



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

What's Inside?

Gov. Edwards proclaims May as Air Quality Awareness Month

Chuck Berger is third LDEQ podcast guest

Message from the Secretary

Love the Boot Week is a win-win for Louisiana

LDEQ celebrates Employee Appreciation Week 2023

LDEQ employees raise funds for American Heart Association

Regional Haze – Breton Wilderness Area

LDEQ On The Move

Who's Who At LDEQ?

CONNECT WITH LDEQ



Subscribe to our monthly newsletter

Discover DEQ

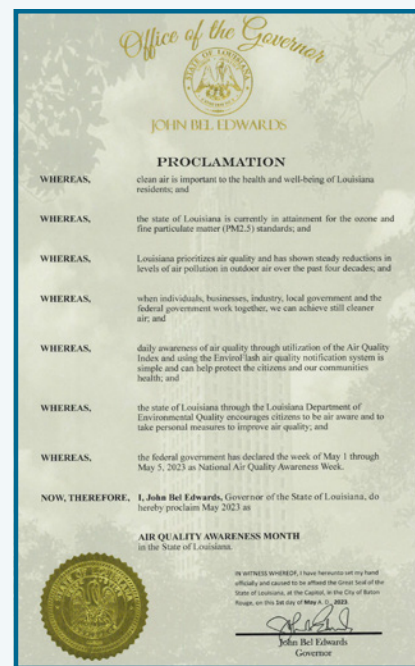
Gov. Edwards proclaims May as Air Quality Awareness Month

Gov. John Bel Edwards proclaimed May to be Air Quality Awareness Month in Louisiana. Air quality is the best it has been since the Clean Air Act was promulgated, and the entire state is in attainment for ozone and fine particulate matter (PM 2.5). The keys to maintaining and continuing to improve our air quality are awareness and co-operation. Governments, industry, business owners and citizens all play a part in protecting the air quality and environment in Louisiana.

May is the beginning of ozone season as clear, windless days become more common. The days we enjoy so much in the spring are not necessarily good for ozone levels as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) can combine to form ozone on sunny, still days. If ozone levels begin to rise, LDEQ calls for Air Quality advisory days. Air Quality advisories are based on a forecast, and like the weather forecast, the prediction for high ozone does not always result in a high ozone day. The purpose of the forecast is to help sensitive populations make informed decisions about outdoor activity and to take preventative actions to prevent ozone formation.

The ozone and the PM 2.5 forecast are determined by a set of variables: the presence of precursor pollutants, plus the amount of sunlight and wind. Ozone forms in the highest concentrations, mainly on sunny days with light wind speeds. Louisiana's background levels of ozone are close to the standard from natural precursors, biogenic chemical compounds emitted from trees, plants, lightning and other natural occurrences. This coupled with man-made pollutants, in the presence of sunlight and stagnant winds can result in air quality advisories.

Good air quality is every one's responsibility. Industry is regulated to meet stringent standards and many have an ozone action day procedure. But individuals have steps they can take to reduce the possibility of ozone formation and improve air quality. Those steps include: walking, biking, carpooling, using mass transit and ride sharing; use gasoline powered engines after 6 p.m. and fuel your car when weather



Proclamation

Continued on page 2



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

conditions are cooler; when running errands, plan and combine them for less driving; don't idle your vehicle – walk into the restaurant or turn off your engine. Carpool when you can; take your lunch to work in lieu of driving; and, conserve energy in your home.

It is important to be aware of the air quality, and you can do this by signing up for EnviroFlash. This free, automated air quality notification system will send you an advisory, by email or text, when an Air Quality Advisory is forecast. You can also sign up to receive information daily by simply registering for EnviroFlash, at <http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enviroflash>. If you need real time data, from monitoring sites, the forecast and to receive notifications you can access real-time air quality monitoring information at <http://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov>. Being air aware allows you to make the best choices for your health and the environment.

Chuck Berger is third LDEQ podcast guest

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) Communications Section has ventured into a new project, starting an official LDEQ monthly podcast. Each month, the podcast, appropriately named "LDEQ On Air," features one guest answering questions about his or her role at LDEQ. The goal of the podcast is to inform the public about how issues are handled at LDEQ, how LDEQ is organized, the people behind the processes at LDEQ and answers to questions about agency issues.

The third episode features LDEQ environmental engineer Chuck Berger as he discusses LDEQ's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program and its New Vision approach.

