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LDEQ deploys MAMLs to Calcasieu Parish to perform air monitoring post-Hurricane Laura

BATON ROUGE – In the wake of Hurricane Laura, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has deployed two Mobile Air Monitoring Labs (MAML) and staff to Calcasieu Parish to support air monitoring efforts in the area. The monitoring data from the MAMLs is now available, real-time on the LDEQ website. While the monitoring systems remained intact through the storm, only one of the five monitoring sites LDEQ operates in the area sustained minor damage. Once the power is restored, the five stationary sites will be fully operational.

In the meantime, the MAMLs will allow LDEQ to sample and analyze air quality data on-site and in real-time. The vehicles are mounted on a 35-foot truck chassis with a custom body to house equipment, supplies and work gear with benches. They house gas chromatographs, reduced sulfur compounds analyzers, methane/nonmethane analyzers, and much more. MAMLs can test for all criteria pollutants -- ground-level ozone, particle pollution, lead, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxide, as well as hydrogen sulfide, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), methane, ammonia, speciated reduced sulfur compounds, speciated hydrocarbons and atmospheric mercury.

The data currently being collected is now available online via the following steps:

1. Visit the Air Monitoring and Data site at <https://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov/>.
2. Under the Current AQI Data heading, choose either Mobile Air Monitoring Lab #1 or #2 in the 'By Site' drop-down menu. Click 'Go.'
3. The information populated will indicate the reading, according to the Air Quality Index, for Fine Particulate Matter (PM2.5 and Sulphur Dioxide (SO2)).

The MAMLs monitor more than PM2.5* and Sulphur Dioxide. To see the comprehensive data for each MAML, take the following steps:

1. On the Air Monitoring and Data site, <https://airquality.deq.louisiana.gov/>, click 'Site Data' in the menu header.
2. Select either Mobile Air Monitoring Lab #1 or #2 in the 'Site' drop-down menu and enter the specified date into the 'Date' box.
3. The current data, hour by hour, will populate.

*Please note: The data has not been quality reviewed or validated. Continuous PM2.5 readings shown are not NAAQS comparable.

Corresponding screenshots for the step-by-step process can be found at <https://bit.ly/3ILyQfm>.

"We are glad to use the MAMLs to monitor ambient air quality while our ambient air-monitoring network is out of power. This is not the MAMLs' intended use, but they can do the job. We hope to have our monitoring system back up and running soon. Like so many others in the storm impact zone, we are awaiting the restoration of electric power," LDEQ Secretary Dr. Chuck Brown said.

Please remember to use the Air Quality Index when looking at the data for ozone, PM 2.5 or SO2. The Air Quality Index, or AQI, is EPA’s tool for communicating daily air quality. It uses color-coded categories and provides statements for each category that tell you about air quality in your area, which groups of people may be affected, and steps you can take to reduce your exposure to air pollution.

AQI Basics for Ozone and Particle Pollution			
Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

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An LDEQ MAML stationed on the McNeese State campus in Lake Charles, LA.