



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL  
GOVERNOR

PEGGY M. HATCH  
SECRETARY

**For Immediate Release:**  
April 29, 2013

**Contact: Jean Kelly**  
Telephone: 225.219.3966

### **May is Air Quality Awareness month in Louisiana**

BATON ROUGE – Several organizations that work for cleaner air held a press conference at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality today to recognize Air Quality Awareness Month and to promote the Advance Program.

May is Air Quality Awareness month, both nationally and in Louisiana. While the air quality in Louisiana is better than it has been since the implementation of the Clean Air Act, May is also traditionally the start of ozone season. DEQ is encouraging citizens to become familiar with the Air Quality Index, to understand what causes ozone formation and to take voluntary steps to help prevent the formation, further improve air quality and meet or continue to meet the current national air quality standards.

Representatives from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Baton Rouge Clean Cities Coalition, Capital Region Planning Commission and Greater Baton Rouge Clean Cities Coalition participated.

When conditions are right, the air pollutant known as ozone is formed. It is formed by a chemical reaction on hot days when the pollutants, known as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds, cook under a hot sun. Ozone formation is most prevalent between May 1 and Sept. 30, but it can occur at other times. When people limit the formation of ozone-causing pollutants, there is a chance the ozone formation may decrease or not form at all.

Many areas of that state, including Shreveport, Lake Charles, Houma/Thibodaux and New Orleans, have joined the Ozone Advance Program set up by the U S Environmental Protection Agency to plan and put in measures to prevent their area from becoming a nonattainment area for ozone and PM2.5, fine particulate matter.

Some steps the public can take include: walking, biking, carpooling, using mass transit and ride sharing. Use gasoline powered engines after 6 p.m. and fuel your car when it's cool. When running errands, plan and combine them for less driving. Conserve energy in your home and buy energy efficient appliances. Good air quality is every ones responsibility.

Information on air quality can be sent to the public, automatically, by email or text, by subscribing to EnviroFlash. This free system, provided by DEQ in conjunction with the EPA, allows citizens to receive daily or on demand air quality information and ensures that the public receives Ozone Action Day alerts and other pertinent air quality information. To subscribe to EnviroFlash go to [www.deq.louisiana.gov/enviroflash](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/enviroflash). Current air quality information is available on the DEQ Web site at [www.deq.louisiana.gov/aqinfo](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/aqinfo).