water Permits:

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

Second Quarter 2019 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

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

