



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



September 2022 Issue Number: 128

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DEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown received the 2022 Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) President's Award at the group's fall meeting in Park City, Utah, Sept. 19. The award is given annually to an ECOS member who has made a significant contribution to the initiatives undertaken by the ECOS President, and who is instrumental to achieving success of one or more important initiatives during the President's tenure. The awardee is selected by the ECOS President.



ECOS President Myra Reece of South Carolina presents the 2022 President's Award to ECOS Vice President Dr. Chuck Carr Brown of Louisiana.

Presenting the award, ECOS President Myra Reece of South Carolina cited Brown's dedication, leadership and ability to find compromises on divisive issues.

"I was really surprised to get this," Brown said. "and really honored."

Brown, who currently serves as ECOS vice president, said the work the organization does to keep states updated on current issues, EPA policy and programs and technical developments is essential. "Sometimes we have to boil down what an EPA directive means for a given state. ECOS has the knowledge and assets to do that – and we do."

The fall meeting, Sept. 19-22, was a good example of what ECOS does to foster information exchange and develop key connections between states and EPA. The event featured EPA Office of Water Assistant Administrator Radhika Fox sitting on a panel discussing "New Directions in PFAS Risk Communication amid Tightened Standards," along with state and private experts. There were panel discussions on methane monitoring in oil and gas production, environmental equity, the challenges of recycling, food waste, the circular economy for plastics, what the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will fund, the Inflation Reduction Act, the challenge in recruiting and retaining environmental workers and much more.

Brown said the ECOS meeting was a buffet of environmental information. "Everyone could find something they wanted."

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Message from the Secretary

Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.

At the beginning of this month, I went to visit the garage where the Mobile Air Monitoring Laboratories (MAMLs) are kept. It's on the Westbank across from Baton Rouge. I had not visited there in quite some time, and I was pleasantly surprised to see how it has changed.

The garage is both bigger and better. It has been modernized and enlarged to house both of our newer MAMLs and the old MAML that is awaiting repurposing. It has soaring ceilings to accommodate the height of the MAMLs and fresh concrete where additions were made. The mobile command post and several of our boats are stationed there too. It's a top notch place to use as home base for the MAMLs and other equipment. There is a small suite of business rooms including a small lab space as well as a kitchen for staff.

Our MAMLs are an enormous asset. Not only do we use them in emergency response situations, we dispatch one of them each month to do community monitoring in a different location. So far our monthly monitoring mission has taken a MAML to St. Gabriel, Nine Mile Point, Dutchtown, Luling, Romeville and Alexandria. The MAML is collecting background information for comparison levels. It's good information to have and provides great training for the MAML crews and puts the agency in the spotlight when locals see the wrapper on the vehicle.

You may be seeing a few empty desks around the agency. Our staffing is cyclical, and we are in the down part of the cycle right now. We are working to fill vacancies. In the meantime, we are maintaining all the same services and meeting our grant commitments just like we always do. It'll be good to get back to a full complement of employees though. Let your friends know there are employment opportunities at LDEQ. It's a great place to work!

I hope no one is complaining about the weather. I wouldn't dare. We have had a beautiful stretch of clear days with pleasant temperatures at the end of September. Florida was not so fortunate. Hurricane Ian ripped through that state to end the quiet hurricane season in the Gulf. Remember, October is firmly in the period we call "hurricane season." In 2020, Hurricane Zeta came ashore in Louisiana as a Category 3 storm on October 28.

The season lasts until November. I know we all are thinking about Halloween and pumpkins and fall things, but we can't let our guard down now.

Last but not least, stay safe. Look out for everyone else while you're out there. Traffic accidents are on the rise in Baton Rouge. Be careful coming and going.



I am inspecting one of the new MAMLs during my visit to the renovated garage facility.



Open burning and prescribed burning – the difference

Fall is here and brings with it cooler weather, shorter days, impending holidays and harvesting of crops. Late fall also brings the burning of sugar cane fields, an operation known as prescribed burning. It is legal. While agricultural and vegetative waste burning can be legal, LDEQ reminds residents that any open burning of household waste, solid waste and/or chemicals is illegal in the state of Louisiana.

