



# DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

Friday, February 6, 2009

Issue Number: 1

## INTEREST RATES LOWERED ON STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND

In January, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality dropped the interest rate on the Louisiana Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund from 2.95 percent to 0.95 percent. The department has \$130 million to loan out at this low interest rate.

The significant drop will help stimulate the economy, protect the environment and put State Revolving Loan Fund money to good use, said DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett.

“Sewer plants aren’t a problem just in Louisiana,” he said. “Wastewater infrastructure is becoming a problem nationwide. Many times we find that the sewerage infrastructure has been in place since the 1920s or 30s. By modernizing these systems, communities are better prepared to meet their permitted limits for water discharge and are better able to maintain these systems. While this is good for the environment and human health, it also stimulates the economy because it takes people to build these facilities and repair the systems.”

Louisiana’s Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund program offers low-interest loans to communities for the construction or upgrade of wastewater treatment works and other water quality improvement projects. The program was created by the Clean Water Act Amendments of 1987 and the first loans in Louisiana were made in 1990. Since then more than \$400 million in loans have been made to Louisiana communities. On Jan. 27, Monroe became the first city to get a loan at the 0.95 percent rate. The \$14 million loan is complete the fifth phase of its wastewater repairs.

The city will use the money to reduce sewer system inflow and infiltration within the collection system. The city’s system consists of more than 330 miles of pipe, some of which was installed in the 1920s and 1930s. Because this pipe is in poor condition, extraneous water enters the wastewater system through cracks in the pipes, manholes and other entry points when it rains.

For this phase of the city’s project, Monroe has hired a contractor to rehabilitate the system in the central part of the city; South Grand St., South 13th Street, Desiard St. and Bright St. By ensuring that manholes have proper leak protection, repairing or replacing pipes and making other necessary repairs the city will be have a more reliable wastewater treatment system that will be more easily maintained.

State Revolving Loan Projects for construction of community sewerage systems must be publicly owned. The applicant must be a public entity with jurisdiction over collection, treatment, and disposal of sanitary sewage within its service area. An applicant for a non-point source pollution management and estuary improvement project may be any individual, organization, or public entity.

For more information on how to apply for funds from the state’s Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund, call Bijan Sharafkhani at 225.219.3957 or Jonathan McFarland at 225.219.3956. You can also visit their website at <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2148/Default.aspx>.

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## LOUISIANA'S AIR TOXICS PROGRAM HELPS PROTECT CITIZENS

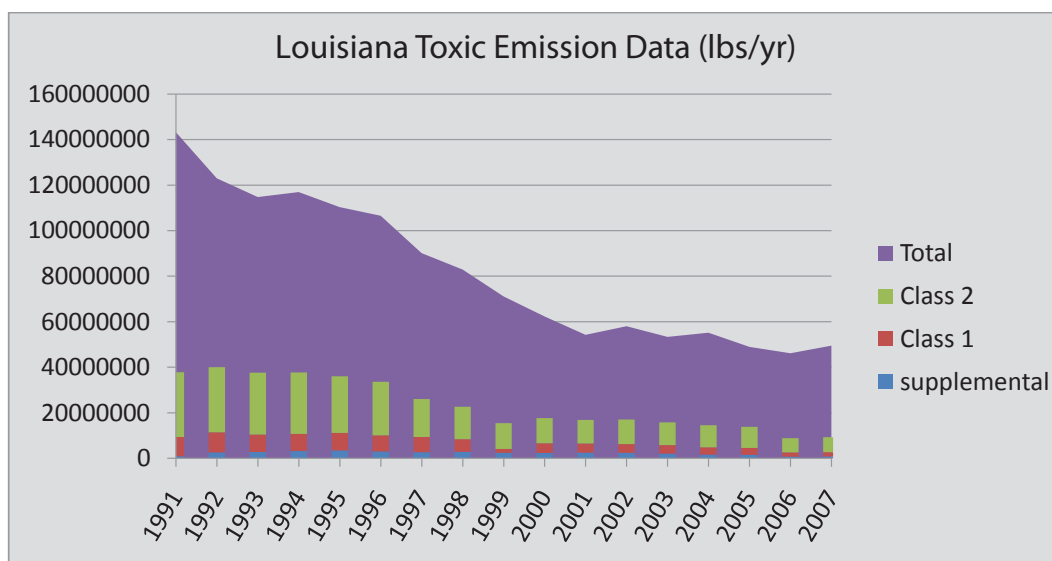
Louisiana residents can breathe easier knowing the state has one of the most comprehensive air toxics monitoring systems in the nation. These monitors, of which there are 21 strategically placed throughout the state, make up a network that keeps close tabs on possible air toxic emissions. These monitors show an overall picture of what the air quality is like throughout the state.

