DEQ reminds residents, businesses to make preparations in Morganza Spillway area

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is reminding residents and businesses located in and around the Morganza Spillway area to make preparations in advance of the potential river flooding in the region.

“As we move forward into the traditionally wet spring months ongoing efforts to secure properties and equipment should proceed as a priority. DEQ will continue to conduct focused surveillance and outreach in the Mississippi, Red and Atchafalaya Basin areas prone to flooding” said Tom Killeen, Administrator of DEQ’s Inspection Division.

Even though a determination has been made to keep the Morganza Spillway closed at this time, there is still a potential for high water conditions in and around the area. As such, DEQ is advising residents and businesses to:

- Secure all movable objects, such as boats, above-ground tanks, lawnmowers, ATVs, outdoor furniture, BBQ grills, etc.
- Turn off water, gas and electrical power to the residence or business
- Ensure your local storm drains are free of debris
- Ensure pets and livestock are relocated to higher ground
- Be sure to take important documents with you, along with water, medicine, portable radio and spare batteries
- Remain in contact with local media outlets for updates on road closures, weather and safety issues

Residents and business owners should avoid any contact with chemicals, pollution, hazardous materials or loose containers in and around floodwater areas. Reports on any oil spills or chemical releases should be made to the National Response Center at 800-424-8802 or the DEQ hotline at 225-219-3640 or 888-763-5424. If it is an emergency, call 911.

Please review the below websites for further information:

Information on the current river flood outlook, visit: http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lmrfc/

Information on flood preparation: http://www.epa.gov/natural-disasters/flooding

Information on how to plan and prepare for weather-related events, visit: http://getagameplan.org/

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