Prescribed burning is an agricultural management practice in Louisiana row crop production used primarily during sugar cane harvest. The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) manages the prescribed burning of cane fields.

Prescribed burning is very visible, and it causes questions and concerns for those who see it.

Since there can be a number of environmental concerns associated with this practice, the state has instituted a voluntary smoke and ash management training program to assist growers in addressing these concerns and help prevent smoke and ash from affecting public areas. “Prescribed burning can be defined as the controlled application of fire to agricultural fields under weather conditions that allow the fire to be confined to a predetermined area, in a manner that will produce the desired result of reducing leaves in the harvested cane or reduction of crop residue,” LDAF said. This program encourages growers to have a responsible attitude toward environmental and public issues in their efforts to be as efficient as possible in the production of sugar cane.



Prescribed burning of crops is legal in Louisiana.

While Louisiana is not the only state dealing with this issue, industry and farming that uses prescribed burning recognizes that reducing or eliminating open field burning is one of the most important research topics facing it. Researchers are working to identify the most effective techniques for handling plant material.

While prescribed burning is legal and monitored, open burning is illegal and harmful to those conducting the open burn as well as their families, neighbors, pets and livestock. The ash generated from an open burn can contain toxic materials which can contaminate air, soil and groundwater. When burned, household trash releases toxic pollutants into the air such as hydrogen chloride, hydrogen cyanide, phosgene, sulfur dioxide, dioxin, carbon monoxide and heavy metals. These pollutants can cause health problems for anyone nearby. Health impacts include damage to the lungs, nervous system, kidneys and liver. Asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema and cancer are other potential problems.

Open burning of waste is a practice passed down from generation to generation. However, the responsible parties are liable for committing an illegal act. These types of waste must be disposed of in the proper manner.

Those without trash pickup service should deliver their waste to a landfill for proper disposal. Doing so is protective of public health and the environment and helps you do your part in preserving our Sportsman’s Paradise.

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Here are some alternatives to open burning:

- Reduce, Recycle and Reuse as much as possible.
- Compost vegetative matter such as eggshells, coffee grounds and fruit/vegetable peelings for your garden.
- Take household paint, chemicals and waste tires to a Household Hazardous Materials Day event for disposal – free of charge. Check your city or parish for locations.
- Used fluorescent light bulbs, batteries and plastic grocery bags are accepted for recycling at many big box stores.
- Electronics (laptops, iPhones, etc.) you no longer need are accepted by the CACRC at www.cacrc.com.
- Deliver any household waste to a landfill or trash disposal location within your city or parish.
- Construction and demolition waste should be disposed of at permitted landfills, municipal incinerators or other state-approved facilities.
- Spread the word. Talk to your neighbors about the importance of not open burning for you and your family's health and the environment.

Citizens can watch for open burning activities. Report any open burn of waste tires, household debris, oil or chemical waste to your local law enforcement authorities as well as LDEQ at 888-763-5424. Also, submit an incident report online at www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/file-a-complaint-report-an-incident. Reports can be anonymous, but a phone number is required for a callback for further details. In order to assist authorities with the investigation, document the exact location and parish, time/date, materials burned and parties involved with as much detail as possible.

To see the LDEQ State of Louisiana comprehensive Plan for Disaster Cleanup and Debris Management, visit www.deq.louisiana.gov/page/disaster-debris-management.

LDEQ encourages citizens to report any open burn of waste tires, household debris, oil or chemical waste to your local fire department, law enforcement authorities and LDEQ at 1-888-763-5424. Citizens may also submit a complaint report online at www.deq.louisiana.gov/apps/forms/irf/forms.

- Reports can be made anonymously (only by phone), and a phone number is required for a callback if further details are needed. Be sure to document the exact location and parish, time/date, materials being burned, parties involved and as much detail as possible in order to better assist authorities with an investigation.
- If someone is found to be conducting an illegal open burn, LDEQ's Criminal Investigation Section may also investigate. Anyone found to be in violation of the law is subject to prosecution and may face fines, imprisonment or both.
- Please view LDEQ's informational video on open burning: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yunEs3aYGY.



