

# Hurricane Ida Report #13

## September 9, 2021

**INCIDENT OVERVIEW** Hurricane Ida made landfall August 29, 2021, at approximately 12:00 pm west of Grand Isle, Louisiana. High winds and storm surge affected the coastal Parishes of Louisiana, leading to widespread power and communications outages throughout Southeast Louisiana. Ida produced heavy rains across the central Gulf Coast from southeast Louisiana to coastal Mississippi, Alabama, as well as the Lower Mississippi Valley resulting in considerable flash, urban, small stream, and riverine flooding.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On September 9, 2021, EPA began roving air monitoring at priority locations as determined by LDEQ. Air sampling started upwind and downwind at Shell Norco and Marathon-Garyville.
- As of September 9, 2021, ASPECT has completed the assigned mission of assessing industrial targets identified by the state of Louisiana following Hurricane Ida. On September 8, 2021, ASPECT assessed 18 facilities on the LDEQ priority list plus the Phillips 66 pipeline in St. Charles Parish, where an earlier release had been reported. ASPECT remains on stand-by for future missions as deemed necessary by LDEQ.
- As of 1:00 pm on September 9, 2021, EPA has received a total of 196 National Response Center (NRC) reports with 47 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. As of September 9, 2021, EPA will no longer be receiving reports from the US Coast Guard AOR.
- EPA is remotely monitoring two facilities with on-going air releases, ExxonMobil Baton Rouge and Shell Norco, and an oil spill in Lake Salvador which is currently being responded to by the responsible party.
- LDEQ reported that 7 of their ambient air monitoring sites have stopped polling due to power outages as of September 9, 2021. LDEQ's Mobile Air Monitoring Labs (MAMLs) are positioned in Norco and Marrero.
- Drinking Water System Status

Status *	Systems	Population Served
Water Outages	27	41,298
Boil Water Advisories	205	574,395
Cleared of Boil Water Advisories	91	551,810

\* As of 10:00 am on September 9, 2021

- LDEQ completed their initial Rapid Needs Assessments of the impacted area. At this time an ESF #10 Mission Assignment to EPA for assistance with orphan containers and spills is not anticipated. Assessments of drinking water, wastewater and industrial facilities are ongoing. No major issues have been reported to date.
- On September 9, 2021, EPA approved the No Action Assurance (NAA) request from LDEQ. The NAA will help address current fuel shortages resulting from storm damage and increased demand post storm for storm relief efforts.

## SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS

- 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.
- 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.
- ORAX posted EPA links to Public Service Announcements about emergencies and disasters to <https://response.epa.gov/HurricaneIda>. These links are in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.
- ORAX will publish a news release on September 9, 2021, "EPA Expands Air Monitoring Efforts in Communities Impacted by Hurricane Ida." It will be shared with media, Congressional members and EJ management for distribution to stakeholders.
- The Region 6 Air Enforcement Branch sent follow-up questions to facilities that reported air releases to the NRC. The facilities have 7 days to respond to EPA.
- OCTEA sent stakeholders the latest report on EPA's activities.
- On September 9, 2021, the Acting Regional Administrator (RA) attended OCTEA's meeting with EJ Stakeholders and updated them on activities within the Region regarding Hurricane Ida. The Acting RA provided updates on the status of air monitors, reported that Valero's H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> monitors were back up and reported New Orleans sewage bypass into the Mississippi River had ceased. He also talked about how EPA is following up on spill reports and will be issuing information requests to those facilities and how ASPECT will be on standby for facilities' startups. Information shared from stakeholders is below:
  - Stakeholders are concerned that comment periods are on-going, new comment periods are being announced, and concerned that regulations due to expire are being overlooked. The Acting RA will bring the issue forward regarding an extension of comment and review periods.
  - Stakeholder asked if access to all the ASPECT photos could be made available. It was also requested that the name and location of the facility be included on the photos.
  - A representative from Mary Queen of Vietnam brought forth concerns regarding Southern LA, where it may be month(s) before the power is back on. Language barriers are also a challenge faced by the community.
- A public response site has been created at <https://response.epa.gov/HurricaneIda>.
- As Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) transitions their activities to the field, the need for Liaison Officers from EPA has decreased, so as of September 4, 2021, only one EPA staff will serve as a liaison to FEMA. The position will continue to be staffed virtually.
- 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 provided 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.
- A Force Majeure notice from New Orleans Water and Sewerage Board was received on September 3, 2021. The notice provides that the Sewerage and Water Board does not yet know the extent of damage sustained as a result of Hurricane Ida.
- EPA received a Force Majeure notice of a two-week delay from the Chair of the Star Lake Canal Cooperating Parties (SLCCP) pursuant to EPA's 09/26/2016 Remedial Design Administrative Order on Consent was received by EPA. The notice acknowledges

that Hurricane Ida did not impact the Star Lake Canal Superfund Site near Port Neches, Texas. However, the Pre-Final Design work cannot be completed because the SLCCP contractors, who are located in Baton Rouge, LA, cannot deploy due to storm damage.

- On September 8, 2021, ORC received an informal notice that the Phillips 66 Belle Chasse Refinery, Louisiana refinery shutdown in advance of Hurricane Ida's landfall and that it has remained shutdown since. The informal notice claims a more formal, written Force Majeure notice would be forthcoming no later than September 27, 2021.
- The SPod air monitors at the Denka Performance Elastomers may have the ability to sample for chloroprene as early as September 9, 2021. The SPods are powered by solar panels and batteries so the power disruption is not an issue. The two SPods taken down prior to Ida will also be reinstalled.

#### **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.