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LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY NEWSLETTER

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LSWA

DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch spoke at the opening session of the Louisiana Solid Waste Association (LSWA) Environmental Conference March 20 in Lafayette and told the participants that DEQ has seen another year of downsizing. The agency has shrunk in size yet continued to offer the same services and even increased and improved them. Despite ongoing paring of its staff, DEQ notched some singular achievements last year, Hatch said. She pointed out that the five-parish area in and around Baton Rouge has now registered ozone data in compliance with federal air standards.

"We have started the process to re-designate the nonattainment area to 'in attainment,'" she said. "A lot of people have worked very hard for a long time to make it happen – stakeholders, citizens, industry."

"It's a big step."

DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch addresses the LSWA Conference as Gary Bonvillain, LSWA Charter Emeritus Member, and DEQ Deputy Secretary Alex Appeaning listen.

Hatch also lauded the agency's work in surveillance, inspections, and other areas. Hurricane season is fast approaching, and DEQ is gearing up for that even as the agency continues to deal with the continuing response to the BP oil spill of 2010. Hatch said the agency remains involved in the response to the Bayou Corne sink hole in Assumption Parish. She also mentioned the agency's remediation efforts that bring environmentally compromised sites back into commerce.

As DEQ goes about its other work, Hatch said, it also reaches out to citizens, businesses and other stakeholders with programs like the Enviroschool, the environmental education outreach arm of the agency that provides training for communities, businesses and other organizations on a number of regulatory topics. "We've done over 50 across the state," she said. The Environmental Leadership Awards recognized individuals, businesses and governmental agencies that went "above and beyond environmental regulations" to substantially improve the quality of the environment, Hatch said.

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All of these achievements were accomplished with the agency off the general fund. DEQ is fiscally self-sufficient, Hatch said, which requires the agency to be innovative, do more with less and use technology to provide services. Online forms for such things as permit applications and payment of fees and fines are available, she said, but she also emphasized that the agency carefully scrutinizes such forms. “We try to be efficient,” Hatch said. “We have to be efficient, but we also have to be effective.”

Following Hatch to the podium, DEQ Deputy Secretary Alex Appeaning, spoke about the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, a federally funded program that is administered through DEQ. The program provides low interest loans (.95 percent annually) to municipalities and parish governments to finance wastewater treatment improvements. “Wastewater is one of those non-sexy infrastructure components,” Appeaning said. But the benefits of cleaner water in the rivers, lakes and bayous of the state are undeniable, he said. That’s why the program has proven so popular and so successful.

Working in the program has taken Appeaning to the far-flung corners of Louisiana and every place in between. “You learn something about public service when you get out of that ivory tower and get down where the real people live,” Appeaning said. The program has brought $540 million to fund 125 municipal projects in 54 parishes in the last six years, he said. A better environment ensures a healthier economy, he said.

“DEQ is an agency that cares about people – protecting them and making sure they have jobs for economic development.”

The LSWA Environmental Conference is an annual event held at the Cajundome Conference Center in Lafayette. Each year members of the group, guests, regulatory officials, public officials and others gather to hear presentations about advances in solid waste technology, legislation and regulatory changes and other topics of interest. The conference also features displays by vendors who market equipment and services to facilitate solid waste operations.

Larry Baldwin and Suzanne Bordelon receive awards at LSWA

Two longtime DEQ employees received prestigious awards for service at the recent Louisiana Solid Waste Association’s Environmental Partnership of Business, Industry and Government Conference in Lafayette.

Larry Baldwin, regional manager for the DEQ Northeast, Northwest and Kisatchie Central offices was awarded the 2014 Bentley Mackay, Jr. Award for the Most Outstanding Solid Waste Professional of the year. This award is for the most outstanding environmental professional in the area of Solid Waste Management in the state of Louisiana. It is selected by the Board of Certification and Training. The Bentley B. Mackay, Jr. award has been awarded annually to solid waste professionals since 1998. Nominations for this award must be submitted by a member of the Board of Certification and Training.

Larry Baldwin, DEQ Regional Manager, receives his award from Terrance Stewart, member of the Board of Certification

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Baldwin has been employed by the state for more than 30 years, 28 of them with DEQ. During his tenure at DEQ, Baldwin has been an inspector in the Solid Waste Division, a supervisor in the Surveillance Division at the Northeast Regional Office and in 2009 was promoted to Regional Manager. He now manages the Northeast Regional Office in Monroe, the Northwest Regional Office in Shreveport and the Kisatchie Central office in Pineville.

Suzanne Bordelon, DEQ environmental project manger, receives her award from Bill Mollere, president of LSWA and Gary Bonvillan, member of the Board of Certification.

