



What's Inside?

DEQ honors two of their own for their service in Afghanistan

Improving Bayou Terrebonne

DEQ participates in 2013 Louisiana Offshore Oil Port drill

DEQ on the Move

EnviroFlash- That is the name to remember for free air quality notification!

St. Margaret's Foundation receives Brownfields grant

DEQ participates in National Geographic BioBlitz

Regional offices cover the state

If you would like to subscribe to Discover DEQ, send your email to sectcommunication@mail.la.gov

Know about your air quality! Sign up for EnviroFlash and receive air quality notifications by email or phone. Go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/enviroflash.

DEQ honors two of their own for their service in Afghanistan

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has honored two of its employees for their service to our country during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Russell Clark, an Environmental Scientist with DEQ's Radiation Division; and Christopher Simms, a Staff Environmental Scientist in DEQ's Capital Regional Office, were recognized by DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch for their service as Intelligence Non-Commissioned Officers for the Louisiana Army National Guard. Clark and Simms served with the Guard's 415th Military Intelligence Battalion in Parwan, Afghanistan, from 2010-2011. Headquartered in Carville, the 415th was activated in the fall of 2010 for service in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Clark, a Sergeant First Class with nearly 30 years of service in the Army National Guard, enlisted in 1983 as a Combat Engineer before transitioning into the Military Intelligence branch in 1989. Clark was Team Sergeant of a Human Intelligence Collection Team while deployed to the Balkans in 2003-2004 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While deployed to Parwan, Clark served as one of his Battalion's Non-Commissioned Officers in Charge in support of Intelligence Operations. For his service as an Operations Section NCOIC, he was awarded an Army Commendation Medal.



DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch (center) receives a U.S. flag and certificate of service on behalf of DEQ from Chris Simms (left) and Russell Clark (right)

Simms, a Staff Sergeant also serving with the 415th Military Intelligence Battalion, joined the Army National Guard in 1984 as a Military Policeman and served a 6-year enlistment before receiving an Honorable Discharge in 1990. In 2007, he rejoined the National Guard and deployed to Iraq in 2008-09 on a Police Transition Team mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom before

Continued on page 2



Thursday, June 27, 2013 Issue Number: 19

deploying to Afghanistan in 2010 with the 415th. During his tour in Afghanistan, he was awarded the Bronze Star for exemplary service as a Senior Intelligence Analyst during Operation Enduring Freedom.

During a ceremony at DEQ Headquarters on May 14, Clark and Simms bestowed a U.S. flag upon DEQ as a gesture of gratitude in honor of DEQ's commitment to stand behind its military service members during times of peace as well as conflict. The flag served as a distinctive sign of motivation and pride for the men, as it was physically present in the interrogation room during their examination of several enemy informants, suspects and known terrorists who were captured for questioning in Afghanistan. As a result of several months of painstaking, extensive intelligence efforts undertaken by Clark, Simms and their colleagues, the 415th departed the theatre of operations in late 2011 having interrogated more than 4,500 detainees, resulting in the interdiction of more than 2,000 terrorist-led missions, thereby saving countless numbers of American and Afghani lives in the process.

For their service to the State of Louisiana and the United States of America, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is proud, honored and humbled to receive this American flag from Sergeants Clark and Simms in recognition of their steadfast devotion to duty and unyielding commitment to defend our nation.

Improving Bayou Terrebonne

Bayou Terrebonne is on the impaired waters list for Louisiana. At the present time, Upper Bayou Terrebonne watershed is not meeting Primary Contact Recreation and Fish and Wildlife Propagation. It has high concentrations of bacteria, nitrite/N=nitrate (NO_2/NO_3), total phosphorus (TP), non-native plants (hyacinth & salvinia) and low dissolved oxygen. Middle Bayou Terrebonne watershed also has high concentrations of bacteria, non-native plants (salvinia and hyacinth) and low dissolved oxygen.



From left: Jen Roberts, Emily Gootee, Blaise Pezold, Jordan Allen and Dr. Shirley Laska. LDEQ Surveillance, Bayou Terrebonne, Task Force

A significant portion of bacteria problems in Bayou Terrebonne appear to be from failing septic systems, including bayou-side homes and business systems that feed directly to the bayou. Reducing bacteria concentrations entering the bayou will require targeting failing septic systems as a priority watershed activity.

