



Water Quality Program

Wastewater Assistance

What is “Wastewater”?



Wastewater is water that has been used by humans and picked up contaminants through its use. Wastewater includes water used in homes and offices (including sewer), car washes and other wash down facilities, industrial water uses, cooling or heating water, and agriculture to name a few. For us at the LPBF, tracking down sources of poorly treated and untreated wastewater (particularly sewer) has become an important part of cleaning our waterways.

On the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, in rapidly developing parishes such as St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Livingston, Iberville, and Ascension, many homes and businesses are responsible for their own wastewater (mainly sewer) treatment, using small, individual treatment plants. Many times these small plants are not functioning properly and can release contaminated water into the rivers. While one plant doesn't release a lot of water, the combined effect of many plants releasing contaminated water leads to the river becoming high in bacteria counts and low in dissolved oxygen levels. This is seen on many north shore rivers.

LPBF Assists Wastewater Plant Owners

For over ten years the LPBF has assisted businesses and homes with these small treatment plants. We work with the plant owner to understand the parts of the plant and how it functions. We assess the plant to see if repairs need to be made and we guide the plant owners as repairs are made. Sometimes a wastewater treatment plant is not permitted properly, in that case we work with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's Small Business Small Community Assistance Program to have the system permitted properly.

To date, we have worked with well over 800 small wastewater treatment plants. They are now functioning properly and not contributing wastewater to the rivers. With the treatment plants functioning properly, we have seen measurable improvements on at least ten rivers in St. Tammany and Tangipahoa Parishes.

If you have any questions about your individual wastewater treatment plant, please contact the LPBF Wastewater Technician, Ronny Carter, at 985-320-3062.





WWTP Assistance

- Assist owners/operators of small WWTPs with correct functioning of plant.
- Assist municipalities in location and correction of sources of infiltration and inflow and promote the use of flow-proportional disinfection
- Help owners/operators obtain and manage LPDES discharge permits- in cooperation with *LDEQ's Small Business Assistance Program*.

WWTP Issues

- Have found that most plants do not need to go to enforcement. This is an **EDUCATION** issue.
 - Installers do not adequately educate owner on plant operation
 - Businesses change hands and sometimes change type of business
 - Developer builds plant then sells it to subdivision.
- The majority of plants encountered were permitted to be built by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals but did not receive a permit to discharge into waters of the state from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.
- Work with Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, and the parishes to find plants without discharge permits.
- Recommend flow-prop disinfection on larger systems to maintain adequate disinfection in high flow event.
- Work with municipalities on aging collection systems and stormwater infiltration and inflow issues