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## DEQ's Criminal Investigations Division Investigates Waste Tire Piles

A large part of DEQ's effort to protect the environment involves waste tire piles, which can be a fairly common sight around certain industrial and maintenance shop areas as well as rural locations throughout the state. Waste tires are not only an eyesore, they are an environmental and health hazard, as they are hotbeds for mosquitoes and rodents that can carry an array of diseases.

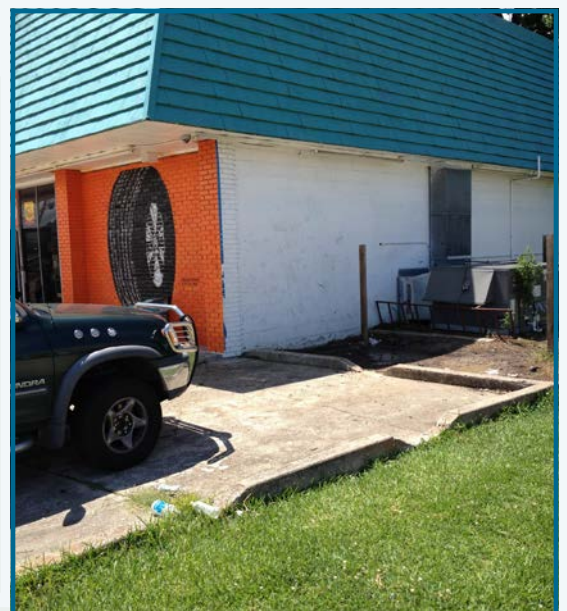
Often, a tip with a waste tire location is called in or a report is made to DEQ's online reporting portal. From there, DEQ's Criminal Investigations Division will visit the location and try to determine the responsible party in order to clean the area and dispose of the tires properly in accordance with the law.

Responding to a tip on a waste tire pile next to City Rim and Tires, an automotive shop in Baton Rouge, DEQ Criminal Investigations Division Agent Keith Bates visited the location June 5. After Bates spoke with the owner, he agreed to remove the waste tire pile immediately in lieu of facing possible enforcement penalties. Agent Bates returned the next day to confirm that the waste tires had been removed.

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*Waste tires piled up next to the shop*



*The shop after tires were removed.*



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“Quite often, businesses and private citizens discard waste tires as a way to avoid transporting the tires and paying the applicable environmental fees,” said Bates. “What many don’t realize is that dumping or stacking waste tires without ensuring for proper disposal is against the law. An investigation, followed by possible enforcement action, may result after all attempts to seek a more reasonable alternative have been exhausted.”

By law, waste tires must be submitted to a registered waste tire processor, who will then ensure that those tires are recycled in accordance with state regulations.

Information on waste tire regulations and a list of registered waste tire processors can be found on the DEQ website at: <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/FinancialServices/WasteTires.aspx>.

## DEQ Participates in 17th Annual Chem Friends Expo in Gonzales

Since the event’s inception, staff scientists from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality have participated in Chem Friends Expo, a science-based demonstration held at the Gonzales Civic Center in Ascension Parish. Now in its 17th year, the annual Expo has provided basic chemistry instruction to more than 60,000 area sixth grade students, with the participation of a wide array of local businesses and organizations that use some aspect of chemistry in their daily operations.

In addition to DEQ, participating organizations this year included Rubicon, Shell Chemical, Athlon Solutions, Honeywell, Motiva Enterprises, Southern University, Methanex, BASF, OxyChem, Westlake Chemical, Air Products, CF Industries, Potash Corporation and the Gonzales Fire Department.



*DEQ Senior Environmental Scientist Mia Townsel instructs students on the pH scale at the Chem Friends Expo.*

The Expo is as a three-day science exhibition that provides participating organizations an opportunity to interact with students. The show-and-tell format allows organizations to demonstrate some aspect of what they do in relation to science.

After participants set up their demonstration booths around the auditorium at the Expo, sixth grade students from Ascension Parish schools arrived and, with the assistance of student volunteers from St. Amant High School, were divided into small groups. All of the visiting students were given protective glasses and a safety orientation before proceeding to their first station.

