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## EWOCDS system protects drinking water

The Mississippi River is the drinking water source for more than 1.6 million people in Louisiana. The river is also a busy shipping lane where barges and ships carry all sorts of cargoes – including dangerous chemicals. The river bisects the area between Baton Rouge and New Orleans where the banks are lined with chemical plants, refineries, sewage treatment plants and other industries. More than 350 industrial and municipal facilities are situated adjacent to the Mississippi River within the state of Louisiana.

To mitigate any threat to drinking water drawn from the river, LDEQ, potable water works and industries along the river entered into a cooperative agreement in 1986 to establish the Early Warning Organic Compound Detection System (EWOCDS). LDEQ agreed to purchase, install and maintain gas chromatographs, accessories and data transmitting devices and in turn, each monitoring site provides lab space, utilities and manpower to analyze samples. Some equipment purchases and replacement equipment were funded through civil penalty settlements.

Over time, some of the EWOCDS participants decided to leave the program as other detection methods were found to be effective, including three large sites. A smaller version of the system evolved with the remaining participants. LDEQ Environmental Scientist Hoan Nguyen oversees operation of the Lower Mississippi River Monitoring System at the Southeast Regional Office in suburban New Orleans. "Sites like Shell wanted to stay with the program, and we set them up again," Nguyen said.

"We sample two times a month at the lab and two times a day at the sites," Nguyen said.

"Just a few years ago, the Early Warning Organic Chemical Detection System run by LDEQ had seven participating sites. Now there are four remaining sites. Other locations are sampled and the collected samples are brought to LDEQ's Southeast Regional Office (SERO) for analysis.



*The DC mass spectrometer in the SERO lab runs a river water sample.*

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Each of the sampling sites uses a system that has a tube containing a sorbent material. Purged sample components are trapped in the tubes, and when purging is complete, the sorbent tube is heated and backflushed with helium to desorb trapped sample components onto a capillary gas chromatography (GC) column. The column is temperature programmed to separate the method analytes which are then detected with a photoionization detector (PID) and a halogen specific detector placed in series.

It's EPA's drinking water method, and it allows detection of halogenated organic compounds, chlorinated hydrocarbons, trihalomethanes, vinyl chloride, benzene and styrene –to name a few – a total of about 28 substances.

Nguyen likens the process to a health check for the river. "We have a baseline (for comparison)," she said, "It's like checking your blood sugar." That's important, she believes, because "eventually the river is somebody's drinking water."



*LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, left, Surveillance Administrator Mike Algero Assistant Secretary Lourdes Iturralde and LDEQ Undersecretary Karyn Andrews watch as environmental scientist Hoan Nguyen demonstrates operation of the water analysis lab at SERO.*



## Message from the Secretary

*Chuck Carr Brown, Ph.D.*

By the time you read this, Santa will have eaten the cookies. I hope you all had a great holiday, filled with wonderful moments that are sure to become lasting memories. With the New Year's holiday coming up, I will take this opportunity to wish all of you a Happy New Year!

Once again, Louisiana weather exhibited its unpredictable nature in December. We had 80-degree days followed by a cold front that spawned deadly tornadoes across central Louisiana. On Dec. 16, a tornado event led to one fatality in Rosepine. Vernon Parish and Rapides Parish were hard hit and declared emergencies. Emergency response was ready, and LDEQ responders headed out to do their jobs as they always do in emergency events.



*LDEQ Secretary Chuck Carr Brown plays cornhole to benefit the Baton Rouge Food Bank.*

The National Weather Service has confirmed that the tornado that raked Deridder and Alexandria was an EF3, a very powerful storm. Shelters have opened in Central Louisiana locations for people whose homes were destroyed. Relief agencies are accepting donations for storm victims, so maybe we all can reach into our pockets and find a little something to help out during the holidays.

Enjoy your New Year's, and come back to work ready to tackle another year. We will certainly face new challenges and achieve new things in 2020.

Let me also remind everyone that it's equally certain that many old issues will continue right on into 2020. I know we are up to the test. We will do great work in 2020, and I look forward to all that we will achieve together.



## LDEQ produces video on electronic recycling

Instead of throwing out your old iPhone, laptop or other electronic devices, consider recycling as an alternative.

Used electronic discards add up and can have a negative impact on our environment if they're simply discarded. Diverting electronic waste from our landfills to help protect our environment and conserve resources is very important.

It all adds up and makes a difference. For example, recycling 1,000 laptops saves the energy equivalent of the electricity used by three Louisiana homes in a year.

