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DEQ's hazardous waste permitting program commended by EPA

BATON ROUGE – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region recently conducted an in-depth review of DEQ's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act permitting program regarding hazardous waste permits. This review was to verify that the DEQ program is in line with the policies, responsibilities and procedures established by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 for hazardous waste permitting programs.

The review cited many program strengths including access to the Web site and the Electronic Data Management System that contains all official records, making it easy for the public to receive information. Also noted were a strong public participation process, using an Environmental Assessment Analysis for major expansion or new facilities and regularly updating standard operating procedures for permitting, financial assurance, public notices, public hearings and environmental justice grievance procedures.

The hazardous waste permitting program was complimented for conducting activities outside of normal RCRA permitting such as assisting with household hazardous waste collection days, and conducting door-to-door notifications concerning how to handle household hazardous waste during the Mississippi River Flood.

“Overall the LDEQ permitting program is based upon a well documented process and LDEQ has maintained a staff that is implementing the permitting program and as noted has worked to implement a method to allow the public better access to all permitting actions and we compliment LDEQ on their program,” said the report.

The report noted that LDEQ's permitting program continues to perform consistently with the EPA's goals and requirements, which enhances the quality of the LDEQ/USEPA partnership.