Suzanne Bordelon, DEQ environmental program analyst, received an award from the Louisiana Solid Waste Association and the Board of Certification and Training for Solid Waste Management Operators for many years of dedicated service. Bordelon works with the Board of Certification assisting landfill operators in obtaining the certification required by DEQ to operate Type II, II-A and III landfills. She has been in that position since 1997. The Board of Certification, which is made up of members from the Police Jury Association, Municipal Association, private industry, the Solid Waste Management Association, as well as a DEQ ex-officio member, meets quarterly to review and approve applications for those operators for which exams have been administered by Bordelon. She works closely with the Certification Board and the LSWA Board in provide continuing education for those operators, once certified

Bordelon has been employed with DEQ for almost 22 years and works in the Office of Environmental Services.

"DEQ takes great pride in the quality of the employees that serve the state of Louisiana in many capacities," DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch said. "These two employees exemplify the very best in work ethic and service."

Envirothon

Eight eager teams of high school students arrived bright and early at the Botanic Gardens at the LSU AgCenter to participate in the daylong 2014 Louisiana Envirothon. The Envirothon is a challenging environmental competition, in which students grades 6 – 12 can compete. It tests the students on their knowledge of aquatic resources, forestry, land use, wildlife, soil and current environmental topics. It is a hands-on competition and the students participate in training sessions with their advisors before the event.

After breakfast, the teams were deployed to several stations to be tested on their knowledge of the various subjects. For example, at the soils station the students go into a pit to identify types of soil layers. The teams work together to complete the testing and the teams also work together on an oral presentation on a current environmental issue. This year it was Sustainable Local Agriculture/Locally Grown and Simsboro High School finished first in that part of the competition. The other teams that scored highest in other areas were Aquatics: Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Gamma; Forestry: Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Alpha; Soils: Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Gamma; Wildlife: Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Alpha; Current Issue-Sustainable Local Agriculture: Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Alpha & Beta.

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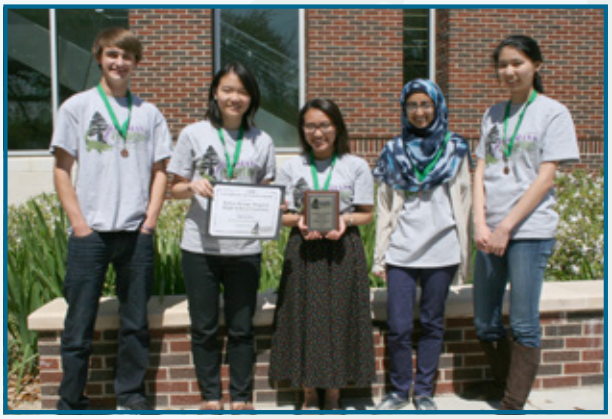
The winning teams were: Baton Rouge Magnet High School- Alpha, first place; Louisiana School for Math, Science Arts-Blue, second place; and third place, Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Gamma. The teams received cash and prizes totaling over $1500.

Participating teams were Acadiana High School, Lafayette- Marie Trahan, advisor; Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Alpha, Baton Rouge- Laurie Font, advisor; Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Beta, Baton Rouge-Laurie Font, advisor; Baton Rouge Magnet High School-Gamma, Baton Rouge-Laurie Font, advisor; Live Oak High School, Denham Springs-Clint Gates, advisor; Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts- Blue, Natchitoches- Dr. Allison Landry, advisor; Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts- Gold, Natchitoches- Dr. Allison Landry, advisor; and Simsboro High School, Simsboro- Marty Cantrell, advisor.

For more information on the Envirothon please go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/envirothon and like us on Facebook. You may also contact laenvirothon@gmail.com.

First Place Team
Baton Rouge Magnet High - Alpha

Second Place Team
Louisiana School for Math, Science and Arts - Blue



Third Place Team
Baton Rouge Magnet High - Gamma

All teams that participated in the 2014 Louisiana Envirothon.

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Citizens, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, Tangipahoa planning and public works team up to clean up Ponchatoula Creek

Protecting our state's waterways is a full time job, shared by several state agencies and the citizens of Louisiana, Recently, local parish government, citizens and a nonprofit got together to do just that.

On Saturday, April 5, the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation partnered with Tangipahoa Parish citizen Brandon Hayes and Tangipahoa Parish's Planning and Public Works departments to perform a litter pickup on Ponchatoula Creek. A group of about a dozen volunteers with six boats launched from the Wadesboro Road Launch at the southern end of Ponchatoula Creek.

Over a 12-hour span, the group picked up everything from small floatable items such as cups to large refrigerators and tires. By the end of the cleanup, the group had gathered three trash trailers of garbage plus a large pile of tires, all weighing a total of 4,200 pounds. The trash was taken to the Tangipahoa Parish landfill. Since litter is an ongoing issue in Ponchatoula Creek, Hayes, the LPBF and Tangipahoa Parish are also tracking down the input locations for the trash and trying projects to catch the floatable litter using booms.

