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LDEQ's regional offices collaborate during post-hurricane response

In the first hour of Thursday, Aug. 27, a monster came howling ashore in Cameron, headed inland. Hurricane Laura packed winds of 150 mph at landfall and no good intentions. The storm damaged most everything it touched, knocking out the power grid, ripping off countless roofs in Lake Charles and sparking a fire at a chemical plant in Westlake. As day broke over southwest Louisiana, first responders negotiated fallen trees and debris to survey Laura's effects and answer calls for help.

Even as responders from LDEQ's Southwest Regional Office were scrambling to answer storm-related calls, the hurricane was moving on and continuing its destruction all the way into north Louisiana. It maintained hurricane status past Alexandria and almost into Shreveport.

While spills and petrochemical releases were minimal during Hurricane Laura, the widespread wind damage generated tons of debris that had to be handled. LDEQ marshalled resources quickly and coordinated assessment oversight coverage among staff from all of the department's regional offices. The offices rallied to shift personnel to back up each regional office to ensure that LDEQ's environmental protection responsibilities continued uninterrupted. Simultaneously, personnel from LDEQ also had to navigate the difficult staffing issues related to COVID-19 and its associated health concerns, restrictions and protective guidelines.



Members of the LDEQ Incident Command Group at work at headquarters in Baton Rouge.

Six weeks later, and just 12 miles from the spot where Laura had made landfall, Hurricane Delta came ashore near Creole with winds of 100 mph. Delta tracked slightly eastward of Laura's path, angling toward Baton Rouge before turning north toward Monroe as a strong tropical storm. Gusts of 40 to 60 mph were recorded throughout northeast Louisiana. All of a sudden, the already daunting workload for LDEQ personnel multiplied.

Many LDEQ employees' personal lives were impacted, with at least one losing their home in Lake Charles, as that area experienced multiple impacts from repeated

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blows. Staff from the Southwest Regional Office (SWRO) was hit particularly hard, both personally and professionally. In fact, the SWRO's main building was damaged, resulting in a roof leak and associated water damage to flooring and walls. The office also lost some furniture and had damage to a vehicle.



Emergency debris sites must be attended by a responsible party during a controlled burn.

"Every person in the office was impacted to some degree," said Billy Eakin, LDEQ Southwest Regional Office Manager. As SWRO staff weathered the hurricanes and started to get the office functional, the workload increased as the office had to take on debris site assessments, landfills authorized to handle debris, facility damage assessments and ongoing response duties.

Still, employees based at the SWRO and Acadiana Regional Office (ARO) in Lafayette pressed forward, coordinating staff to handle those tasks, despite dealing with personal hardships. While the Acadiana Regional Office dealt with their own hurricane-related challenges, they rapidly shifted personnel and resources to the Lake Charles area to cover assessments to support SWRO.

In turn, the Northeast Regional Office (NWRO), based in West Monroe, took on double-duty. They continued to cover their own region while also sending surveillance teams to fill the void left by ARO. The NWRO team stepped up and handled ARO's assessment responsibilities in the central and northern parishes. During this

period, ARO continued to oversee the lower Gulf Coast parishes while simultaneously assisting the SWRO in the Lake Charles area.

"Our surveillance staff covered our own region as well as handled emergency debris site assessments, wastewater assessments, facility assessments and tasks in the northern parishes that fall under the purview of the Acadiana Regional Office," said Casey Head, LDEQ Northeast Regional Office Manager. "We're all part of a team, and we have a great staff here in the Northeast Region that's willing to help and chip in where needed."

That teamwork would face yet another test in 2020. On Wednesday, Oct. 28, Hurricane Zeta made landfall in Cocodrie with winds of 110 mph. It cut a swath across extreme southeast Louisiana, crossing the New Orleans metropolitan area before exiting the state.

"Zeta's impact wasn't like they had from Laura," Southeast Regional Office Manager (SERO) Brian Tusa said. "There wasn't a lot of damage to facilities or houses; mainly, it was trees. There was some superficial roof and shingle damage, but most of it was trees." There were a lot of trees down all over the region – Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Terrebonne parishes, he said. Only Washington Parish had minimal damage. SERO is a large regional office, Tusa said, and the larger staff enabled SERO to handle Zeta's impact without assistance. "They do a great job," Tusa said of the SERO staff. "On top of everything else – the challenges with staffing and COVID-19 – everybody stepped up, and we were able to accomplish the inspections that were required."

And the collaborative effort continues, even as we move into a new year.

"We could not do what we are doing in this response without assistance from Casey Head and his staff in the Northeast Regional Office, said Rhonda McCormick, LDEQ Regional Office Manager for the Acadiana Regional Office in Lafayette.