Governor, cabinet members tout apprenticeship ideas at conference



Gov. John Bel Edwards talks about how Louisiana benefits from apprenticeship programs.

“We are going to transform our state in positive ways,” Gov. John Bel Edwards told the group gathered at the Renaissance Hotel in Baton Rouge Sept. 8 for the Louisiana Apprenticeship Conference.

The governor talked to participants in Job Apprenticeship programs in Louisiana. These programs allow inexperienced yet qualified individuals to get both a job and training at the same time. “Not everyone needs a college degree,” Edwards said. “Apprenticeship programs are important,” he said. Salaries of graduates of such programs average \$50,000 a year, he pointed out, and said that allows them an opportunity to generate “so much more wealth.”

“Apprenticeships can help break the cycle of poverty,” Edwards said.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) sponsored the conference. LWC Secretary Ava Cates was on hand to host events, including a panel discussion featuring three other cabinet members: LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, Louisiana Department of Transportation (LDOT) Secretary Dr. Shawn Wilson and Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) Secretary Tom Harris.



LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown makes a point. “There is going to be tons of opportunities.” From left, LWC Secretary Ava Cates, LDNR Secretary Tom Harris, Brown, and LDOT Secretary Dr. Shawn Wilson.

Brown said the current push to limit carbon emissions will bring new technology, and that technology will present employment opportunities. “When you start thinking how the Biden Administration wants Louisiana to have 300,000 electric vehicles (EVs) by 2030.”

We need chargers to keep the EVs running, and we are already behind in providing them, Brown said, and someone will have to construct and maintain all those chargers. Very few people buy a brand new car, he said. “There is going to have to be an aftermarket for EVs.”

That tidal wave of EVs will create a need for people to work on EVs, technicians that can be trained through an apprenticeship program. Other technologies will create similar labor needs, he said.

“We haven’t even touched on solar panels and wind farms. There is going to be tons of opportunities,” Brown said. “With our climate action plan, we are way ahead of the curve.”

“We are going to get there, and we are going to have to hire workers.”



Registration for the 2023 Louisiana Envirothon has begun

Calling all Louisiana teachers and students! LDEQ would like to invite you to participate in the 2023 Louisiana Envirothon! This year's competition will be held March 1, 2023, 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 2023 is Adapting to a Changing Climate.

You can get involved by organizing a team of five students from the same school or that are associated with an organized group (i.e. FFA, 4-H, science clubs). Test preparation is on your own. However, Louisiana Envirothon team members and advisors have direct access to the station masters for questions as well as access to online study guides. To supplement the study guides, you may also view training videos on the Louisiana Envirothon [YouTube page](#) and [Facebook page](#).



Student participants work together to identify animal hides in the Wildlife section of the 2022 Louisiana Envirothon test.

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 (i.e. FFA, 4-H, science clubs). The team registration fee is \$50. The deadline to register is Oct. 14.

ADVOCATE: Help us spread the word! Please share this information with any teachers or groups you think may be interested. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and share the opportunity via social media.

SPONSOR: Become a Sponsor! Envirothon would not be possible without our wonderful sponsors. Sponsors receive recognition on competition posters, promotional items, the LDEQ website, social media and through press releases. Details are listed on the sponsorship flyer found at www.deq.louisiana.gov/envirothon.

Louisiana Envirothon prides itself in providing students the opportunity to engage in a unique environmental learning experience that will create more environmentally aware citizens for our state. We hope you will consider leading a team or sharing this with someone who will!

Visit www.deq.louisiana.gov/envirothon to register now.



LDEQ’s Nonpoint Source Pollution group participates in the STEM Fest in Hammond

Nearly 2,000 students and adults, along with almost 50 organizations, came together under one roof Saturday, Aug. 26, to participate in the 4th annual STEM Fest at Southeastern Louisiana State University in Hammond. The event was held in the University’s Pennington Student Activity Center.