When you see what an impact that this kind of partnership can have on the waterways, it is apparent that Louisiana's rivers, bayous, streams and lakes need all the help they can get.

A boom near the shore captures just some of the litter and trash that is thrown into the water.

Andrea Bourgeois-Calvin with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, and litter and logs fished out of Ponchatoula Creek.

Even the youngest citizens can help protect our waterways and environment in Louisiana.

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DEQ and partners help train new businesses in safety

Change can be jarring when you relocate to a new place. You may think you know what to expect, but reality might overwhelm you. If you're coming from say, Michigan, to Louisiana, you might have been warned that summers are hot here. But "hot" doesn't quite describe what you will experience in Louisiana in August.

The same is true for businesses. Good businesses have done thorough research before relocating, but even then "wind and rain" models might not prepare them for what a Louisiana hurricane can bring. The Stephenson Disaster Management Institute (SDMI) at LSU has entered into a partnership with State Police, Parish Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP) directors and DEQ to establish the Industry Emergency Management Orientation initiative.

SDMI Director of Business Development, Pat Santos, center standing, speaks to representatives from Methanex Corporation.

This initiative is designed to introduce petro-chemical companies that are new to Louisiana to local emergency management processes and protocols as well as to make company officials aware of special conditions unique to Louisiana. The orientation sessions began in March in Ascension Parish and paired company decision makers with emergency management professionals from participating partners.

Evita Lagarde, administrator for assessment at DEQ, and Cheryl Nolan, DEQ assistant secretary for Environmental Compliance, joined State Police representatives in a discussion with representative of Methanex Corporation, a company that is disassembling two methanol plants it operates in Chile to ship and reassemble in Geismar where the first of them is scheduled to begin operations by the end of the year.

"Their goal is to go out and help with educating a lot of the facilities. We have a lot of new industries coming into the state, and some of these people are probably not familiar with what happens with hurricanes and with flooding because if they're from another country or another part of the United States. Maybe they're used to other types of natural disasters, maybe not hurricanes. They're hoping to go out, explain to them the incident command center and how all the different players are involved," Lagarde said of SDMI.

"The first group we presented to, a lot of the people they hired were local so they were familiar with what they needed to do. But that's not always going to be the case with a lot of the target industries they hit." Lagarde said. "Economic development having lured a lot of companies to expand (in) or come to Louisiana, they are trying to prepare them for the unique challenges they may face here."

Sometimes the things that companies need to pay special attention to are not things that are readily apparent, Lagarde said. "One of the big things we noticed was loss of records from some of the flooding events. People didn't

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maintain good records. I guess they assumed that everything would be on the exterior of your building -- it's kind of obvious that you should anchor down your tanks or chain down anything that is not permanently affixed (in place), but we also talked about protecting paper records, hard drives and maintaining backup copies in a secure location."

Before Katrina, Lagarde said, records were not such an issue. "Now we go out and a lot of people say 'We don't have any records.'"

"We went through some basic things: maintaining power, communications," Lagarde said. The DEQ representatives emphasized things businesses can do to maintain communications with their employees, she said. During hurricane events, landlines may go out. Cell phones can also be affected.

"Any time you get disaster response information out to businesses ahead of an event, that's a win-win," Nolan said. "DEQ wants to help save lives and militate against disaster losses by helping businesses be prepared. SDMI has provided an excellent venue to achieve that goal through Industry Emergency Management Orientation."

"What we are trying to do is to give an introduction to some of the industry partners who are setting up here," said Lexie Andrews, project manager at Stephenson's Center for Business Preparedness. "We involved DEQ because we believe they would be able to give an orientation to their processes during those type of events."

Ascension Parish to hold Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day

Ascension Parish is holding its 2014 Household Hazardous Materials Collection Day on Saturday, May 10, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Lamar Dixon Expo Center, 9039 Landry Road, Gonzales.

They will be accepting tires, batteries, electronic equipment, cell phones, fluorescent bulbs, home and garden chemicals, latex and oil paint, thinners and varnishes, small quantities of scrap metal, televisions and small propane tanks.

They will NOT accept explosives, radioactive materials, medical waste, asbestos, school lab waste, commercial waste, paper, magazines, newspaper, cardboard, aluminum cans, plastic, glass, hurricane debris and woody waste.

For more information call Don Hysell 225-450-1308.

HHMCD in Ascension is sponsored by DEQ, Shell Chemical, Home Depot, BASF, Wal-Mart, Ascension Moving and Storage, Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office, Gonzales Fire Department District 1, Leblanc's Payless Food Store and Republic Services.