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“They are handling all of the debris sites and landfills in Catahoula, Concordia, Grant and LaSalle. The Waste Permits Division is handling debris sites and landfills in Acadia, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Mary and Vermilion. “They have dedicated hundreds of man-hours to hurricane response.”

“In addition to hurricane response, the Acadiana Regional Office and Kisatchie Central Office (based in Alexandria) continue to do inspections and respond to incidents. They have worked tirelessly over the past 94 days. More than 2,000 site assessments have been conducted since August, and the teams have been in the field ‘non-stop’,” McCormick added.

The Capital Regional Office, based in Baton Rouge, and the Northwestern Regional Office, based in Shreveport, also took up the slack.

“We took some incidents from the Southwest Regions (regular work not related to the storms),” Capital Regional Office Manager April Baiamonte said. “We tried to give them some relief.” Her region also saw storm impacts, Baiamonte said. “We have done some storm response here. We have 16 sites we visit regularly in East Baton Rouge, Ascension, Pointe Coupee parishes – scattered across the region. Almost all of the debris is vegetative for us. There have been very little in terms of appliances, etc.”

She added that five of her responders are working on the Incident Command staff, four on one shift and one on another shift. “They are in there on weekends, in there late, and they still try to maintain their incident response numbers and do their regular work, doing overtime and late shifts to do non-storm work.”

In addition to the usual tasks regarding inspections of wastewater treatment plants, facilities and landfills, emergency debris sites are suddenly added to the environmental protection oversight mission when a major storm or hurricane impacts the state. Through an Emergency Order and Declaration, pre-approved emergency debris sites will be activated in order to handle the overflow of debris that mount as a result of a severe weather-related event. Designated landfills will also be allowed to accept construction and demolition debris.

During this particularly busy time, teams from LDEQ’s Office of Environmental Services have supported the Office of Environmental Compliance to schedule inspection rotations of those debris sites to ensure that each one is accounted for and checked for compliance. “Teams will typically inspect emergency debris sites every week and landfills every two weeks,” LDEQ Geologist Greg Keller indicated. “If a controlled burn is in progress, we check to see that someone is present and tending to it.”

Sites must be permitted, and a visual inspection of each site is done to verify activity while ensuring that the site is being used for its intended purpose. An Emergency Debris Site assessment checklist will be prepared upon each visit by the inspector, who will document the visit. If deficiencies are identified, a Field Notice of Deficiency form will also be prepared, which will be presented to the site owner or operator for correction, and filed into the public record.

“In support of the hurricanes during 2020, the Northwest Regional Office stepped up and handled additional responsibilities beginning immediately after Hurricane Laura. All of our divisions teamed up to inspect over 70 sites that included permitted



LDEQ Geologist Greg Keller from the Capital Regional Office supports the Acadiana Regional Office’s post-hurricane field assessment mission during an inspection of an emergency debris site in Lafayette Parish.

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landfills and temporary debris sites. Surveillance continues to inspect the few remaining sites,” said Mark Juneau, Northwest Regional Office Manager. “While this was a large task to take on, it pales in comparison to what the Southwest Regional and Acadiana Regional Offices had to endure. Many of the LDEQ employees in these regions lost homes and/or had severe damage to their properties. They continued to come to work when they had no electricity at home, and they continue to this day to inspect a large number of debris sites and landfills.”

“Rhonda McCormick and her staff in ARO were instrumental in organizing and getting the initial response efforts running,” Eakin elaborated. “A lot of credit goes to the Incident Command as well, who assisted us with whatever we needed, on short notice.”

Each of LDEQ’s six regional offices and two substations (based in Alexandria and Lockport) provided personnel and resources to help each other on a personal level while supporting the department’s environmental protection mission. Some people from each region are assigned to the Incident Command Group at LDEQ, which oversees and coordinates all storm-related activity, including Rapid Needs Assessments with State Police, phone assessments with facilities, parish needs assessments, storm assessment overflights, phone contacts with all regulated radiation sources, debris staging site inspections, landfill inspections, some Superfund site assessments and inspections of underground storage tanks. All incident command tasks must be performed in accordance with a safety plan on file.

LDEQ Incident Command also monitors the state WebEOC system to provide assistance to other agencies, state or federal, that request personnel with specific expertise. “Regional staff have done a tremendous job in response to these unprecedented hurricane events. As a result of these events, we have implemented new practices and procedures along with using new technology to streamline activities, reporting requirement, and overall response coordination,” Incident Commander Daniel Lambert said. “These practices and procedures will be incorporated into the Department’s Natural Disaster and Catastrophic Event Response Plan as the new standard in response to future events,” said Lambert.