Each station is hosted by a business or organization that provides a science-based demonstration or a participatory activity where students can personally assist in conducting mock experiments. Demonstrations typically involve

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basic chemistry processes in an easy-to-understand presentation, and each group receives approximately 12 minutes at each station.

DEQ's demonstration was based on "kitchen chemistry." Various chemicals found in the kitchen were tested to determine their position on the pH scale. Common household products such as ammonia, baby shampoo, fabric softener, lemon juice, carbonated soda, aspirin, glass cleaner, baking soda, antacid tablets, vinegar and orange juice were placed on the display table to be tested. Boiled cabbage water was used as a control to determine whether a specific household product is actually a base, an acid or closer to a neutral. Students are divided into two teams which compete to give the most correct answers as each product interacts with the cabbage water to reveal a result. The water turns green if the product is a base, pink if acidic and purple if neutral.

"DEQ is proud to be a part of Chem Friends every year, as the event provides a unique opportunity for students to get a hands-on understanding of basic chemistry from multiple organizations in a single setting," said DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch. "The event is actually a 'Career Day' of sorts for many students, as their direct interaction with chemical processes here could lead to a lifelong interest in science as a profession."

## DEQ Participates in Ocean Commotion 2013

**O**n October 22nd, DEQ Environmental Scientists participated in Ocean Commotion 2013 hosted by the Louisiana Sea Grant College Program at the LSU Pete Maravich Assembly Center.

DEQ environmental scientists Al Hindrichs, India Anderson and Marissa Jimenez demonstrated an interactive model known as "Walnut Bayou," which teaches students how rivers meander and react to various obstructions and environmental situations that may enter the waterway. DEQ geologists Mary Gentry and Tiffani Cravens, who are members of the Drinking Water Protection Team, demonstrated how drinking water can become contaminated, along with ideas on how we can work together to prevent contamination.

More than 3,000 area students, teachers and chaperones came to the event to learn about the Gulf Coast, the environment and the state's bodies of water from 65 exhibitors. The exhibits are provided by LSU researchers and public and private organizations. Exhibit viewing was divided into two time slots, each two hours in duration. The early time slot was reserved for students grades 5-8, while the later slot was reserved for students from Kindergarten to grade 4.

The primary purpose of Ocean Commotion is to give students the chance to learn about and touch the products of the sea and coast—the aquatic animals, plants, and minerals — upon which Louisiana's citizens are so dependent.



*DEQ Environmental Scientists Al Hindrichs and Marissa Jimenez demonstrate the Walnut Bayou model to students.*





## Chili Cook Off for United Way

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's Chili Cook-off Contest to raise money for Capital Area United Way at the Galvez Building on North Fifth Street on Thursday, Nov. 7. Seven contestants competed. The judges selected the first, second and third place winners. The judges were Kenny Kimble, DEQ's reigning hot dog eating contest winner; Smiley Anders of The Advocate; Whitney Vann, WBRZ morning anchor; and Jay Grymes, WAFB's chief meteorologist.

After the winners were announced, hungry patrons lined up for their own taste of hot chili.

The event raised more than \$300 for United Way. Sean Darensbourg won first place in the Chili Cook-off Contest and took home a \$50 gift card from Piggly Wiggly. Annette Sharp and Mary Beth Bucher, second and third place winners respectively, also received gift cards. Sharp also won first place in the "Best-Tasting" category of the cupcake competition and was awarded a \$25 Nothing Bundt Cake gift card. Vennetta Hayes won first place in the "Best Decorated" category, taking home a \$25 Sacha gift card. Other winners in the cupcake competition were: Amber Pino, second place in "Best Decorated" and "Best Tasting" categories; Jenny O'Rourke, third place in the "Best Decorated" category; and Hayes, third place in the "Best Tasting" category.



