

# Hurricane Ida Report #7

## September 3, 2021

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At 11:20 am on September 3, 2021, EPA deployed the ASPECT air monitoring plane to assess industrial targets identified by the state of Louisiana following Hurricane Ida. A delay in the data for the initial flight was caused by computer issues. EPA will post the report and map of the initial flight to the public site when available.
- On September 1, 2021, FEMA issued the Mission Assignment for mobile drinking water lab support in Louisiana. Region 6 and Region 7 mobile labs were deployed on September 2, 2021.
- On August 31, 2021, FEMA issued a Mission Assignment for drinking water and wastewater subject matter experts to assist FEMA and the state. The two subject matter experts began their mission on September 1, 2021.
- As of 1:00 pm on September 3, 2021, EPA has received a total of 127 National Response Center (NRC) reports with 29 in EPA's Area of Responsibility (AOR) related to Hurricane Ida, of these 17 are air releases. None have required EPA response actions beyond assessments by the Phone Duty Officer.
- LDEQ reported that seventeen of their ambient air monitoring sites had stopped polling, due to power outages as of September 3, 2021.
- Per the Louisiana Department of Health, some water outages and boil water advisories may not be captured due to lack of communications with the water systems.

Status *	Systems Affected	Population Served
Water Outages	131	191,853
Boil Water Advisories	187	976,065

\* As of 10:00 am on September 3, 2021

- LDEQ and the Louisiana State Police are continuing their Rapid Needs Assessments throughout the impacted area. Assessments of drinking water, wastewater and industrial facilities are ongoing. No major issues have been reported to date.

### SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS

- The Office of External Affairs (ORAX) is working with the HQ Public Information Officer on press inquiries. ORAX continues to post information to social media.
- On September 3, 2021, OCTEA held a meeting with EJ stakeholders to update them on activities that EPA is conducting after Hurricane Ida. The meeting also provided EPA an opportunity to hear and discuss concerns on EJ related environmental issues associated with the hurricane. Information shared from stakeholders includes:
  - Many stakeholders are still without electricity, water, internet and cell service and had no way of participating on the call.
  - Awareness was raised of the need to alert emergency response staff of the safety concerns regarding chemical debris and containers of potential toxic products in the Port Fourchon area. There is concern that responders may not know what they are

- walking into in this hard-hit area when it becomes accessible.
  - With regards to water monitoring it would be helpful to know what is being tested for and what are the lower detection limits.
- A public response site has been created at <https://response.epa.gov/HurricaneIda>.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) activated the ESF #10 desk at the Regional Response Coordination Center and the State of Louisiana Emergency Operation Center on Saturday, August 28, 2021. EPA Region 6 is staffing both positions virtually.
- The Region 6 Air Enforcement Branch reached out to 10 facilities that reported air releases to the National Response Center. Follow-up questions to the NRC reports were sent to these facilities. The facilities have 7 days to respond to EPA once they receive the questions.
- The EPA Remedial Program monitored 23 total NPL sites pre- and post-hurricane. All 23 were cleared and none required action.
- On August 27, 2021, Office of Regional Counsel (ORC) received a Force Majeure notice from the Valero (Meraux) Refinery in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana. The notice provides that the refinery will shut down its Community Air Monitoring Station on Ventura Drive in order to protect the equipment. The refinery provided the notice pursuant to the terms of the Consent Decree it is under. On September 2, 2021, ORC received an update to the notice, the facility still lacks power, therefore, the air monitoring has not resumed.
- On August 31, 2021, the counsel for the New Orleans Water and Sewerage Board communicated with ORC regarding the continuing bypass discharge of unknown amounts into the Mississippi River due to generator failure. Counsel for the Water and Sewerage Board stated a formal, Force Majeure notice in writing would be forthcoming.
- Fourteen intakes associated with 11 drinking water facilities along the Mississippi River are near the discharge by the New Orleans Water and Sewage Board. The Louisiana Department of Health has notified the water systems downstream of the release. Generators have been delivered to the plant; however, the bypass valves will remain open until the plant is fully operational.

## **COORDINATION WITH STATE AGENCIES**

- EPA is participating in the daily Hurricane Taskforce calls with the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), LDEQ, Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office (LOSCO) and the USCG to discuss storm preparations and resource availability.