“Every region in the state has some sort of site that was affected, the whole state is now being affected,” Baiamonte said. “All six regions have some sort of response.” Capitol Regional staff also pitched to assist other regions, including providing staff as “runners” to ferry supplies to other regions. Three employees are assigned tracking, scheduling, organizing and reviewing duties for documents and information from the storms.

All in all, LDEQ’s headquarters staff and regional offices knew no boundaries as they all pitched in to help each other – both on a personal level as well as a professional one. Doing so was necessary in order to ease a bit of the burden felt through Mother Nature’s repeated visits to the state.

“We’re very thankful for the monetary donations as well as the water, food and supplies that were provided to assist us – and the support that continues,” Eakin said.

LDEQ’s Bayou Lafourche Office and Kisatchie Central Office have both relocated

Bayou Lafourche Office
125 Baratavia St.
Lockport, LA 70374
Phone: (985) 532-6206

Kisatchie Central Office
2800 S. MacArthur Drive
Suite A
Alexandria, LA 71301
Phone: (318) 487-5656



Message from the Secretary

Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.

This will be my last communication with you in 2020. The New Year is here, and I, for one, am very glad to say goodbye to 2020. Unfortunately, a lot of the issues and problems we had last year are going to extend into this year. Just a few days ago, I sent out a message to all employees, reminding everyone that you should continue observing all Covid-19 precautions. That is still true, and it will continue to be important even as we begin to vaccinate our population against the virus. So keep wearing that mask! Maintain social distancing, and wash your hands frequently. Avoid large gatherings, even for holiday events.

Don't stand in long lines. Don't join in large crowds. Wear a mask inside. Wear a mask outside if you are going to be close to other people outside your immediate family. Make these behaviors habits. We are going to have to continue to be careful for a long time yet.

As we move into a new year, we will still be wrestling with some of our same issues. There are too many odor sources that generate complaints from the public. We will be working on ways to encourage facilities whose activities generate unpleasant odors to find ways to reduce or eliminate the problem. We will also be looking at stronger measures that might be available to us.

Litter is a constant problem and an expensive one. Not only is it unsightly, but it can also clog up drainage, create environmental issues and can exacerbate or even cause destructive flooding. We will continue working with our sister agencies and with local authorities and environmental groups to find ways to get people to stop throwing trash onto the ground, in the street, in rivers and bayous and along every roadside. It's just learned behavior. We have to unlearn it.

This year we will focus more on reducing greenhouse gases. With the governor's new Climate Initiatives Task Force, the problem of climate change and its direct antecedent, carbon emissions, is on everyone's list. The task force will investigate and make recommendations for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions originating in Louisiana to achieve the stated greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals in order to improve the health and welfare of the people of Louisiana and advance Louisiana's economic and energy profile.

I am one of the 23 members the governor named to this task force, and I can tell you that it will be looking at everything. No greenhouse gas source will be exempt from examination. I expect we can find some big reductions by moving the state toward more electric vehicles (EVs) and mass transit using zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs).

The Climate Initiatives Task Force has ambitious goals, and it is in the planning and information gathering phase right now. As the process continues, the task force will examine everything from transportation to mining to industry to land use to agriculture. It will gather information from "state government, colleges and universities, the private sector, and civil society" to inform its recommendations on policy that can help reduce greenhouse emissions. It's an ambitious and exciting agenda.

So I anticipate a challenging and rewarding year in 2021 – a better year than the one before. So let's begin 2021 with optimism and continue to do the excellent work we did while shouldering all the burdens of last year. I appreciate each and every one of you. Stay safe.



If you are inside, wear a mask.



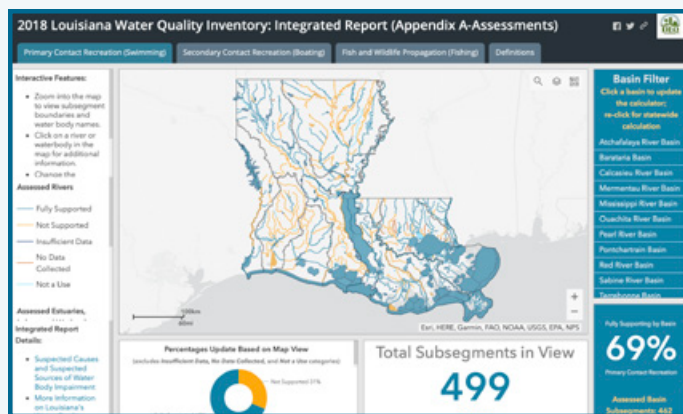
LDEQ's 2020 Year in Review

LDEQ responded to an unprecedented number of hurricanes (Laura, Delta and Zeta) plus Tropical Storm Cristobal