LDEQ recently produced a YouTube video on the topic of e-recycling and what you can do to put those old iPhones and electronics to good use.

Featuring Nancy Jo Craig with the Capital Area Corporate Recycling Council (a major electronic waste recycler in Louisiana), the video provides an overview of how the CACRC refurbishes and repurposes laptops for a new lease on life. E-recycling by certified recyclers ensures that valuable materials don't go to waste – and that toxic materials are not diverted to landfills or incinerated – potentially causing an air emissions hazard.

Not all electronic components can be recycled, so consult your local recycler for a list of the items they'll accept. Check out LDEQ's video on e-recycling: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIGsvKvnqOY>.





## Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition takes a look at LDEQ's new technology

The month of December was a festive and educational time for the members, visitors and former members of the organization. The group, consisting of a mix of agencies, consultants, industry representatives, nonprofit organizations and individual members, met at LDEQ headquarters to discuss issues involving air quality, standards and the future of air quality in the state of Louisiana.

The December meeting provided the group an opportunity to see and inspect one of the two new Mobile Air Monitoring Labs (MAML). Before the meeting, the group took a tour that explained the capabilities of the equipment. One of the two MAMLs has the capability of taking water samples as well as air.

The group was also treated to a presentation on LDEQ's Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) by Jason Smith, UAS manager, who operates the system. Using unmanned aircraft has significantly increased the reach and scope of LDEQ's environmental capabilities. To be a commercial operator of these aircraft, one must have a license from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to be sure the operator is aware of all rules air space classes, visual observers and regulations that govern their use.

LDEQ began acquiring the aircraft in 2017, and their addition to the equipment and capability of the Department will greatly enhance LDEQ's reach. There are many different types of UAS, with a variety of uses. They are an excellent tool in determining the extent of spills. They are extremely helpful in emergency response situations such as oil and chemical spills, natural disasters, surveillance situations, permitting issues such as mapping, compliance verification and criminal investigation. They can and will be doing more. They will carry thermal cameras, be capable of air monitoring and sampling and optical gas imaging for leak detection. Their uses are endless.

Smith gave the group a display of different types of UAS equipment, including a large fixed-wing unit, capable of mapping a landfill in an hour, smaller units, a quadcopter and helicopter with six motors. They vary in flight time and range depending on their size and use.

After the presentation and a lively discussion of air issues led by BRCAC facilitator Paul Miller, the group adjourned. The group welcomes new members and meets on the first Wednesday of each month. If you are interested in times and topics, please email [jean.kelly@la.gov](mailto:jean.kelly@la.gov).



One of the latest MAMLs available for a tour outside LDEQ headquarters



Environmental Scientist Manager Bob Bailey explains MAML equipment to former LDEQ Secretary Mike McDaniel.



UAS Manager Jason Smith shows the BRCAC members some of LDEQ's UAS.



## LDEQ showcases why the holidays really are the most wonderful time of the year

LDEQ employees participated in a fundraising drive to benefit the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank (GBRFB) over the last few months, wrapping up on Dec. 12. According to the food bank, they rely heavily on donations at this time of year with more kids at home for the holidays, and LDEQ wanted to do as much as possible to fill their shelves with non-perishable food.

Since October, LDEQ has held various events, including the purchase of casual dress days, popcorn, pizza, hot dog and nacho sales, a dessert auction, a chili cook-off contest, a cornhole tournament and a “Fill-A-Plate” food drive that benefited the Food Bank.

All of the events proved to be successful, with a few standing out. For example, LDEQ made giving back a “green” event this year at the chili cook-off by selling the samples and bowls of chili in portion cups made from renewable materials. Additionally, a special thanks to the guest judges (including weather reporters from WBRZ, WAFB, and NBC-33, plus Charlie Lato (LDEQ’s hot dog eating champ) and Charlene Montelaro of the Greater BR Food Bank) who helped to make the event a success.

New to the event roster this year was the cornhole tournament, and it is sure to be featured again. Playoffs were held to determine a team to represent each division. Once division teams were in place, they played each other to determine who would go on to play an executive staff team in the final.

“The Kernels,” SP Davis and Rob Thomas, represented Waste Permits from the Office of Environmental Services and played LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown and Assistant Secretary for the Office of Environmental Services Elliot Vega in the final. “The Kernels” took home the victory.

