

HURRICANE UNIFIED COMMAND



VERMILION PARISH

October 2006

COMPLETION REPORT

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT A GLANCE	
11	Drinking Water Plant Assessments
15	Industry Damage Assessments
56,224	Hazardous Waste Containers Collected*
1,180	Electronic Items Collected
2,897	White Goods Collected
822	Pounds of Freon Extracted
13,488	Pounds of Ammunition/Explosives Collected
376,728	Pounds of Cumulative Waste Disposed*
16	School Lab Assessments

Since September 2005, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) have worked together to address environmental hazards from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to help Vermilion Parish recover.

One of EPA and LDEQ's first priorities was to ensure residents returning to all the cities affected by the hurricanes had safe drinking water. Throughout Vermilion Parish, 11 assessments were conducted at drinking water facilities. Similarly, wastewater treatment plants were assessed for damage.

Next, EPA and LDEQ turned to federally-permitted facilities. The agencies conducted interviews and site visits at hazardous waste storage, transfer or disposal facilities. Facilities in southern Louisiana were addressed, including 15 facilities in Vermilion Parish. The site visits and interviews established that employees could re-

turn to work at facilities operating in accordance with federal and state regulations.

Because of concerns that damaged chemicals in school biology and chemistry laboratories could cause a health hazard, EPA and LDEQ conducted assessments at schools in southern Louisiana. Some chemical containers were found to be damaged by the hurricanes, by flood waters and/or from heat exposure. EPA and LDEQ, in coordination with the Louisiana State Police and local fire departments, removed dangerous chemicals from schools in southern Louisiana. Sixteen schools in Vermilion Parish were assessed; chemicals were removed from seven of them.

Paint, computers, washing machines, and refrigerators in homes under normal circumstances are not usually considered hazardous. However, when hundreds of thousands of these items become waste products at the same time, the hazardous components in them could create problems. To help remove these materials from the waste going to Louisiana's municipal landfills, EPA and LDEQ collected 60,301 units consisting of appliances, hazardous waste containers, and home electronics. The hazardous materials were recycled or disposed in landfills designed to handle them safely. In Vermilion



Parish, EPA and LDEQ have disposed of 376,728 pounds of waste as of September 30, 2006.

In response to community concerns about potential harm from firearms, ammunition and explosives, EPA began collecting these materials for appropriate disposal in January 2006. As of September 30, 2006, in southwestern and south-central Louisiana Parishes, 13,488 pieces of ammunition, explosives, and other similar items have been collected, as well as 224 firearms.



Above: EPA emptying a refrigerator at a collection site.

*Reflects more than Vermilion Parish activities.