LDEQ's Emergency Response Division led a multi-media response during a particularly busy storm and hurricane season across the state. Emergency Declarations and Amendments were issued directing the emergency response protocol and agency mechanisms during the damage assessment and recovery process. LDEQ partnered with several local, parish, state and Federal entities during each event's complete response, including pre-storm safety protocols, communication with facilities and pre-/post-storm planning, orphan drum locations, facility fire/safety issues, overall damage assessment (ground and overflights) and post-storm evaluation and recovery.

Interactive map of Integrated report developed

LDEQ launched a new interactive map that details the water bodies included in the Louisiana Water Quality Integrated Report. The Louisiana Water Quality Integrated Report is the current format for the state's biennial reports on the water quality of Louisiana surface waters. The most current Water Quality Integrated Report, considered final and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is the 2018 report, which can be viewed via an interactive map at: www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/louisiana-water-quality-integrated-report. The full report, including text, assessments and appendices, can be viewed at www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/468. For more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/News_Releases/2020/WaterQualityIRMapPressRelease.pdf



Screen capture of the Louisiana Water Quality Integrated Report interactive map

Bayou Bonfouca swimming and sediment contact advisory lifted

After completion of sediment sampling in Bayou Bonfouca in January 2020, followed by detailed risk assessment analysis by LDEQ and the Louisiana Department of Health, the agencies signed a notice rescinding the long-standing swimming and sediment contact advisory on Bayou Bonfouca in Slidell. This marks the second time in two years that a chemical related advisory has been fully rescinded following remedial actions. In December 2018, a fish consumption advisory on Sibley Lake was also lifted. For more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/assets/Bonfouca_PR2.pdf.

Louisiana received \$176,000 from EPA to improve and protect waters across the state

EPA awarded LDEQ \$176,000 to improve impaired waters and protect unimpaired waters across the state. Several water quality improvement and protection projects are underway. For more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/News_Releases/2020/EPAprovidesLouisiana176000k.pdf.

LDEQ responded to COVID-19 epidemic

LDEQ issued several Emergency Declarations and Amendments in response to the public health emergency response. LDEQ also provided tips on proper safety protocols to the public and adjusted business operations and personnel staffing accordingly so that little to no disruption in service to the state was seen. LDEQ accomplished several public hearing in a safe manner in accordance with COVID-19 regulations and concerns. The agency also partnered with the Louisiana Department of Corrections and LSU to produce hand sanitizer for use in the fight against Covid-19. Using donated ingredients – isopropyl alcohol, glycerol and hydrogen peroxide – and labor furnished by Prison Enterprises. LDEQ and LSU chemists mixed up 7,370 gallon of the much-needed hand cleaner. For a video and more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/covid19.

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LDEQ receives \$800K Brownfields grant from EPA, plus \$300K for Southern Louisiana Brownfield sites

EPA awarded LDEQ an \$800,000 Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund grant. In a separate funding announcement, EPA announced \$300,000 for Southern Louisiana Brownfields Sites Funds as part of \$6.9 million awarded nationwide. Louisiana's South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC) will receive a \$300,000 Revolving Loan Fund for its South Louisiana Brownfields Coalition. The grant is part of \$6.9 million in supplemental funding EPA is providing for 25 current successful Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (Revolving Loan) grantees. For more information, visit www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/brownfields



LDEQ's new MAMLS

LDEQ activated and deployed two new Mobile Air Monitoring Labs

LDEQ added two new Mobile Air Monitoring Labs (MAMLS) in late 2019, for a total of three, to enhance the Department's ability to monitor the air quality in Louisiana. The new MAMLS were highly active in 2020, supporting the department's emergency response mission during an unusually busy hurricane season. Their capabilities have allowed LDEQ to deploy monitoring anywhere in the state, providing scientists and the public with near real-time air quality data. The data can be viewed online at airquality.deq.louisiana.gov/data. For more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/mobile-air-monitoring-lab.

Louisiana Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust Allocations To Date

The State of Louisiana has awarded \$11,917,845.89 to 16 Parish School Boards who applied for funding under the VW Environmental Mitigation Settlement. Approximately 156 of the 351 buses receiving funding are propane or CNG driven. Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) is replacing old diesel equipment and vehicles with \$6,616,268.43 in VW Funding. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry is replacing 7 vehicles with \$693,791.00 of funding. The Town of Hornbeck was awarded \$75,000.00 to replace an old diesel dump truck with a clean-burning CNG emergency roadside nurse dump truck that will be used to refuel other CNG vehicles. For more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/louisiana-volkswagen-environmental-mitigation-trust.