In 1987, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency conducted a nationwide study of toxic air pollutants. Toxic pollutants are those pollutants that are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects. The degree to which a toxic air pollutant affects health depends on many things, such as the quantity that a person is exposed to, the duration and frequency of exposure, the toxicity of the chemical and the person's general health.

The 1987 study showed Louisiana had high levels of air toxic emissions. This prompted Louisiana Legislature to require industry to report emissions and unauthorized releases to DEQ and to implement control technologies to reduce these emissions. The law provided for regulation of both major and minor sources but the requirements are different.

DEQ was required to develop a list of approximately 100 air toxics that would be monitored and reduced. The goal of the statute was to reduce air toxic emissions in Louisiana by 50 percent from the 1987 level by December 1996. That goal was achieved and the Louisiana Legislature, which put these requirements in place ahead of other states and EPA, won national recognition for being progressive and aggressive in cleaning up Louisiana's air.

Currently, Louisiana has reduced its toxic emissions 65 percent. (see chart) Louisiana industry complied with installing control technologies ahead of the EPA's requirement, at a considerable cost, but the results in air toxic emissions reduction has been significant.



From 1991 to 2007 Louisiana toxic air pollutant emissions have decreased from 71,500 tons/yr (143,000,000 lbs/yr) to 24,736 tons/yr (49,472,861 lbs/yr). This represents a 65 percent reduction in toxic air pollutant emissions.

Class 1 toxic air pollutants are known and probable human carcinogens. Class 2 toxic air pollutants are suspected human carcinogens and known or suspected human reproductive toxins. Class 3 toxic air pollutants (displayed in the purple area of the chart) are acute and chronic (non-carcinogenic) toxins. Supplemental toxic air pollutants do not have established minimum emission rates or ambient air standards but are reported in annual emissions reports.



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Louisiana's current toxic air pollutant control program covers more than 200 pollutants, and tracks toxic air emissions from more than 250 industrial facilities. Toxic emissions are down across a broad spectrum of sources. This trend downward is expected to continue.

The Louisiana air toxics program has been a leader in the nation in protecting human health and the environment. It has resulted in major reductions in toxic air pollutants.

## UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK DIVISION

The Underground Storage Tank Division, under the Office of Environmental Assessment, monitors remediation of facilities throughout the state that may be in the process of opening or closing USTs on their premises.

A UST is defined as any one or combination of tanks (including underground pipes connected thereto) that are used to contain an accumulation of "regulated substances," and the volume of which (including connected underground piping) is 10 percent or more beneath the surface of the ground. The most common types are gas and diesel tanks that are situated under service stations.

All tanks that fit the definition of a UST must be registered with DEQ, unless the UST was filled with a solid inert material before Jan. 1, 1974, or removed from the ground prior to May 8, 1986. All owners of new and existing USTs must register their system with DEQ at least thirty days before bringing the tanks into use. A UST registration form and a registration form for technical requirements must be submitted within 60 days of introducing product into the tank. The forms must be received and fees must be paid before a Certificate of Underground Storage Tank Registration is issued by DEQ.

"In addition to these requirements, the owner must maintain accurate and current information with the DEQ," said Tim Knight, UST Division Administrator. "DEQ must be notified of any ownership changes or

any changes, alterations or upgrades in the UST system description. An owner can be subject to a civil penalty if he or she fails to register or knowingly submits false information."

Nearly 4,000 UST sites fall under the division's purview, with approximately 900 of which are undergoing some form of remediation. The division inspects active facilities to minimize, detect and address any UST leaks. When a leak occurs, the division determines the length and depth of the contamination. Soil and groundwater must then be removed and/or treated until they no longer pose a threat to public health and the environment. Removal and treatment work is handled by the Response Action Contractors that are certified under DEQ's direction. "The staff and I look forward to continuing and improving the association we have enjoyed with the regulated community, the Response Action Contractors and the general public" Knight said.

