



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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For Immediate Release:
Jan.13, 2009

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Community celebrates a significant air quality achievement

BATON ROUGE – For the first time in Louisiana’s history, the state meets all federal ozone standards for the original one-hour standard and the eight-hour ozone standard that is in effect until 2010. To mark this occasion, the Department of Environmental Quality and others responsible for achieving this milestone held a celebration today at the DEQ headquarters in Baton Rouge.

Nearly 100 people attended the meeting to hear speakers affected by ozone attainment status present their commentary on the achievement.

The occasion marks the success of a collaborative effort that included DEQ, EPA, local industries, local governments, environmental groups, citizens and community leaders in bringing the five-parish Baton Rouge area into attainment. This achievement is an example of how the air quality has improved in the Baton Rouge area and throughout the state since the ozone standards were put into place. Twenty parishes were out of attainment in 1978.

“There has been a tremendous amount of effort and teamwork from the people represented in this room today to reach this achievement in air-quality,” DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett said. “I believe we will see a continued effort from all the leaders who have used their resources for the betterment of Louisiana and I foresee others getting on board in the near future. In the late 1970s there were 20 parishes out of attainment for the initial federal ozone standard. As the standard has gotten lower, the number of parishes out of attainment has dropped to its current status. That is truly an example of teamwork and progress.”

“Today Baton Rouge’s air is the cleanest it has been in over a generation,” said EPA Deputy Regional Administrator Larry Starfield. “Baton Rouge is breathing easier because of your steady efforts and teamwork directed toward this critical goal.”

Speakers commenting at the celebration were: East Baton Rouge Parish Mayor-President Melvin “Kip” Holden; Larry Starfield, Deputy Regional Administrator from EPA, Region 6; Dan Borne, President of the Louisiana Chemical Association; Steven Grissom, Deputy Secretary with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development; Adam Knapp with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber; and Harold Leggett, DEQ Secretary.