LDEQ's first all-electric car

LDEQ introduces its first all-electric car to vehicle fleet

LDEQ expanded its vehicle fleet to include its first electric vehicle. With the electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure recently added to the Galvez Parking garage, LDEQ continues to work toward energy-efficient investments with the procurement of a Chevrolet Bolt EV. For more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/News_Releases/2020/LDEQintroducesfirstall-electriccartovehiclefleet.pdf.

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Louisiana part of an EPA awards of over \$1 Million to clean up school buses in 43 states

In conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, EPA awarded \$11.5 million to replace 580 older diesel school buses. The funds are going to 157 school bus fleets in 43 states and Puerto Rico, each of which will receive rebates through EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) funding. Twelve school districts in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas received \$1,095,000. For more information, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/News_Releases/2020/EPAwardsMoreThan1MilliontoCleanUpSchoolBuses.pdf.

Contract established with USGS to expand statewide gauge network for Louisiana Watershed Initiative

LDEQ will manage the contract with the U.S. Geological Survey. The addition of 100 or more gauges to the USGS network in Louisiana will aid in the watershed modeling conducted by the University of Louisiana at Lafayette as part of the Louisiana Watershed Initiative.

Triennial Review water regulation update submitted to EPA

The three-year cycle rule update has been completed and included updates to water quality standards, subsegment boundaries and waterbody classifications.

The first application for new Water Quality Trading Program credits received and is under review

The application is from the Restore the Earth Foundation for the reforestation efforts in the Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries' Pointe au Chene Wildlife Management Area. The Foundation's goal is for LDEQ to certify the water quality benefits associated with the reforestation and award Water Quality Credits to the Foundation based on the calculated reduction of pollutant load.

LDEQ Received an EPA 106 grant to compare satellite imagery indicative of Harmful Algal Bloom conditions to field data

The funding will support the field sampling and lab analysis of water samples in areas in which satellite imagery indicates potentially harmful algal blooms. Data will then be used to confirm the usefulness of the satellite indicators.

EPA approved of Non-Point Source success story for the Lake Providence project

LDEQ worked with the Louisiana Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement Best Management Practices in coordination with landowners around Lake Providence to reduce non-point source pollution into the lake. The reduction in polluted runoff resulted in water quality improvements to a level that supports all designated uses and is no longer considered impaired.

Airfield Services staff captured 96% of the data for LDEQ's ambient air monitoring sites during the Fiscal Year

By operating a statewide ambient monitoring sampling network, data is collected to ensure areas of the state are in compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Real-time monitoring data is viewable anytime on the LDEQ website. Airfield Services staff inspect the monitoring sites on a routine basis to ensure data is being properly collected and all equipment is functioning correctly.

LDEQ submitted a request to EPA to discontinue monitoring at four SO2 monitoring sites and to have these areas redesignated to Attainment/Unclassifiable for the 2010 SO2 National Ambient Air Quality Standards

These sites began monitoring on Jan. 1, 2017, and have been monitoring specific SO2 sources for three years to demonstrate compliance with the updated SO2 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). These four sites have shown SO2 concentrations are less than 50% of the NAAQS. Residents are benefiting from the improved air quality. The monitoring at these sites was accomplished in cooperation with local industry and industry groups. Industry partners purchased and donated the equipment to LDEQ for use at the sites.

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LDEQ established a Temporarily Located Community ambient air monitoring site in Jefferson Parish

This temporary site was established in a relatively short period of time due to concerns raised by residents of the parish, primarily due to odors that were impacting the area. Residents of the parish benefit by having quality-assured data indicating that concentrations measured fall below established health concerns and standards. LDEQ was able to accomplish this by working closely with state, parish and local government officials along with community representatives in the arduous process of site selection, parameter choice and site establishment. The air quality has improved to be protective of human health and the environment such that Stage II Vapor recovery systems are no longer necessary to maintain compliance with Ozone NAAQS. Fuel stations in the five-parish Baton Rouge area will benefit upon approval by no longer being required to install, operate and maintain Stage II systems, while still protecting air quality. Late-model vehicles are equipped with onboard refueling vapor recovery equipment that captures vapor during refueling. The vehicle fleet in the area now contains a sufficient number of equipped vehicles. The benefits from stage II systems are no longer needed.

