



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

Concerns Regarding the Effectiveness and Timeliness of LDEQ's Clean Air Act Compliance/Enforcement in the Lake Charles Region: Environmental Integrity Project Letter

10/07/2026

The Environmental Integrity Project ("EIP") sent a September 23rd letter to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's ("LDEQ") Secretary Courtney J. Burdette with the subject:

Concerns Regarding the Effectiveness and Timeliness of LDEQ's Clean Air Act Compliance and Enforcement in the Lake Charles Region ("Letter").

EIP states that it reviewed LDEQ's Clean Air Act administrative compliance and enforcement records for 23 industrial facilities in the Lake Charles region.

The Letter states that EIP's review examined:

... longstanding concerns regarding enforcement timeliness identified by the Louisiana Legislative Auditor in 2021 and evaluated the effectiveness of LDEQ's recent enforcement response in the Lake Charles region.

Concerns expressed by EIP regarding the compliance and enforcement program include:

- Unreasonable delays in identifying violations and taking enforcement action.
- Formal enforcement actions that do not require specific corrective measures.
- Heavy reliance on self-reported violations and warning letters.

EIP argues that the above can:

- Allow violations to continue.
- Weaken incentives for facilities to invest in compliance.
- Reduce the effectiveness of enforcement in preventing future violations.

EIP states in regard to the enforcement actions and informal actions in the Lake Charles region:

- LDEQ often identified and addressed violations years after they occurred.
- LDEQ's 365-day enforcement deadline does not address unreasonable delays before referral.
- Delayed enforcement of self-reported violations.
- Delayed enforcement of substantially older violations.
- Delayed identification of violations that EPA considers high priority.

- Delays can jeopardize LDEQ's ability to obtain civil penalties.
- LDEQ's formal enforcement actions did not require specific measures to correct the underlying causes of violations.
- LDEQ relied on warning letters in response to recurring compliance problems.

The Letter concludes with 9 recommendations that it states would ensure LDEQ's environmental programs are operated effectively and provide adequate protection of human health and the environment.

A copy of the Letter can be found [here](#).