STEM, or Science-Technology-Engineering-Math, is an educational track that promotes those fields for youth who may have an interest in pursuing one of them in their educational endeavors and future careers.

Among the participants in this back-to-school event was Environmental Scientist India Ambeau with LDEQ’s Nonpoint Source Pollution Group. Ambeau brought along the Enviroscope model which has proven to be a popular tool in outreach events. She used the model to demonstrate how nonpoint source pollution enters our environment, subsequently traveling into other areas that can ultimately harm our ecosystems and communities.

“We brought the Enviroscope model to teach kids and adults principles of nonpoint source pollution, where comes from, how it travels, and how we can prevent it,” Ambeau said.

Next year’s back-to-school STEM Fest is slated for Aug. 26, 2023. For more information, visit www.southeastern.edu/stemfest or www.northshorem.org.



Using the Enviroscope model, LDEQ Environmental Scientist India Ambeau explains how nonpoint source pollution can negatively impact a community.

A demonstration of the Enviroscope model can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WHW3F5qG18&t=205s.

If you are interested in having Enviroscope at your school or event, contact India Ambeau at india.ambeau@la.gov.

2022 LDEQ Employee Service Award Ceremony to be held Oct. 18

The LDEQ Employee Service Award Ceremony will be held in the Galvez Conference Center at LDEQ headquarters in Baton Rouge, La. LDEQ will award employees who have obtained five, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years of state classified service. These milestone anniversaries occurred between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

This year’s celebration will be at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 18, in the Oliver Pollock Room of the Galvez Conference Center. All employees are invited to attend.



Shreveport Green addresses Food Insecurity with an Urban Farm

This month, Keep Louisiana Beautiful's (KLB) Community Affiliates had the opportunity to learn from Lauren Jones, Shreveport Green's Urban Farm Director, about efforts to repurpose and revitalize a once vacant 2-acre lot along historic Sprague Street in Shreveport. The farm, a collaboration between KLB Community Affiliate, Shreveport Green; Housing and Urban Development (HUD); Southwestern Electric Power Company (SWEPCO); and the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI), is designed for growing a variety of fresh produce and is strategically positioned to serve the city's 19 food deserts – regions where people have limited access to nutritious and affordable food.

The food grown at the Urban Farm is sold through Shreveport Green's Mobile Market program at below market cost. Residents from HUD Choice Neighborhoods – surrounding neighborhoods identified as experiencing food insecurity – are also able to buy produce through sweat equity, or time worked on the farm.



Local Shreveport students water plants at the Urban Farm.
Photo credit: Shreveport Green

Education is a key focus of the farm's mission, offering students from local schools the chance to learn the basics of planting, growing, and cooking healthy food. The curriculum is tailored to each group depending on their base knowledge, which is identified through a quick assessment quiz.

Another major focus on the farm is a hydroponic research project. With the support of American Electric Power, SWEPCO, and EPRI, Shreveport Green was invited to participate in agriculture and energy research using a hydroponic container outfitted for indoor agriculture. The hydroponic container has also provided Jones and her team with the chance to grow nutrient dense produce for the community and integrate STEM learning opportunities. Hosting up to 13,000 plants at one time, the container uses 99% less water than traditional farming and utilizes automation software to remotely control the environment, nutrition, and hydration levels. Once the research project concludes, the Urban Farm is able to keep the container to support their mission to feed community members in need.

To learn more about the Urban Farm in Shreveport, contact Lauren Jones at ljones@shreveportgreen.org or call (318) 219-1888 ext 12.

Article originally published by Keep Louisiana Beautiful



Louisiana Clean Fuels planning the Louisiana Clean Fuel Leaders Awards event

The Annual Louisiana Clean Fuel Leader Awards will be presented at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2, at the Basin Music Hall, 336 3rd St. in downtown Baton Rouge. These awards will honor Louisiana Clean Fuel Leaders for their outstanding contributions to alternative fuels in Louisiana.