The 2015 Ozone NAAQS Prong 4 Visibility State Implementation Plan (SIP) submitted

This SIP will allow EPA to approve all criteria pollutant Infrastructure SIPs submitted by LDEQ. It benefits all residents as it provides the legal authority for Louisiana to submit SIPs to keep the area's air quality intact.

2020 EPA Clean Air Excellence Award recipient in the Community Action category for LDEQ's TLC Air Monitoring Program

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has been working to promote environmental justice in Louisiana for almost 30 years. The LDEQ began fostering relationships with under-served communities by bringing assistance. The Temporarily Located Community (TLC) Air Monitor Program exemplifies the agency's efforts in this undertaking. This program has allowed LDEQ to expand its outreach to under-served communities and respond meaningfully and effectively to their concerns.

TLC Air Monitors collect ambient air quality data in neighborhoods, using EPA approved methods and protocols, for at least one year. The data is collected and relayed to LDEQ's website, airquality.deq.louisiana.gov/data, providing real-time data on the extent of outdoor pollution and air quality pollution trends of certain regulated pollutants. LDEQ also deploys the Mobile Air Monitoring Lab (MAML) to support the TLC Air Monitoring Program. The MAML and TLC Air Monitors also serve as an educational opportunity for LDEQ to invite the public to tour the resources being dedicated to their community. A tour of a TLC air monitor station is available upon request, whereas tours of the MAML are regularly offered at emergency response meetings, high schools, universities and fairs such as Earth Day.

Today, LDEQ collects data in three neighborhood locations, including St. Rose, Marrero and Waggaman. Community partners assist in determining which pollutants to monitor for and the site location. The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) partners through their Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT), which further publicizes the data and educates the community concerning health risks. LDEQ regularly meets with various community groups as it conducts its business of environmental stewardship. These locally led, community-driven solutions help to improve environmental protection and have become a key component in LDEQ's mission to protect human health and the environment in Louisiana.



LDEQ creates Nonpoint Source Pollution demonstration to continue outreach efforts during COVID-19

With COVID-19 restrictions limiting outreach efforts, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's (LDEQ) Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution group created a video demonstrating the EnviroScape model. The EnviroScape model effectively communicates the shared responsibility for the environment, specifically water quality, to people of all ages.

The three-dimensional EnviroScape nonpoint source model focuses on problems caused by nonpoint source pollution and how some of those problems can be mitigated. LDEQ's NPS group usually visits classrooms throughout the year for in-person demonstrations. However, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the postponement or cancellation of many outreach events.

In order to continue the agency's commitment to education and outreach, LDEQ Nonpoint Source Division created this resource that can be used anytime, anywhere to teach students about nonpoint source pollution. The video can be found at <https://youtu.be/2WHW3F5qG18>, and the worksheet, with the corresponding answer key, can be downloaded at www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/nonpoint-source.



India Ambeau, Environmental Scientist in LDEQ's Nonpoint Source Division, demonstrates the sources and effects of water pollution via the EnviroScape Watershed/Nonpoint Source model.

"The Nonpoint Source division has always been committed to education and outreach. In the past, we have participated in events throughout the state, including Earth Days, STEM Days, classroom visits and so many more. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of our regularly scheduled outreach events were postponed or canceled," said India Ambeau, Environmental Scientist in LDEQ's Nonpoint Source Division. "In an effort to keep up with these changes, we had to figure out how to continue to reach our young learners without being able to physically be there with them. So, we decided to do a short video explaining the model, similarly to the way it would be done in person. We also created a short test that can be used with the video so that educators can ensure that students have a better understanding of the concepts discussed."

Louisiana's Nonpoint Source Pollution Program is managed by the LDEQ and is a collaborative effort that includes many partners. NPS is a type of water pollution that is not generated from a discrete conveyance, such as a discharge pipe, but is generated during rainfall events. NPS pollution is the largest remaining type of water pollution to be addressed within Louisiana and across the nation in order to restore the designated uses to the impaired waterbodies. LDEQ's NPS Pollution group's goal is to educate the public about NPS pollution and best management practices (BMPs) that can be implemented to reduce and control this type of pollution.

"We know that there is nothing that can compare to physically being at outreach events and interacting with students, their families and other educators, but it is our hope that this video will help us continue to reach audiences who need environmental education materials until it's safe for us to participate in-person again. If this video is effective, we may be able to produce similar educational videos on different environmental topics," Ambeau said.

Learn more about LDEQ's Nonpoint Source Pollution Program at www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/nonpoint-source.