A new podcast will be released every third Thursday of the month. An easy way to remember that is that it's the day after the "Ask the Governor" radio show. Communications won't be accepting live questions but will accept email submissions with suggestions.

To listen, visit the LDEQ webpage at www.deq.louisiana.gov/podcast. LDEQ On Air is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and Google Podcasts.

If you have any questions or would like to submit question suggestions, please email the LDEQ Communications Section at SECTCOMMUNICATIONS@la.gov.





DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

Message from the Secretary

Roger W. Gingles



LDEQ Secretary Roger W. Gingles

In the middle of our statewide system outage May 19, we received notice from our weather partners that Friday was to be an Ozone Action Day. Air Assessment and Communications scrambled to get the word out. Their efforts went above and beyond, considering the technological challenges any kind of communications faced that day.

The outage just drives home how fragile our work systems can be. It also shows the necessity of having as many options to get things done as you can. And don't blow off deadlines. If you procrastinate and there is a system failure like that, you won't be able to get your project or assignment or work task completed in an acceptable time. I don't expect everyone to go around looking over their shoulder for a computer crash, just be aware it can happen and think about how to deal with it.

One last word on Employee Appreciation Week – it was fun. I enjoyed every event I attended and especially appreciated the opportunity to visit with as many of you as possible. I really like to hear about how things are going for each of you. From the feedback I and the Executive Staff got, you all enjoyed the events, too. Thanks to all who participated.

We are now fully engaged with the new system in the parking garage. So far, so good. We had a few people park in reserved spots (not people from the agency) last week, but they moved their vehicles when we informed them of their error. Please make sure your information is up to date with Human Resources so the parking patrol doesn't write you up.

I am finding that I do like the gateless entry, although those speed bumps demand respect. They're just a reminder to slow down in there. Make sure you give pedestrians plenty of room to get where they are going safely. We have had people who were hit while walking in the garage to get to their vehicles. That's not acceptable. Let's be careful and take care of one another.

I hope you enjoyed your Memorial Day Holiday. Maybe you had time to cook out with family and friends. Maybe you went fishing or just took it easy and relaxed. Those things are all on the agenda for any holiday. In just a couple of weeks, we will celebrate Juneteenth on Friday, June 16. This will be a state holiday as well, and it marks the date in 1865 when enslaved people in Texas were first officially notified of their emancipation. That event is commemorated at Juneteenth, but it also serves as a larger vehicle to remember the ending of slavery and celebrate African-American culture in the United States.

Memorial Day marks the beginning of summer. Now we enter June and the hurricane season begins. Keep an eye on the weather and make sure you are prepared for possible storms. If you need some help deciding what things to do to get ready, just go to www.getagameplan.org and you will find handy check lists and advice and what to do and when to do it. There is even a free app you can download and get instant access to storm information like contraflow maps. The app even allows you to customize the emergency response guide to your personal needs.

Be careful out there. Watch out for your fellow workers.



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

Love the Boot Week is a win-win for Louisiana

Love the Boot week was a win-win for the State of Louisiana. Keep Louisiana Beautiful reports that the numbers are in, and 313 tons of litter were removed by 12,777 volunteers over the course of 61,493 hours during Love the Boot Week, a value of \$1.68 million. In addition, 370 trees and 3,542 plants were planted. Five hundred and forty two events were registered across all 64 parishes. In comparison to last year, the 2023 event achieved the following growth:

- 95.36% increase in events registered
- 18.52% increase in parishes impacted
- 6.85% increase in litter removed
- 50.74% increase in volunteers participating
- 182.44% increase in trees planted
- 427.87% increase in plants planted

Love the Boot Week was a tremendous start, but the real impact will be when Louisiana citizens make it a point to pick up litter every day. Please Love the Boot all year long and Keep Louisiana Beautiful.

LDEQ celebrates Employee Appreciation Week 2023

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) celebrated Employee Appreciation Week May 8 through May 12. LDEQ employees were treated to an array of goodies throughout the week to show appreciation for their hard work.

On Tuesday, May 9, employees started their morning with coffee and cupcakes in the downstairs break room. On Wednesday, May 10, employees enjoyed a jambalaya luncheon from Rice and Roux in the Oliver/Pollock room. On Thursday, May 11, employees wound down their day with ice cream sandwiches in the break room, a perfect snack for the hot weather outside. LDEQ employees were also granted a free week of casual dress. Six employees were chosen for one month access to a reserved parking spot on the first floor of the Galvez Parking Garage. Those winners are Angela Marse, Enforcement; Dao Binh, Water Planning and Assessment; Fernando Iturralde, Remediation; Gregory Keller, Waste Permits; Hugh Doran, UST; and Clinton Beauregard, Audit. Congratulations to the winners of the parking spots.