The division is comprised of 42 employees who fall under the administration of Tim Knight. Aside from a small headquarters contingent, two districts make up the division, with district one covering the Northwest,



Workers install Underground Storage Tank



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Northeast and Southeast regions of the state; and District two encompassing the Acadiana, Capital and Southwest regions.

For more information, visit <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2659/Default.aspx>.

## ABITA BREWING TAKES STEPS TO BE ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND

The Abita Brewing Company, in Abita Springs, takes environmental responsibility seriously. Even though the company is known more for its amber-colored beer, Abita Brewing has triumphed in the area of going “green” as well. Preserving the environment through conservation and protection of resources is a corporate goal which it meets through energy efficiency and social responsibility.

“At the Abita Brewing Company, we work to make great beer every day,” said David Blossman, President of Abita Beer. “We also work to make Abita Springs, Louisiana, and the world around us a better place to live by being a good neighbor. We’re proud to be a good neighbor -- a good neighbor who makes great Abita Beer.”

Protecting and improving the environment is accomplished in many different and innovative ways. Abita Beer is brewed using the Merlin system, which reduces boiling time and carbon dioxide emissions. This system also captures and reuses steam. Abita was the first brewery in the nation to convert to the process that consumes 70 percent less energy than traditional methods.

The company operates their own wastewater treatment plant which results in an 85 percent reduction of load to the Abita Springs sewerage system and reduces the amount of solid waste sent to landfills. They use the wastewater to produce their own energy. Abita uses a Bio-Energy Recovery System that treats the wastewater and creates a bio-gas used to fuel the boilers.

Abita, which means “healing waters” in Choctaw, draws



David Blossman, President of the Abita Brewing Company

water for the beer from the Southern Hills Aquifer system, located more than 3,000 feet into the ground. Abita undertakes several measures to reduce the amount of water used in the brewing process. They conduct regular maintenance of pipes and faucets, which recaptures used wastewater in the process.

Abita’s packaging is also environmentally friendly. The six-pack cartons use 50 percent less paper and glue than ordinary carriers and they use recycled paper. The glass beer bottles are also recycled.

Abita’s environmental mission goes beyond plant operations and beer brewing. It applies to their vehicles, too. The sales staff operates gasoline-electric hybrid vehicles. Every 18 wheeler in the Abita delivery fleet is equipped with an Auxiliary Power Unit that engages when the vehicle is parked, thereby decreasing engine emissions and idling time. Even the spent grain and hops from the brewing process don’t go to waste. Local farmers used the end products of beer making as feed for their cattle.

Abita’s latest television commercial, “Recycle and Renew,” reflects Abita’s ongoing recycling effort and their commitment to preserving the environment.



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Green Light Director Andreas Hoffmann installs a CFL

## MAN GOES EXTRA MILE TO MAKE ENVIRONMENTAL DIFFERENCE IN N.O.

One local organization that is making strides to reduce energy costs is Green Light New Orleans, a non-profit group operating in the Greater New Orleans area and expanding into the Lusher and Gramercy areas.

Started in the wake of Hurricane Katrina by Swiss musician-turned New Orleans resident Andreas Hoffmann, the group's mission is to reduce the carbon footprint in the city while educating residents on the value of Compact Fluorescent Lightbulbs (CFLs) as a smart alternative to energy-draining incandescent bulbs. After Katrina's devastating effects in 2005, Hoffman wanted to make a positive difference in the city's rebirth.

"I had to do something to help New Orleans get back on its feet again," he said. With memories of the free recycling and conservation-wide mindset of his native

Switzerland, Hoffmann began changing out light bulbs around town, realizing that switching to CFLs could be just one step in the right direction to slow global warming and reduce energy costs. With the mission of "lowering New Orleans' energy usage one light bulb at a time," he began Green Light New Orleans and undertook an extensive search for volunteers and funding.

Green Light's service is primarily aimed at low- to middle-income New Orleans residents who have recently returned to the city. Since many of these residents have health, work and household repair priorities, replacing light bulbs is not a top concern for them. However, once residents realize that they can see an immediate savings if they replace their incandescent bulbs with CFLs, Green Light receives a request for a house call. After a request is made, Green Light representatives assemble a volunteer team which goes out to the home and installs the CFLs free of charge.