*Celebrity judges for the Chili Cook-off Contest at Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality were, from left: Smiley Anders of The Advocate, DEQ hot dog eating champion Kenny Kimble; Whitney Vann of WBRZ; and Jay Grymes of WAFB.*

## 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, there are 6 regional offices with 2 substations within the state. Since DEQ is committed to responding to any environmental event within a short amount of time, regional offices are a necessity in order to provide adequate and prompt service to any parish within the state. DEQ environmental scientists at the regional offices often wear many hats, as air quality, hazardous waste, emergency response and water quality issues must be addressed at any given time. Emergency response and coordinating with local, parish and state officials is also an important facet of the regional office mission, as facility mishaps, illegal discharges, hazardous waste spills, fires and other environmentally related events may occur at any moment.

Over the next few newsletters, we will focus on a different DEQ Regional Office each issue, in order to provide some insight into the work they do and to showcase the total mission coverage that DEQ provides throughout the state. This issue spotlights the Southwest Regional Office based in Lake Charles.

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*The Southwest Regional office covers a six-parish corner of Louisiana bordering Texas and a portion of the Gulf Coast.*



*The Southwest Regional Office houses a fleet of boats, a high-capacity generator and an all-terrain vehicle available for rapid deployment for various incident response activities.*



*Scott Wilkinson, supervisor at the Southwest Regional Office, reviews water quality survey results from Cameron Parish.*

## SOUTHWEST REGIONAL OFFICE

Parishes served: Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis & Vernon

Located at 1301 Gadwall Street, the Lake Charles office has 24 staff members who are responsible for water quality inspections, solid/hazardous waste inspections, ambient air and facility air inspections, remediation, criminal investigations, small business/small community assistance and on-call emergency response activities.

“The Greater Lake Charles area is unique in that it contains 3 major oil refineries in the region, so a large part of our mission centers on frequent facility inspections and monitoring capabilities as it relates to ensuring for safety and compliance at those facilities,” said Billy Eakin, Regional Office Administrator for the Southwest Regional and Acadiana Regional Offices.

“Our office is also tasked with weekly scheduled inspections of four ambient air monitoring sites in the region to ensure the equipment is functioning properly and the data is being properly collected and evaluated,” said Scott Wilkinson, Environmental Scientist Supervisor at the Southwest Regional Office.

Environmental questions and concerns from citizens also comprise a substantial portion of the office’s daily schedule, with more than 510 inquiries having undergone the investigative process over the last fiscal year.

Covering southwestern Louisiana’s Gulf Coast, the office is equipped to respond to incidents by boat. Most of the staff are fully trained in the operation of boats. This capability was particularly effective in facilitating DEQ’s prompt and comprehensive response to hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008, as well as the BP oil recovery and response effort in 2010.

Due to their shared border, the Southwest Regional Office also maintains a close relationship with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, as the offices frequently consult each other on certain environmental matters that may affect the Beaumont-Lake Charles corridor and coastline.



## Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day

The Greater Baton Rouge Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day and Paint Swap was held on Saturday, Nov. 2. East Baton Rouge residents brought household hazardous materials and leftover paint to Memorial Stadium parking lot.

Eighteen DEQ volunteers manned the paint swap area taking in reusable latex paint and mixing it in five-gallon containers. The objective of the swap is to recycle unused paint, varnishes, and stains. After the material is collected, screened and blended by the volunteers, it is given to Habitat for Humanity ReStore and then sold to the public at a reduced price. This HHMCD, DEQ recycled 112 five-gallon buckets of paint that would have otherwise ended up in a landfill or disposed of in an environmentally unsound manner.



*At this year's Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day, held in Baton Rouge, DEQ recycled 112 5-gallon buckets of paint.*

DEQ initiated the paint swap in 1990 and has participated every year since.

“DEQ has been involved with Household Hazardous Material Collection Day since 1985 and helped initiate the program,” said Judy Schuerman, DEQ coordinator for the event. “DEQ employees have worked with the paint swap for many years and thousands of gallons of paint have been disposed of properly because of environmentally aware citizens and the volunteers that assist each year.”