Another specific aspect of the overall fundraising efforts that must be recognized is the internal challenge issued to the Waste Permits Division by Waste Permits Administrator Estuardo Silva. Administrator Silva challenged his division to double last year’s goal of two boxes filled and \$100 raised. If the group reached their goal by December, they would win a pizza party. The division was divided into two teams and competed against each other to see who could fill two additional boxes first. The winners received a trophy and bragging rights for the year.

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*Judges sample a variety of chili and take notes during the event.*



*Traditional Chili winners (l to r) 1st Place – William Barlett (Barlett also was the top chef for the entire event including non-traditional chilies); 2nd Place – Brad Bourgoyne; and 3rd Place – Karen Price*



*Non-traditional Chili winners (l to r) 2nd Place – James Pate; 1st Place – Annette Sharp; 3rd Place – Connie Payne*



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Team B took home the trophy this year! Team B members included Steven Forrester (Captain), Amber Randall, Ann Finney, Brad Bourgoyne, Dorian Heroman, Estuardo Silva, Gerelle Jackson, Jill Ruffin, Madeline Abernethy, Marty Perilloux, Mykenz Brown, Perry Fontenot, Rob Thomas, Ruby Costa, and SP Davis. A special thanks to everyone in Waste Permits for your efforts. They filled a total of seven boxes and raised \$300.

Thanks to the many charitable events and donations from LDEQ employees, \$3,240.05 (equivalent to 9,720 meals provided) and 2,614 pounds of food (equivalent to 2,178 meals provided) were donated to Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank this year. That is a total of 11,898 plates filled this holiday season!!!

While GBRFB fundraising events were being held weekly, LDEQ employees were also participating in the Louisiana State Combined Charitable Campaign (LA SCCC). The LA SCCC began in August and came to a close on Dec. 2.

The campaign is the only state-approved charitable activity that enables payroll-deducted gifts from employees of state agencies. This program allows LDEQ employees to designate an ongoing or one-time contribution to their choice of up to four health and human service charities participating in the LA SCCC.

The goal for 2019 was to raise \$4,000, and the final contribution was \$4,637.50. A special thanks to all of the LDEQ family that made surpassing this goal possible.

The holiday season is one of the most financially taxing, yet it is also the time where true character shines, and the generous spirit of others is on display. LDEQ's employees sure let their shine bright! To get involved with the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank, visit [brfoodbank.org](http://brfoodbank.org).

To learn more about the Louisiana State Combined Charitable Campaign, visit [www.lasccc.org](http://www.lasccc.org).



*LDEQ Assistant Secretary Elliott Vega challenges the Kernals in the cornhole final.*



*LDEQ's Waste Permits Division collected seven boxes of non-perishable food items and raised \$300 for the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank.*



*Secretary Dr. Chuck Carr Brown delivers the monetary donations to Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank Representative Charlene Montelaro on behalf of LDEQ.*



## LDEQ presents Sewage Treatment System maintenance classes in Assumption Parish

LDEQ works to protect drinking water sources through public outreach and pollution prevention across the state. Educating citizens on how to maintain their sewage treatment system is an important facet of this work.

As part of an ongoing effort to mitigate the impact of sewage in Bayou Lafourche, which is the water source for more than 300,000 people, LDEQ periodically hosts classes on proper maintenance measures in the Bayou Lafourche area. These classes are held in collaboration with the Louisiana Rural Water Association (LRWA) and the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), along with support from the Environmental Protection Agency, Nicholls State University, Louisiana State University, the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program and the Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District.

The classes are free and open to the public and consist of presentations about the human health and environmental impacts of sewage along with the regulatory requirements and proper maintenance of small sewage treatment systems designed for single homes or businesses. The presentations are followed by an onsite demonstration of an actual sewage treatment system. While the information pertains directly to those who have their own sewage system (such as a mechanical system or septic tank), there is valuable information to be gleaned, whether you own/operate a sewage treatment system or not.

“The idea with these classes is to not only provide information to citizens on how to properly maintain your sewage system but to hopefully spread the word on the health, environmental and financial impact that poorly operated or broken systems can have upon a community,” Jesse Means, LDEQ geologist, said.

LDEQ begins the classes by explaining the main water quality issue with Bayou Lafourche, why this is important and what is being done about it. The bayou is not meeting its water quality standards for fecal coliform, which is a type of bacteria found in warm blooded animals, making it unsafe for swimming and causing the water systems to use more treatment to clean the water for consumption. LDEQ identified areas where sewage, a source of fecal coliform, is getting into the bayou and has coordinated with other agencies to reduce sewage input through various means including inspections, assistance with funding to repair/replace malfunctioning systems, the establishment of community systems and public education.