The treats were provided by Secretary Roger Gingles and the LDEQ Executive Staff who, after tallying up expenses, wound up with a little something extra. So a random drawing was held and two names picked to receive \$25 Amazon gift cards. The winners, one each from headquarters and the regional offices, were: Baton Rouge -- Kathryn Fontenot; and Regional -- Bobby Bell in NWRO/Surveillance.

"The Executive Staff and I wanted to show our utmost appreciation for the employees of LDEQ and let them know how much their time, effort and dedication to the agency means to us," Gingles said. "I greatly enjoyed getting the opportunity to speak to many of our employees during the three days of celebration while enjoying special treats like coffee, cupcakes, ice cream sandwiches and jambalaya. I hope the employees of LDEQ know how valuable they are to the success of the agency."

The continued dedication of every LDEQ employee has allowed the agency to be the best it can be for the state of Louisiana. Thank you to all for your hard work year-round.

Continued on page 6



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

LDEQ Employee Appreciation Week 2023





May 2023 Issue Number: 136

LDEQ employees raise funds for American Heart Association

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) raised an incredible amount of money this year for the American Heart Association (AHA). Donations for casual dress days, snacks, paper hearts and a raffle basket bumped the total raised to \$3,172.70. That's up almost \$1,000 from last year.

The total amount broken up by events:

- American Heart Association 2023
- Casual Dress: \$1,901
- Raffle Basket: \$522
- Snacks: \$479.70
- Hearts: \$270

"We always show our empathy and compassion for worthy causes," LDEQ Secretary Roger Gingles said. "And no cause is more worthy than the American Heart Association. I'm proud of our employees for giving so generously."

Contribution from LDEQ employees will help AHA improve heart patient health and fund lifesaving research.



LDEQ Undersecretary Karyn Andrews (Right) presented Capital Area Heart Walk Director Nicole Jackson (Left) with LDEQ's AHA fundraising check.



LDEQ Secretary Roger W. Gingles draws the winner of the AHA raffle basket.



Hearts were sold for \$1.



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

Regional Haze – Breton Wilderness Area

Established in 1904 through executive order of President Theodore Roosevelt, Breton National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is the second oldest refuge in the National Wildlife Refuge System and the only refuge the president ever visited when he traveled to the islands in June 1915. As Louisiana's only Class I area, Breton NWR comprises a 60-mile-long crescent of barrier islands, including Breton Island and the Chandeleur Islands. Breton NWR is located in the Gulf of Mexico, south of Gulfport, Miss. and east of New Orleans and is accessible only by boat or seaplane.

The exposed islands are composed of open sand, shell beaches, and are partially covered with dune grasses and other shrubby vegetation. As nature takes its course, some parts of the islands are washed away while sand is deposited in other areas. Breton NWR also has some of the largest seabird colonies in the nation and has been identified as a Globally Important Bird Area by the American Bird Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy. Twenty-three species of seabirds and shorebirds frequently use the refuge, and thirteen species nest on the islands. The most abundant nesters are brown pelicans, laughing gulls and royal, Caspian and sandwich terns. Over 10,000 brown pelicans have been recorded nesting on the refuge. Waterfowl winter nearby and use the shallows, marshes and sounds for feeding and shelter. Additionally in 2022, Kemp's Ridley sea turtle nests have been observed on the islands for the first time in 75 years.



Harvard College Library, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Breton National Wildlife Refuge, photograph from www.fws.gov/media/president-teddy-roosevelt-breton-island-1915



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Breton National Wildlife Refuge, photograph from www.fws.gov/refuge/breton.

While the birds use the islands as a safe harbor, Louisiana must not become complacent with emissions reductions that push us firmly under the uniform rate of progress (glideslope). Through the collaborative efforts of state, local and federal entities, visibility has improved and will continue to improve in Breton NWR under the Regional Haze

Rule. The rule requires that each Class I area achieve natural conditions for visibility by the year 2064 by steadily improving the number of most impaired days and keeping the number of clearest days from decreasing. Point source sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NOX) emissions were collectively reduced some 32 percent (134,965 tpy) from 2011 to 2017. These reductions have allowed Louisiana to exceed the uniform rate progress goals and remain below the glideslope established in the original state implementation plan (SIP) submittal.