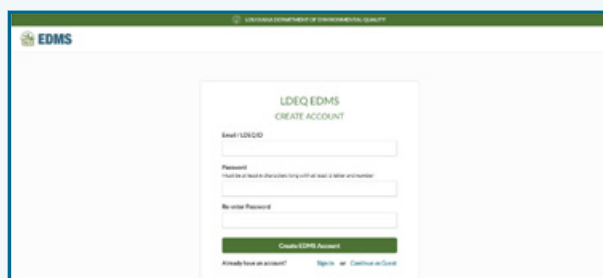


LDEQ’s Electronic Data Management System gets a makeover

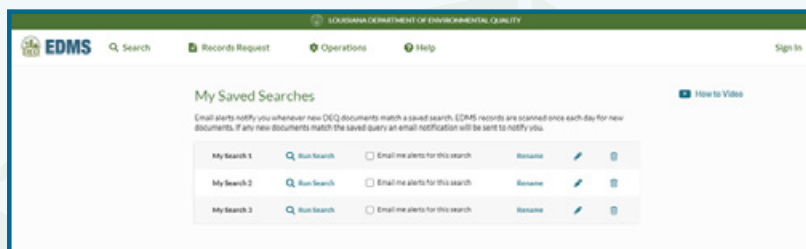
In order to streamline the public records search process and make the system more user-friendly, LDEQ recently launched “MyEDMS,” an updated version of the department’s Electronic Data Management System.

Users of the new EDMS will be able to set up saved searches and receive email notifications on specific search parameters. LDEQ employees will have access to these features; however, public users will be required to set up an account on EDMS in order to use these features.

To set up an account and log in, public users will access the Create Account page that requires an email address as a login ID. LDEQ users will use their ID to access EDMS.



The Saved Search screen provides a list of saved searches based on the parameters the user has created. On this screen, users will be able to run their searches, edit search names and criteria, and click to receive email notifications when a new document in EDMS matches their search criteria. Email notifications will be sent when there is a new document that meets a specific search criteria.



The opinion survey in June gave a preview of the new features of MyEDMS, and we received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Here are a few of the comments we received:

“This email feature for new documents being added seems extremely useful.”

“I especially like the email alerts for documents recently added to EDMS. It would definitely cut down on the time it takes to research looking for documents now.”

“Would love to see this feature added!! Currently, I just look in every week to see if anything new is listed on our AI#.”

If you have any questions or comments about the EDMS redesign, please contact the team at edmsquestions@la.gov.



LDEQ employees give back with donations to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank

Over the past few months, LDEQ employees participated in a fundraising drive to benefit the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank (GBRFB), which concluded on Dec. 8. According to the food bank, there is more food insecurity in our communities than ever before. That's easy to understand when an area is weathering a global health pandemic and has just survived a record hurricane season. Janet Price, Vice President of Development and Philanthropy for the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank, noted that the GBRFB has been feeding 50,000 people a month who reside in an area that covers 11 parishes.

Since October, LDEQ has raised money and collected donations via DEQ's "Snack Shack" sales, individual division campaigns, individual contributions, and a "Fill-A-Plate" food drive that benefited the Food Bank.

Thanks to the many charitable events and donations from LDEQ employees in the last several months, \$1,500 was donated to Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank this year. On behalf of LDEQ, Secretary Dr. Chuck Brown presented a check to Louisiana Food Bank Representative Janet Price.

The Waste Permits Division went the extra mile to give back to the Food Bank. The Waste Permits Division's Culture Team created the "Gratitude is the Best Attitude" campaign benefiting the GBRFB. The campaign encouraged the Waste Permits Division employees to share a reason they were thankful during the Thanksgiving season. Each reason to be thankful resulted in the purchase of a feather for a dollar to dress the Thanksgiving turkey decorating the Waste Permits Division bulletin board. They came up with 710 reasons to be thankful, resulting in a \$710 donation to GBRFB.

Additionally, the Remediation Division created a fundraising campaign in which individual donations amounted to \$80. Remediation Division Administrator Estuardo Silva matched his division's donations for a total monetary contribution of \$160 from the Remediation Division.

LDEQ raised \$1,500 in monetary donations equating to 4,500 meals provided and collected 803 pounds of food equating to 670 meals provided. In total, the fundraiser filled 5,170 plates this holiday season.



LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown presents Janet Price, vice president of Development and Philanthropy for the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank, with a check.



The Culture Team's "Gratitude is the Best Attitude" campaign encouraged the waste permits division to contribute 710 reasons to be thankful this holiday season.



LDEQ hosts second blood drive of the year



All donors received a holiday shirt for their donations, "Don't be Grinch, give blood."