Bayou Land Resource, Conservation and Development District (RC&D), one of DEQ's Watershed Coordinators, has developed Watershed Implementation Plans for both Upper and Middle Bayou Terrebonne and will be sampling in both watersheds. The RC&D watershed planning team includes Watershed Coordinator Jennifer Roberts; Program Coordinator and Field Technician Blaise Pezold; academic interns Emily Gootee (Louisiana State University masters degree candidate) and Jordan Allen (Research Experience in Solid Earth Science for Students, Savannah State University bachelor of science candidate).

Continued on page 3



Thursday, June 27, 2013 Issue Number: 19



Jordan Allen, Resess intern, collecting water quality samples from a bridge on Upper Bayou Terrebonne.

Resess intern, Jordan Allen developed a survey on the community's perspective of the health of the Bayou Terrebonne watershed. For this work, Allen was awarded best student paper at the 31st annual meeting of the National Association of Black Geoscientists.

The watershed planning team meets with the Bayou Terrebonne watershed task force on a monthly basis to continue watershed planning efforts on both Upper and Middle Bayou Terrebonne. The WIPs were developed using a process driven by local participation from the task force. The WIPs identify key water quality issues, management programs and public outreach efforts that can be targeted to restore and protect this watershed.

in 2012 to locate unpermitted commercial waste water treatment systems which contribute to the impairment. DEQ then provided environmental regulatory assistance to get the facilities permitted and in compliance. This year, Bayou Land RC&D just finished conducting a year of water quality monitoring and continue to work with DEQ to restore the Bayou.

As part of the Upper Bayou Terrebonne plan, DEQ surveillance staff conducted a sweep of Bayou Terrebonne

DEQ participates in 2013 Louisiana Offshore Oil Port drill

On May 16, personnel from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, along with contractors and representatives from various local, state and federal agencies, gathered at the Civic Center in Larose, for participation in an oil spill drill conducted by the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP), LLC.

LOOP, LLC, is a company tasked with ensuring the safe offloading of foreign crude oil from tankers, proper storage of the oil and the subsequent transportation of the oil through connecting pipelines to refineries throughout the U.S. Gulf Coast and Midwest. As a component of their mission, LOOP holds an annual drill which is designed to bring multiple agencies and resources together as a way to test LOOP's responsiveness regarding a sudden oil spill-related incident. After introductions and a safety briefing, the exercise was initiated at approximately 8:15 a.m.

This year's exercise was unique in that it involved two scenarios occurring simultaneously that the participants were required to address. The first scenario involved a drain line being cut due to a failed component on a crane during routine painting work on a vessel, resulting in a spill of thousands of barrels of crude oil into a state waterway. The second scenario began around 45 minutes later, and involved the breach of a floating gate by a tugboat that was en route to respond to the oil spill. All of the participants worked throughout the day to address the scenarios by marshaling resources to contain the release, protect the environment, ensure for personnel safety and provide the media and public with current information regarding the status of the event.

Continued on page 4



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



Thursday, June 27, 2013 Issue Number: 19

In addition to DEQ public information and environmental science personnel, participants included representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard, the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, the Louisiana Offshore Terminal Authority, the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office, the Greater Lafourche Port Commission and officials from other agencies and organizations.

The multi-party effort enabled the participants to interact in a face-to-face environment as the exercise unfolded. The participating parties worked in conjunction to review and assess status reports in preparation for a unified response, with the goal of making quick, sound decisions that would minimize the environmental impact by containing the oil spill and addressing any potential health and safety issues associated with the spill.



DEQ Environmental Scientist Jeff Dauzat confers with Unified Command Group representatives during the drill

In the wake of the 2010 BP Deepwater Horizon platform oil spill that occurred in the Gulf of Mexico, drills such as these are important as precautionary and pre-planning measures for quickly marshalling Louisiana's environmental protection resources and initiating a comprehensive response plan in anticipation of a real event.

"These annual drills serve as a vital training tool that provides an educational resource in conjunction with a real-time evaluation of the effectiveness of responding agencies and organizations as they work together to address a significant oil spill," said Jeff Dauzat, DEQ Environmental Scientist. "DEQ's role is to ensure the spill is quickly contained as we work to mitigate potential health and environmental impacts while providing technical support to the Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office throughout the response, cleanup and post-cleanup phase."

DEQ participated in several media briefings throughout the exercise, with participating parties exchanging status reports concerning their involvement in the containment and recovery process. The media event culminated in an on-camera mock press conference where agency spokesmen fielded questions from a gallery of participants acting as news reporters.

The exercise concluded with general comments and an opportunity for spectators and participants to voice any strengths and weaknesses concerning the drill, along with suggestions that could be incorporated into future drills.