### SOME TIPS TO MAINTAINING YOUR SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEM

- Stay up to date on the latest information on how to maintain your system
- Don't plant trees or shrubs near your system – the roots could cause damage
- Don't drive upon or park vehicles on any part of your system
- Be sure to keep roof or sump pump drainage systems away from your septic drainfield as flooding could upset the treatment process and cause plumbing backups
- Periodically check your unit for any sewage backups or clogs
- Ensure the aerator and associated parts are functioning properly (aerobic treatment units)
- Keep the area around the unit and discharge pipe free from hindrances such as rocks, tall grass or garden tools
- Take note of any odors or alarms and address any issues ASAP
- Have your system pumped out per the unit's specifications; typically every 3-5 years
- Hire a certified sewage maintenance technician should major problems arise

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“By informing and educating the community upfront, it helps to mitigate – and hopefully eliminate – any impairment in the receiving waterbody,” Means said.

Next, LDH explains the regulatory requirements for small home/business sewage treatment systems and goes over the operation and proper maintenance of mechanical systems that have aeration. LRWA then provides information on the operation and maintenance of conventional septic systems operate and their maintenance. Both of these presentations include tips on how often systems should be inspected and pumped out, measures to prevent costly repairs, the importance of maintenance, and the financial and environmental burdens that can affect a community when systems break down or are neglected. The overriding theme is that spending some money on periodic maintenance can save the homeowner headaches and costly repairs down the road.

The Louisiana Rural Water Association offers free training for water and wastewater utility personnel across the state. For more info on what they do, stop by their website at [www.LRWA.org](http://www.LRWA.org)

For an overview on how to maintain your sewage treatment system, check out LDEQ’s YouTube video at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=1v3JMnlevuo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1v3JMnlevuo).

## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle or Repurpose your plastic bags whenever possible!

**W**hile plastic bags are undoubtedly convenient to use, they can be a detriment to the environment in many forms. Plastic bags can be seen and found almost everywhere, from roadside litter to waterbodies. They do not biodegrade, so they strain our soil, groundwaters, waterbodies and can present a negative impact on aquatic species and wildlife. Foregoing the use of plastic bags during your future shopping visits is a great way to play a part in cleaning up the environment and eliminating their production and removing the demand for them. Across Canada, for example, many shops and grocery stores are in the process of eliminating the use of plastic bags entirely. Customers must either bring their own bags, purchase a canvas bag in the store or carry their items out without a bag.

You can start being a motivator for change and do your part, even if it’s one action at a time.

Begin the practice of using a canvas carry bag in lieu of plastic and slowly start eliminating unnecessary plastic waste from your house and the environment as a whole.

Doing so will also reduce the stress placed upon our landfills, as there are several alternatives to their use.

Here are just some of the options and solutions:

- Deposit your used bags at a recycling receptacle at participating grocery stores and big box stores.
- Reuse your bags for future shopping visits.
- Use a box or canvas carry bag (such as those offered at certain specialty stores) for shopping, instead of plastic.
- Plastic bags can be gathered and fashioned into bedding for the homeless. Consult with churches and organizations regarding ways in which bags can be repurposed in a positive way.
- There are many uses in the arts and crafts world for plastic bags – check online for innovative ideas.



## LDEQ to host CDX/NetDMR assistance sessions

The Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP) will be offering assistance with NetDMR in January 2020. NetDMR is a web-based tool that allows facilities to electronically sign and submit Louisiana Pollution Elimination System (LPDES) discharge monitoring reports (DMRs) to the LDEQ.

The CDX/NetDMR assistance sessions will be offered around the state and will assist in two ways:

- LDEQ Small Business Assistance staff, in conjunction with the LDEQ NetDMR Team, will help permittees in setting up their CDX/NetDMR accounts in NetDMR. The LDEQ staff will help the permittees one-on-one to establish a username and password at the CDX level and request access to their permit(s) at the NetDMR level. Users who need help with already existing accounts are also welcome to attend.
- The LDEQ staff will also assist CDX/NetDMR account holders in submitting their NetDMRs. Account holders should bring in their lab results and be able to login to their CDX/NetDMR accounts. If the account holder has previously attended one of LDEQ's CDX/NetDMR REGISTRATION assistance sessions, they should bring their completed registration sheets, including the answers to any security questions.