In conjunction with The Blood Center, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) hosted a blood drive for employees on Dec. 8 and 9. The blood drive was a success. LDEQ had 45 donors, and The Blood Center collected 49 units of blood. The goal of 20 units each day with a total of 40 for both days was met. The extra four units were made possible by having the ALYX machine available on the first day.

The ALYX machine is a special machine similar to an Apheresis (platelet) donation. It collects two units of red blood cells instead of one, allowing a donor to double the impact of their gift. A typical ALYX donation takes approximately 45 minutes. ALYX donors only give once every 112 days (16 weeks) instead of the normal 56 days.

Employees made appointments online to ensure social distancing at the time of donation. Everyone wore a mask, and hand sanitizer was readily available, all to ensure COVID-19 safety standards were met. The Blood Center also screened all donations for COVID-19 antibodies, delivering results to the donor within three to five days after their donation.

"I haven't missed a single LDEQ blood drive since starting my role at the agency in 2007, and I'm glad I could continue to give during the pandemic," said Will Barlett, an engineer with the LDEQ Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund program. "The Blood Center took every precaution to ensure the safety of each donor. The ongoing pandemic didn't dissuade me at all. Actually, the included COVID-19 antibody test only made it more appealing," Barlett said.

LDEQ's blood drive chairwoman, Mintia Canelas, plans two blood drives a year for LDEQ staff. This was the second and final one for 2020. The goal is to have at least 20 employees donate blood each day of each drive. If that goal is met, it assures that LDEQ employees will receive blood assurance for an entire year. Employees can donate blood in their name, a family member's name or for anyone that requires blood.

Donating blood is an essential service that brings our community together for the greater good. According to the American Red Cross, someone in the U.S. needs blood an estimated every two seconds. The Blood Center reports 1 in 7 people entering the hospital need blood. Inversely, The Blood Center has found that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a 30% reduction in blood drives over the last six months, with a projected blood donation loss of 250,000 by the end of 2020.

LDEQ is proud of the staff that participated in the drive and donate regularly. Masks on, sleeves up, lives saved! Thanks to everyone who donated.



Attention teachers seeking to participate at the 2021 Teacher Leader Summit

Teachers wishing to give a presentation at the 2021 Teacher Leader Summit must apply by January 6.

The application link is now open and can be found in the **Teacher Leader Library**, under “2021 Teacher Leader Summit Materials.”

The online application is the only means by which to apply to lead a session. Paper applications will not be accepted. While the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) welcomes applications on all topics aligned to the Department’s strategy, planners are particularly eager to hear from the field on select topics listed in the application.

Please be sure to read the application in full before you begin planning your session.

For more information, please contact ldoevents@la.gov.





Who's Who At LDEQ?



Yolunda M. Righteous, J.D. – Administrator, Waste Permits Division, Office of Environmental Services

A Baton Rouge native with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Dillard University in New Orleans, Righteous began her career at the LDEQ in April 2011. She worked for nearly 15 years as the Waste Services Director for Providence Engineering. In 2018, she earned a law degree from the Southern University Law Center. She has over 29 years of environmental experience in the field of waste permitting, compliance, training and project management.

Righteous currently serves as Administrator of the Waste Permits Division. She is the Region 4 Director for the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) and serves on their Board of Directors. She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Louisiana Solid Waste Association (LSWA), where she serves as the Conference Chair for the LSWA/LDEQ Louisiana Environmental Conference and Trade Fair.

Chanelle L. Collins – Attorney, Legal Division, Office of the Secretary

Collins is a native of New Orleans. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in mass communications from Southern University and A&M College and a Juris Doctorate from Southern University Law Center. Collins has been employed with LDEQ since September 2020.

Prior to her employment with LDEQ, she was employed as an Associate Attorney with a national law firm, as an Assistant Attorney General with the Louisiana Department of Justice, and as a law clerk for the Clerk of Civil District Court for the Parish of Orleans.



Jacob VanCoevering – Environmental Scientist, Underground Storage Tank Division, Office of Environmental Assessment

VanCoevering earned a Bachelor of Science degree in toxicology from the University of Louisiana at Monroe in May 2020. While attending the University, he researched how pharmaceuticals and personal care products with estrogen-like compounds affect local ecosystems.

Before working with LDEQ, he worked at a specialty chemical plant as a chemist experimenting with new additives for industrial processes. VanCoevering seeks to learn as much as possible while in his role as an environmental scientist.



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



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Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Third Quarter Summaries

Third Quarter 2020 Enforcement Actions:

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

Third Quarter 2020 Settlement Agreements:

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

Third Quarter 2020 Air Permits:

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

Third Quarter 2020 Water Permits:

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

Third Quarter 2020 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

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