DEQ On The Move



Ella Barbe and Marissa Jimenez, DEQ environmental scientists, at the DEQ booth at BIO Blitz at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park



Saturday, June 1, East Baton Rouge parish held its semi-annual Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day at Memorial Stadium in Baton Rouge. Twenty-five DEQ employees and three volunteers manned the paint swap booth. They mixed 86 five-gallon buckets of paint, which were donated to the Habitat for Humanity ReStore for resale.

Five-hundred twenty-five cars came through to drop off various household hazardous materials. The next HHMD will be October 5, so mark your calendars.



EnviroFlash- That is the name to remember for free air quality notification!

Louisiana is in the beginning of ozone season, May 1 to September 30, and it is important to know whether your air quality is healthy or unhealthy. You can sign up for EnviroFlash, a free electronic system that sends emails and texts about the daily air quality forecast. Subscribers can subscribe to the "daily forecast" at the level of notification they desire. The subscriber can get information daily or only on days when the air is forecasted as unhealthy. The system can also send out alerts for unusual air quality events such as the 2011 marsh fires in southeast Louisiana.

To sign up for EnviroFlash, go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/enviroflash. For more information on EnviroFlash, call Jean Kelly at 225-219-3966 or email, jean.kelly@la.gov.



Thursday, June 27, 2013 Issue Number: 19

St. Margaret's Foundation receives Brownfields grant

Recently, St. Margaret's Foundation in New Orleans received a \$200,000 Brownfields cleanup grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This grant will be used to jump start the cleanup of the former Mercy/Lindy Boggs Hospital site at 301 North Jefferson Davis Parkway. Mercy Hospital New Orleans was founded in 1924 and moved to this mid-city neighborhood in 1953.

The site was flooded and badly damaged during Hurricane Katrina. Tenet Healthcare, who had operated the facility, opted not to reopen it, so the facility has been sitting vacant and abandoned ever since. "The buildings were vandalized beyond belief," according to Michael Gilman, development director for St. Margaret's Foundation. St. Margaret's purchased the building in 2010.

The site, operated in the early 1900s by the Southern Lumber and Demolishing Company, was taken over in the 1950s by Mercy Hospital. It is contaminated by asbestos, lead and some underground storage tanks that need to be remediated in order to bring the property back for its intended use. The brownfields grant will be used to begin that process and for community outreach.

The redevelopment of the site is a multi-phase operation and the property was subdivided into three condos (phases) for remediation. Phase one, Condo A, at 115,000 square feet, is already complete and houses St. Margaret's Daughters Nursing Home with 112 beds. Phase two and three, Condos B and C, still need remediation – the removal of asbestos and lead – before they can be put back into service. Condo B is 260,000 square feet and Condo C is 330,000 square feet and includes a basement.

"The idea is to put the buildings back into commerce as originally intended with medical tenants", said Gilman. "Our mission is to provide health care and it is an encouraging thing for us and the community to have this facility up and running. Activity is a good sign and a step in the right direction."

St. Margaret's has been meeting with the mid-city community at their monthly meeting to update the residents on their progress and ask for input.



Mercy/Lindy Boggs hospital exterior



Interior of hospital after Hurricane Katrina

Continued on page 7



Thursday, June 27, 2013 Issue Number: 19

EPA's Brownfields program empowers stakeholders to prevent, assess, safely clean up and reuse brownfields. A brownfield site is real property where the expansion, redevelopment or reuse of which is complicated by the presence or potential presence of hazardous materials or contaminants. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has a Brownfields Program and a Voluntary Remediation Program that ties in with EPA's program. For more information go to <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/PROGRAMS/BrownfieldsandVoluntaryRemediationProgram.aspx>.

DEQ participates in National Geographic BioBlitz



Kurt Wilson, environmental scientist from DEQ's Southeast Regional Office, stamps a student's transcript while Marissa Jimenez looks on.

This month the National Geographic 2013 BioBlitz came to Louisiana in Jean Lafitte National Historical Park. BioBlitz is a 24-hour species count in which teams of volunteer scientists, families, students, teachers, and other community members work together to find and identify as many species of plants, animals, microbes, fungi, and other organisms as possible. There is also a two-day Biodiversity Festival. National Geographic is helping conduct a BioBlitz in a different national park each year leading up to the U.S. National Park Service Centennial in 2016.