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EnviroFlash – the easy way to have current air quality information

EnviroFlash, DEQ's free automatic notification system, delivers air quality information to you in a timely and convenient manner. Since May is Air Quality Awareness Month and the start of ozone season, knowing the air quality is important in planning your activities. Through EnviroFlash, information is available to you daily basis or on demand.

The EnviroFlash alert system can deliver the information to you on your phone or in your email. It is easy to subscribe and once you subscribe you will receive current information on air quality. When the ozone level is high or if the particle pollution is expected to be high, EnviroFlash sends an Air Quality Awareness alert with AQ information and actions you can take. The system is also set up to send you notifications of unusual events, such as fires, that might affect your air quality.

To stay better informed about ozone, particulate pollution and other air quality matters, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality encourages the general public sign up for the EnviroFlash system in their area. The areas are Baton Rouge, Shreveport, New Orleans, Alexandria, Lake Charles, Monroe, Thibodaux and Lafayette. These are the Web addresses to sign up statewide:

http://Batonrougearea.enviroflash.info
http://neworleansarea.enviroflash.info
http://shreveportarea.enviroflash.info
http://alexandriaarea.enviroflash.info
http://lakecharlesarea.enviroflash.info
http://monroearea.enviroflash.info
http://thibodauxarea.enviroflash.info
http://lafayettearea.enviroflash.info

"Hot weather increases the risk of elevated ozone levels," said Peggy Hatch, DEQ Secretary. "Because higher ozone and particle pollution can have an impact on public activity and health, we urge people to take advantage of the free EnviroFlash system. It's a simple way to stay informed and take appropriate steps to protect your health."

Ground level ozone forms when pollutants emitted by cars, industrial sources and other sources react chemically in the presence of sunlight. At ground level, ozone is a harmful air pollutant. During hot, sunny months, ozone becomes a greater concern. Hot, dry weather often means a higher chance of air pollution.

For more information on current air quality, go to the DEQ website, www.deq.louisiana.gov and the interactive EPA website www.airnow.gov. To sign up for EnviroFlash air quality notifications go to www.deq.louisiana.gov/enviroflash.

Press Conference Notice

You're invited to the DEQ Press Conference on Air Quality
Featuring EPA Region 6 Administrator, Ron Curry and DEQ Secretary Peggy Hatch

Wednesday, May 7, at 2 p.m.
DEQ Headquarters, Oliver Pollock Room
602 N. 5th St., Baton Rouge

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DEQ On The Move

John Dupre and Margo Moss, DEQ environmental scientists, demonstrate Walnut Bayou at the Dillard University Earth Day in New Orleans.

Davina Witte and John Dupre display Walnut Bayou at the Audubon Zoo Earth Fest in march of this year.

DEQ staff displayed Walnut Bayou at the Wetland Watchers Celebration at Bonne Carre in mid-April. Middle School Students from St Charles Parish are bused in to do some hands-on learning projects with many exhibitors. The event is sponsored yearly by the Harry Hurst Wetland Watchers group.

Three members of the Harry Hurst Wetland Watchers group were assigned to assist DEQ with Walnut Bayou at the Wetland Watcher's Celebration

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Who's Who At DEQ?

Cindy LaFosse – Emergency Response – Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

LaFosse began her career at DEQ in October 2000 as a secretary for the Radiological Emergency Planning (REP) group. December 2000, she was promoted to an Environmental Program Analyst in the Emergency Response/Single Point of Contact (ER/SPOC) section. LaFosse graduated from the University of Phoenix in 2006 with a degree in Business Management and was promoted to an Environmental Project Specialist in ER/SPOC.

Charlie Lato – Emergency Response – Single Point of Contact

Lato received a BA in Psychology from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond. He has been employed at DEQ for three years as an Environmental Program Analyst in the Emergency Response section working with Single Point of Contact (SPOC).

Lisa Miller – Emergency Response – Single Point of Contact

Miller has worked for DEQ for 23 years since 1991. She has served in various positions, such as working in the Underground Storage Tank Division and the Solid Waste Division. Miller worked for 20 years in Contract and Grants and received the Employee of the Year Award in 2002 for the Office of Management and Finance. She is now working in Emergency Response, Single Point of Contact.

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Louisiana Department Of Environmental Quality's Fourth Quarter Summaries

4th Quarter 2013 Enforcement Actions:
http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/Enforcement/EnforcementActions.aspx

4th Quarter 2013 Settlement Agreements:
http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/Enforcement/SettlementAgreements.aspx

4th Quarter 2013 Air Permits:
http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2922/Default.aspx

4th Quarter 2013 Water Permits:
http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/2899/Default.aspx

4th Quarter 2013 Solid and Hazardous Waste Permits:
http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/divisions/wastepermits.aspx