Every two years a special awards called the Katry Martin Award is presented to a person whose kindness, positive attitudes and passion for alternative fuels sets them apart. Nominations for this award closes Friday, Oct. 7.

For more information on the awards and to register for the event, go to <https://louisianacleanfuels.org/meetinginfo.php>.



Keep Louisiana Beautiful's State Conference scheduled for October

Keep Louisiana Beautiful's State Conference is an annual educational training and networking forum. If you want to learn about proven practices and innovative programs designed to achieve a cleaner, greener and more resilient Louisiana, you are welcome to register and attend.

This year's conference is Oct. 11-12 at the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center. It will cover topics related to the eight recommendations made by the Governor's 2022 Task Force on Statewide Litter Abatement and Beautification.

Conference speakers include Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser; Renee Bellew of EPA; Jennifer Lawson, President and CEO of Keep America Beautiful; Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful; Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, LDEQ Secretary; and many more. Topics covered include litter assessment and planning, enforcement, waste reduction in higher education, recycling and beautification grant opportunities, and more.

To learn more and to register for the conference, visit <https://keeplouisianabeautiful.org/programs-events/stateconference>.





Who's Who At LDEQ?



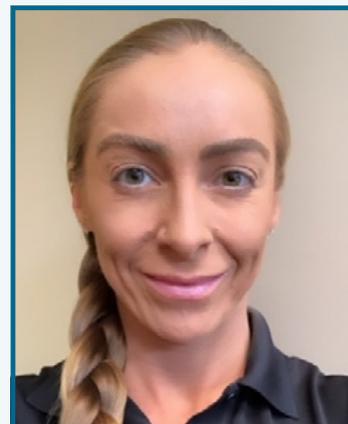
Koffi Dodor – Accountant, Accounts Receivable, Office of Management and Finance

Dodor was born and raised in the African country of Togo. He earned a master's degree in finance and accounting from Togo National University. Dodor started working as accountant before moving to the U.S. to achieve one of his goals, which is to add an overseas degree to his resume.

He then earned an MBA degree with concentration in accounting from Southern University Baton Rouge. He recently joined the LDEQ Financial Services as an accountant in Accounts Receivable. Dodor speaks French and enjoys soccer.

Victoria Brignac – Environmental Scientist, Surveillance Division (Hazardous and Solid Waste), Office of Environmental Compliance, Southeastern Regional Office

Brignac is a New Orleans native. She holds a bachelor's degree in environmental geography and a minor in earth and environmental science from the University of New Orleans. Before joining LDEQ, Brignac worked as an Environmental Enforcement Technician at the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans. Outside of work, she does a lot of competitive running and fitness training. She enjoys getting out around the city and surrounding areas to events and exploring what's new. Brignac loves to travel and experience what other places have to offer. She is an animal lover and volunteers at local animal shelters whenever she can. She is also a fan of the Saints, LSU football and Houston Astros.



Jeremy Fox – Environmental Scientist, Surveillance Division, Office of Environmental Compliance, Northeast Regional Office

Fox is a native of Shreveport. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in forestry from Louisiana Tech University. Fox graduated from the North Delta Police Academy in 2004 and worked as a Park Manager with Louisiana State Parks for six years, then went on to become a Probation and Parole Officer with the Office of Juvenile Justice for 12 years. Fox recently joined the LDEQ Surveillance Division as an environmental scientist in the solid waste and hazardous waste media.

Fox enjoys traveling and camping with his wife and two daughters. His daughters keep him very busy with their horse riding lessons, softball practices and tournaments, and competition cheerleading events. He wouldn't have it any other way. In his spare time, he likes to tinker on cars, piddle around the house, and anything else he can get into.



Retiring This Month

JianZhong Liu, Environmental Scientist Senior, Office of Environmental Assessment, Air Planning and Assessment



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Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Second Quarter Summaries

Second Quarter 2022 Enforcement Actions:

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

Second Quarter 2022 Settlement Agreements:

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

Second Quarter 2022 Air Permits:

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

Second Quarter 2022 Water Permits:

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

Second Quarter 2022 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

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