The collection day is a collaborative effort between the Baton Rouge City parish and other partners. For more information about recycling, paint disposal and common potentially hazardous materials in the home, go to the DEQ Web site at [www.deq.louisiana.gov](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov).





## Holiday Recycling Tips from DEQ

Louisiana, like the rest of the nation, produces more garbage in December than any other month. Reducing, recycling and reusing helps reduce trash and keeps it out of the environment. You can “Be the Solution” and have a more waste-free holiday season by following a few simple tips from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality:

### When preparing for the holidays, think reuse and recycle

If you have outgrown toys and clothing, consider donating them to charitable organizations that reuse them. Discarded electronics (computers, copiers, fax machines, printers, monitors) may be donated to a local nonprofit, parent-teacher association or the Capital Area Corporate Recycling Council who provides computers to schools, families and nonprofits. Visit their website at [www.cacrc.com](http://www.cacrc.com) for details. When you buy gifts, check the recycled content of your purchase and buy recycled items where possible.

### Pre-cycle your Christmas tree

Take recycling and reuse into consideration when you buy a tree. You can purchase an artificial tree that doesn't have to be discarded, or a live tree that you can replant. If you have a cut tree, remember that tinsel, flocking and decorations must be removed before recycling. Trees, usually collected in early January, are ground up into compost or mulch. You can find information about seasonal pickups and recycling at the East Baton Rouge Parish Recycling website: <http://brgov.com/recycle>.

### Foam peanuts, batteries, cardboard and more can be recycled

For information on recycling foam peanuts, or if you are a retailer interested in foam peanut recycling, go to: [www.loosefillpackaging.com/hotline](http://www.loosefillpackaging.com/hotline). You can also save them for reuse yourself and most packing stores will accept them since they are reusable. Buy rechargeable batteries for toys, cameras and gadgets. When those batteries no longer hold a charge, call the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation at 800-8-battery, or go to their website at: [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org), for information on the nearest battery-recycling drop off location. Remember that most cardboard and paper can be recycled.

Have a safe holiday season and remember to never burn wrapping paper or Christmas trees in the fireplace. For more recycling ideas, go to: [www.deq.louisiana.gov/recycling](http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/recycling).





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## DEQ On The Move



*Linda Brown and India Ambeau, DEQ Environmental Scientists, answer questions about DEQ and the environment at the Louisiana Science Teachers Association Conference, held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Baton Rouge at the end of October.*



*Participants in guessing the pH of substances high-five as Linda Brown, DEQ Environmental Scientist, demonstrates at the STEM Expo (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) at the Kenilworth Middle School in Baton Rouge in early November.*



*India Ambeau, DEQ Environmental Scientist, demonstrates the EnviroScape model at the STEM Expo at Kenilworth Middle School.*





## Who's Who At DEQ?



### Greg Langley - Communications Section – Press Secretary

Greg Langley is the new Press Secretary for DEQ. Greg spent the past 30 years in the journalism field, with stints as a government reporter, wire editor, copy editor, features writer, section editor, page designer and marketing writer. He was also the managing editor for a daily newspaper. Greg joins DEQ after working the last 23 years at the Baton Rouge Advocate, where he was a book editor and editor of the Sunday Magazine and Fun sections.

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### Bryan Riche – Emergency Response Section - Manager

Bryan has been with DEQ for more than six years. Prior to relocating to the Baton Rouge Headquarters as an Environmental Scientist Supervisor in Emergency Response, Bryan served as an emergency responder in DEQ's Southeast Regional Office in New Orleans. Bryan was recently promoted to Manager of DEQ's Emergency Response Section.

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225-219-3616  
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### Chad Scroggs – Emergency Response Section - Supervisor

Chad has served as an emergency responder with DEQ for more than 11 years, based out of the Southwest Regional Office in Lafayette, and the Kisatchie Regional Office in Pineville. Chad, an Environmental Scientist, recently relocated to Baton Rouge upon his promotion to Emergency Response Supervisor.

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