



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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### **Orleans Parish Man pleads guilty to illegally dumping waste tires in Algiers**

**BATON ROUGE** – An Orleans Parish man pleaded guilty and was sentenced Wednesday, Feb. 4, in the Orleans Parish Criminal District Court for violating Louisiana’s Environmental Quality Act. Michele A. Morris, 54, of Algiers, illegally dumped solid waste near 178 Woodland Parkway in Algiers in January 2013.

Morris was cited for illegal disposal of waste tires stemming from an ongoing multi-agency compliance effort. In that effort, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality partnered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the city of New Orleans to combat illegal dumping in New Orleans.

During the course of the investigation, investigators from the DEQ’s Criminal Investigation Division (DEQ-CID) determined that Morris illegally disposed of waste tires near 178 Woodland Parkway in Algiers. On Sept. 27, 2013, investigators from DEQ-CID charged Morris with the illegal disposal of waste tires. Subsequently, Morris properly disposed of all the tires.

Morris was sentenced to 60 days in jail, with credit for time served. Judge Harry Cantrell of the Orleans Parish Criminal District Court presided. The case was prosecuted by District Attorney Leon A. Cannizarro Jr. and DEQ’s Criminal Enforcement Counsel Michael Daniels, who was appointed as a Special Assistant District Attorney.

In a separate matter, on Jan. 29, 2015, investigators with DEQ-CID charged James Clark, 59 of Slidell, for the illegal disposal of waste tires. During the course this investigation, investigators determined that Clark illegally disposed of waste tires in a lot on Almonaster Boulevard, in New Orleans East. The case is currently pending.

“Illegal dumping is an ongoing problem throughout the state. My staff continues to work with local law enforcement, district attorneys and other government officials to combat this epidemic which has negative impacts on the environment as well as the state’s economic development,” said Peggy Hatch, DEQ Secretary.

The mission of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is to protect the environment and public health. Any persons with knowledge of any spills, releases, odors, fish kills, open burning, waste tires and any other types of environmental incidents may contact the department at 225-219-3640 or Toll Free 1-888-763-5424.

*An arrest does not constitute guilt in a criminal case. All evidence compiled during the investigation is presented to the area prosecutors who determine if formal charges are warranted.*