Louisiana's Mississippi River delta is a perfect place to explore the interplay of land and water: treeless marshes, distributary channels, slow-moving bayous, forested natural levees, freshwater swamps, and barrier islands. Jean Lafitte's Barataria Preserve encompasses 23,000 acres of this one-of-a-kind diverse natural resource. The event was staged to better understand, appreciate, and protect this national treasure. The National Park Service and National Geographic Society teamed up for the 24-hour BioBlitz species count and a two-day Biodiversity Festival, in which DEQ environmental scientists participated. This event is part scientific endeavor, part festival and part outdoor classroom, as it brought together 100 leading scientists and naturalists from around the country.

The goals of BioBlitz included discovering, mapping and learning about the living creatures in the park, providing scientists and the public an opportunity to do fieldwork together adding to the park's official species list and highlighting the importance of protecting the biodiversity of these extraordinary places and beyond.



Alderfly Larva and rifle beetle are some of the macro invertebrates found in the water at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park in Marrero.

Continued on page 8



Thursday, June 27, 2013 Issue Number: 19

DEQ environmental scientists participated in the Biodiversity Festival part of BioBlitz and were a part of Biodiversity University. They demonstrated “Enviroscape,” which is an example of nonpoint source pollution and demonstrated macro invertebrate sampling for the students and the public. The students (in grades K-12) participated in the demonstrations and had their “transcripts” stamped in their field notebooks or transcript cards.

There were 41 exhibitors and many interactive booths and demonstrations. Besides DEQ, some of the local exhibitors included 4-H Youth Wetland Program, DEQ Watershed Coordinator Bayou Land Resource Conservation and Development Council, Southeast Louisiana Boy Scouts of America, Nicholls State University Biology Society, the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, Audubon Nature Institute, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Louisiana Environmental Education Commission.

Regional offices cover the state

Headquartered in Louisiana’s capital city of Baton Rouge, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality also maintains several regional offices positioned throughout the state, covering all 64 parishes.

Currently, DEQ maintains 6 regional offices and 2 satellite offices within the state. Since DEQ’s mission is to respond to air and water quality issues, solid/hazardous waste concerns and emergency response issues within a short amount of time, regional offices are a necessity in order to provide adequate and prompt service to any parish in the state.

DEQ environmental scientists and staff members at the regional offices often wear many hats, as most environmental threats or concerns must be addressed at any given time. Emergency response and coordinating with local, parish and state officials is also an important aspect of the regional office mission, as train derailments, facility mishaps, hazardous waste spills, fires and other natural events may occur at any moment.



Based in Lafayette, the Acadiana Regional Office covers an 8-parish area along the Louisiana Gulf Coast and within the heart of Cajun country

Continuing in this e-newsletter, we will focus on a DEQ Regional Office in order to provide an overview on their function and the key role they play as a component of DEQ’s mission to protect human health and the environment throughout the state.

This issue spotlights the Acadiana Regional Office based in Lafayette:

ACADIANA REGIONAL OFFICE

Parishes served: Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary & Vermilion

Continued on page 9



DISCOVER DEQ

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER



Thursday, June 27, 2013 Issue Number: 19

Located at 111 New Center Drive in Lafayette, the Acadiana Regional Office employs 28 staff members who are tasked with coverage of all aspects of DEQ's mission to protect human health and the environment within the region. The staff is comprised of technicians, administrators and environmental scientists who conduct facility inspections, surveillance, air analysis, water analysis, criminal investigations, incident investigations, on-call emergency response functions and small business/community development outreach capabilities within the community.

“Due to the unpredictable nature of environmental issues and the ever-evolving variety of assignments that often change on a moment's notice, the majority of Acadiana's staff are cross-trained and capable of providing service on more than one field of expertise,” said Billy Eakin, Regional Office Manager for the Acadiana and Lake Charles Regional Offices. “Responding to a citizen call pertaining to open burning or the illegal disposal of waste tires or used oil are commonly some of the matters we frequently address and investigate.”

While the office's operational reach is extensive and varied, a typical day usually consists of an investigation into environmental inquiries from the public, conducting air monitoring, water analysis within any number of the region's waterways, facility compliance inspections, and ongoing technical support and sampling efforts on seafood and sediment related to the 2010 BP oil spill.

With much of the region comprised of parishes that stretch along the Gulf Coast, the office maintains a fleet of boats and an all-terrain vehicle available for rapid deployment response to environmental events or incidents that require access via water. Adding to the multi-faceted nature of the office's mission, the majority of the staff are fully qualified and certified in boat operations, environmental safety and hazardous waste operations.



Billy Eakin, Manager of the Acadiana and Lake Charles Regional Offices, reviews water sampling data from Iberia Parish



Rhonda McCormick, Acadiana Regional Office Supervisor, examines facility compliance inspection reports