With sponsorships from Entergy, Coca-Cola, People's Health, and the New Orleans Saints, among others, Green Light purports that changing 3 million bulbs will save \$135 million in electricity while reducing CO2 emissions dramatically. According to Energy Star, if every household in the United States replaced one light bulb with a CFL, it would prevent enough pollution to equal removing 800,000 cars from the road. Since a CFL uses 75 percent less energy than an incandescent bulb and lasts approximately 10 times longer, your home's energy bill will be lower. Each CFL saves the user more than \$45 over the lifetime of the bulb. Additionally, the organization notes that if every American household switched one bulb with a CFL, the country would see a savings of \$600 million per year in energy costs. This would be the equivalent of lighting 3 million homes for an entire year.

According to Hoffmann, Green Light installs about 1,000 CFLs per day. To date, they have installed over 132,000 bulbs at a savings equivalent of over \$6 million.

To volunteer or find out more information, please go to [www.greenlightneworleans.org](http://www.greenlightneworleans.org) or call (504) 324-2429.



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## AIR QUALITY - BETTER AIR QUALITY IS A PRIORITY AT DEQ

Currently, all of Louisiana meets the one-hour standard and the eight-hour federal air quality standard for ozone that will be in place until 2010. Achieving this milestone was the result of many years of work, effort and sacrifice from all sectors, said DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett, and a celebration was held at DEQ on Jan. 13 to commemorate this accomplishment.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency offered Louisiana residents another reason to breathe easy when it comes to air quality when it announced all of Louisiana met the more stringent standard for fine particulate matter, known as PM 2.5, in 2008. Louisiana is also in attainment with all of the other criteria pollutants and National Ambient Air Quality Standards, which are lead, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide.

In 2008, DEQ upgraded nine monitoring sites in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and Lake Charles by adding new equipment that allows DEQ to get the results of air monitoring samples within an hour. Sending samples to the lab to be analyzed could take a week. This newly installed gas chromatographs give DEQ a better picture of air quality in real time, much more quickly.

Additional equipment such as the HAWK infrared camera allows the department to add innovative monitoring techniques to its surveillance toolbox. The camera allows the department to search for certain chemical releases that may go unseen by the naked eye. DEQ put the camera to good use as it monitored barges, rail-

ways and tank farms in 2008 for possible undetected releases. A survey of barge traffic showed that vessels on the state's waterways could be an area that needs to be addressed to make the air quality in Louisiana better than it already is.

The study was conducted in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Corps of Engineers. The study was conducted to help quantify the emissions which may play a significant role in ozone formation in the Baton Rouge area. The study results should be available in about three months.

All the technology and expertise will become more valuable in the upcoming months and years. On March 12, 2008, EPA announced a new, more stringent standard for the pollutant ozone. When and if the standard becomes official, this standard, 75 parts per billion, could mean that more than 20 parishes will be out of attainment. Even though the air quality in many of these parishes continues to improve and most have been in attainment, DEQ formed the Statewide Ozone Steering Committee to help educate and assist parishes with positive information and actions to help them deal with the impact of the new standard. This group consists of representatives of industry, environmental groups, community groups, non-profits, citizens and federal, state and local governments. The group held eight public meetings around the state to give presentations, answer questions and offer assistance. This was a cooperative effort to prevent ozone, mitigate the impacts of the standard and improve air quality.

For more information, visit <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/Default.aspx?tabid=2849>.



# BE AIR AWARE

BE THE SOLUTION



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## LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY'S FOURTH QUARTER SUMMARIES

### 4th Quarter 2008 Enforcement Actions:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/225/Default.aspx>

### 4th Quarter 2008 Settlement Agreements:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2838/Default.aspx>

### 4th Quarter 2008 Air Permits:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2922/Default.aspx>

### 4th Quarter 2008 Water Permits:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2899/Default.aspx>

### 4th Quarter 2008 Solid And Hazardous Waste Permits:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2586/Default.aspx>

## HELPFUL TIPS

### To Save Energy:

Cut off all electricity driven items in your home. Keeping cell phone chargers, computers, TVs, gaming units, night lights, etc. plugged in when not in use can take a lot of electricity. A household or office can also use energy saving power strips that will shut off peripheral equipment automatically.

Using Cold water to wash clothes can save up to 80 percent of the energy required.

Install a programmable thermostat that allows you to automatically lower the temperature when no one is home or people are sleeping. Energy Star says this could save you \$150 a year.

Mercury is present in small quantities in fluorescent bulbs, older thermostats, car switches and some light switches. These items must be disposed of properly and go into a hazardous waste collection site.

For more tips, visit:

<http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2927/Default.aspx>