These assistance sessions are free and open to the public. Please visit [deq.louisiana.gov/form/cdxnetdmr-assistance-signup](http://deq.louisiana.gov/form/cdxnetdmr-assistance-signup) to register for one of the offered sessions.

LDEQ's Small Business Assistance Program provides environmental regulatory assistance and information to small businesses and communities. The SBAP operates in accordance with the Confidentiality option provided by the EPA Enforcement Response Policy, effective Aug. 12, 1994, regarding Section 507 of the Clean Air Act. Under this policy, violations detected through assistance will be kept confidential.

For more information about NetDMR, visit [deq.louisiana.gov/page/netdmr](http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/netdmr).

For more information, visit [deq.louisiana.gov/page/small-business-assistance](http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/small-business-assistance).

### Session 1:

Date: Jan. 7, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Mathews Government Complex  
4876 La. 1, Mathews, LA 70375

### Session 2:

Date: Jan. 8, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: St. Tammany Parish Administration  
520 Old Spanish Trail, Slidell, LA 70458

### Session 3:

Date: Jan. 9, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: LSU/SU Ag Center  
7101 Gulf Highway, Lake Charles, LA 70607

### Session 4:

Date: Jan. 14, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Location: Tangipahoa Parish CVB (Tangi Tourism)  
13143 Wardline Road, Hammond, LA 70401

### Session 5 :

Date: Jan. 15, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: LDEQ Northeast Regional Office  
508 Downing Pines Road,  
West Monroe, LA 71292

### Session 6:

Date: Jan. 16, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: LDEQ Northwest Regional Office  
1525 Fairfield, Room 520  
Shreveport, LA 71101

### Session 7:

Date: Jan. 22, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Kees Park Community Center  
2450 Highway 28, Pineville, LA 71360

### Session 8:

Date: Jan. 23, 2020

Time: Time slots available between 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: LUS Training Center  
1314 Walker Road, Lafayette, LA 70506



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## Christmas At LDEQ





## Who's Who At LDEQ?



**Connor Gilbert – Environmental Scientist, Water Surveys, Office of Environmental Assessment**

Gilbert is a native of Woodstock, GA. He moved to Baton Rouge in 2014 to study natural resource ecology and management with a concentration in aquaculture and fisheries and a minor in environmental sciences at LSU.

Gilbert was a student worker at the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, where he worked with the Artificial Reef Program helping build and enhance habitat in coastal Louisiana. He currently works as an environmental scientist in the Water Surveys group at LDEQ.

Gilbert has an interest in habitat evaluation and monitoring with a passion for helping increase the overall quality of waterways in Louisiana and hopes to be a huge impact in the years to come. He also enjoys going fishing, hunting and outdoor sports. Being from Georgia, he is still an LSU fan. Geaux Tigers.

**Jessica Townsend – Environmental Scientist—Underground Storage Tank Division, Kisatchie Regional Office, Office of Environmental Compliance**

Townsend is a Connecticut native who moved to the Pineville area in July 2018. She earned a Bachelor of Science in biology with a focus on environmental science in May 2018 at Central Connecticut State University. She has been working at LDEQ since Sept. 2019.

Townsend loves living in Louisiana and enjoys the many outdoor activities the Sportsman's Paradise is known for, including hunting, fishing, camping and more. To that end, she is eager to use her position with LDEQ to protect and preserve the substantial diversity and beauty this state has to offer.



**Hillary Young – Environmental Scientist, Surveillance Division, Acadiana Regional Office, Office of Environmental Compliance**

Young is from Eunice but moved to Lafayette in 2010 to attend the University of Louisiana-Lafayette. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from UL in 2014 with a concentration in pre-medicine. She recently joined LDEQ after working at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette New Iberia Research Center, where she was a veterinary technician specializing in non-human primates since 2014.

Young has been a registered laboratory animal technician through the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science for three years. She's also a member of the Louisiana Stars Drum and Bugle Corps in 2014, is a former member of the Pride of Acadiana and was featured in the 2012 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Young enjoys going to UL football games, outdoor activities, running, painting and playing trumpet in the Lafayette Concert Band.





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## Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Third Quarter Summaries

### Third Quarter 2019 Enforcement Actions:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-actions>

### Third Quarter 2019 Settlement Agreements:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/enforcement-division>

### Third Quarter 2019 Air Permits:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/permits-issued-by-calendar-quarter>

### Third Quarter 2019 Water Permits:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/lpdes>

### Third Quarter 2019 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:

<http://deq.louisiana.gov/page/waste-permits>