More on the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality can be found at www.deq.louisiana.gov/subhome/air.

Article written by Jason Meyers, LDEQ Administrator for Air Quality Assessment and Vivian Aucoin, LDEQ senior environmental scientist.



LDEQ On The Move

Acadiana Regional Office employees help celebrate Earth Day

LDEQ environmental scientist Perry Fontenot III and environmental chemical specialist Alyssa Auzenne from the Acadiana Regional Office conducted an outreach Earth Day event for 31 first grade students at Westminster Christian Academy, in Opelousas. During the event, both Fontenot and Auzenne allowed the students to ask them questions about their jobs. Questions like: what is their primary focus as environmental scientists and how do they protect the environment?

Working with the students, they emphasized the importance of not littering. They said that each student can directly contribute to the longevity of planet Earth with a positive carbon footprint.

At the end, each student received a marigold and was shown how to plant it properly. Fontenot and Auzenne then explained the scientific process of photosynthesis and that the marigolds planted could survive only with both ample water and sunlight.



(Top left to right) Ciara Fontenot, Perry Fontenot III, Alyssa Auzenne and (Bottom) Kensington Fontenot celebrated Earth Day at Westminster Christian Academy.



Perry Fontenot III and Alyssa Auzenne taught students how to plant marigolds.



India Ambeau, LDEQ environmental scientist, with 2nd graders from First Baptist Christian School in Lafayette.

LDEQ visits elementary school

On May 12, environmental scientist India Ambeau took the EnviroScape model to First Baptist Christian School in Lafayette to teach Ms. Ellen DeSpain's 2nd grade class about erosion.



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

LDEQ On The Move

LDEQ participates in Explore Nature event

On May 13, LDEQ environmental scientists Tomeka Prioleau, Melanie Bauder and India Ambeau participated in the 3rd Explore Nature event which was held at North Park in Denham Springs. They educated citizens on how they can be good stewards of the environment. This information included flyers on home sewage systems, household hazardous waste, rain gardens and managing pet waste.



(Left to Right) LDEQ Environmental Scientists India Ambeau, Tomeka Prioleau and Melanie Bauder at the Explore Nature event.



Tomeka Prioleau and Melanie Bauder



Melanie Bauder



India Ambeau



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

Who's Who At LDEQ?



A'ishah Trahan – Environmental Scientist, Enforcement Division, Office of Environmental Compliance

Trahan, a Lafayette native, joined LDEQ in the Waste Enforcement Division. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology with a Chemistry minor. Currently, she is pursuing her Master of Public Health at Louisiana State University -- Shreveport and plans to move forward with her Doctor of Public Health at Tulane University.

While being full-time in school and having a full-time job, she is also full-time planning her wedding!

Calvin Wiggs – Geologist III, Remediation Division, Office of Environmental Assessment

Wiggs, a native of Lafayette, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in geology from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 1984. He earned a Master of Science in geology from Colorado School of Mines in 1986. Before joining LDEQ, Wiggs worked for the U.S. Geological Survey, an environmental consulting firm in Virginia (HydroGeoLogic) and worked for environmental consulting firms in Baton Rouge for 35 years.

Wiggs has a wide variety of experience, including subsurface investigations, risk-based RECAP evaluations, environmental compliance, and water discharge and solid waste permitting. His most interesting project was assisting the Department of Natural Resources with the investigation, monitoring and remedial actions for the Bayou Corne Sinkhole.

In his spare time, Wiggs enjoys rock hounding, fossil collecting, walking/hiking, yard work projects, and spending time with family and his dog.



Katie Vidrine – Environmental Scientist, Water Surveys Section, Office of Environmental Assessment

Vidrine graduated from LSU and majored in Natural Resource Ecology and Management.

She worked for the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office (LOSCO) before accepting a job at LDEQ. Vidrine enjoys playing with her three dogs and sharing corny jokes.



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



May 2023 Issue Number: 136

Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's First Quarter Summaries

First Quarter 2023 Enforcement Actions:

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

First Quarter 2023 Settlement Agreements:

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

First Quarter 2023 Air Permits:

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

First Quarter 2023 Water Permits:

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

First Quarter 2023 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

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

