Summary

- A water body becomes impaired when it cannot be safely used for recreation, drinking, fishing, or agricultural purposes due to pollutants in the water;
- 2. Nutrient pollution can be harmful to human health if the waterway is used for swimming or drinking water.
- Pathogens are the most commonly reported cause of water pollution. People can become ill by eating contaminated fish or shellfish or swimming in waters with these microbes;
- 4. The LDEQ list all the impaired water bodies in the state in a list called the 303(d) list;
- Swimming advisories are usually caused by sewage contamination entering a water body and
- Fishing advisories are determined by the concentrations of mercury in the fish in an area. The amount of fish that can be eaten is determined based on health effects.





Pictures from the following web sites: urbanspoon.com and www.flickr.com.

Lafayette Airport Commission

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Protecting the Vermillion River: Your Recreational Area

Part 22 – Impaired Water Bodies

Lafayette Airport Commission Lafayette Regional Airport





Picture from the following web site: nonpoint.deq.louisiana.gov

What makes a water body impaired?

A water body becomes impaired when it cannot be safely used for recreation, drinking, fishing, or agricultural purposes due to pollutants in the water. The EPA and States determine the uses of the water body, set the limits on pollutants and test water bodies to determine if they meet the limits for their uses.



What are some examples of causes of water body impairment?

High levels of NUTRIENTS can cause too much aquatic plant growth and algae blooms, sometimes choking off waterways and causing oxygen-poor conditions that can kill fish and other aquatic life. Nutrient pollution can be harmful to human health if the waterway is used for swimming or drinking water. Some sources of nutrients to a water body are fertilizer application, animal farms, or sewage discharges.

PESTICIDES such as herbicides and insecticides include a variety of toxic chemicals. They can easily enter waters through direct application, drift from airborne applications or runoff. Timing and amount of pesticide used, rainfall and how fast the pesticide degrades all affect how much of it may reach the water. Insecticide and herbicide effects on waters can be significant. Pesticides can affect the health of aquatic insects, fish, plants, and animals that are exposed. Aquatic insects are susceptible to insecticides,

affecting the food supply for fish. Fish can be killed or their growth and reproduction rate slowed. Most of the time, the amount of pesticide to which people are exposed is too small to pose a risk.

PATHOGENS or bacteria and other microbes are potential disease-causing organisms from human or animal wastes that enter waters through sewage discharges, farm manure runoff, and wildlife waste. Pathogens are the most commonly reported cause of water pollution nationwide. People can become ill by eating contaminated fish or shellfish or swimming in waters with high levels of these microbes.

Information in this section from EPA document: http://www.epa.gov/waters/ir/34PARENTATTAINSDESCRIPTIONS.pdf.



What water bodies in the State are impaired?

The LDEQ list all the impaired water bodies in the state in a list called the 303(d) list. The list is updated every two years.

The 303(d) list along with the state's water quality report can be found at the following website: <u>http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/tabid/98/Default.as</u> px.

Where can I find information on water bodies in my area?

Sampling data that the LDEQ collects is available on their website at the following address: http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/DIVISIONS/WaterPer mits/WaterQualityAssessment/AmbientWaterQualityMoni toringData.aspx The LDEQ has about 600 sites throughout the state that it collects water samples from. Samples are collected monthly at 100 of those sites a year. Another 20 or so sampling sites in addition to the 100 sites are sampled every year to look at long term trends in water quality.

Is there a place I can go to find information on fishing and swimming advisories?

The Department of Health and Hospitals along with the LDEQ, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry work together on issuing swimming and fishing advisories.

Fishing advisories are determined by collecting samples in areas of potential contamination to monitor the concentrations of mercury in the fish in the area. The amount of fish that can be consumed is established using health based determinations.

Swimming advisories are usually caused by sewage contamination entering a water body. The sewage impacts can come from poorly operating septic systems, direct sewage discharges and operations of animal holding areas.

Information on fishing and swimming advisories can be found at the following website: <u>http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/PROGRAMS/Mercur</u> yInitiative/FishConsumptionandSwimmingAdvisories.aspx



Picture from the following web site: new.dhh.louisiana.gov