



EARTH DAY POSTER COMPETITION

BACKGROUND

In the City of Baton Rouge, Parish of East Baton Rouge (City-Parish), anything drained from a household sink, tub, dishwasher, washing machine, or flushed down a toilet is considered wastewater. Most wastewater flows from residential areas and businesses through a system of pipes and pump stations until it eventually reaches one of two treatment plants, where it must be cleaned and treated before being discharged into the Mississippi River. The City-Parish's Department of Environmental Services (DES) serves a critical role in this process by ensuring that all wastewater is collected and transported to the treatment plants where it can be cleaned and treated properly before it is released into the river – an important resource for Louisiana and home to a diverse and vast population of wildlife.

THE PROBLEM

There are many substances or items, such as fats, oils, and grease (FOG) and plastic items or rags, that cause significant issues and harm to the Baton Rouge wastewater system – especially when residents or businesses put these items down the drain or flush them down the toilet, or when restaurants dispose of FOG substances incorrectly. For example, warm fats and grease *in their liquid form* easily flow through piping; however, when these liquids cool and solidify, they form clogs in our wastewater system's piping that require work crews to go out, find the clog, and ultimately clear it so that wastewater can flow freely again. Plastic and cloth items can also contribute to clogging and problems with flow.

POSTER COMPETITION GUIDELINES

DES is asking for your help in educating the public on ways to help prevent clogs or back-ups in our wastewater system through a parish-wide poster competition. For example, students may create a poster that illustrates the path that wastewater takes from our homes, through piping, to the treatment plant, and ultimately into the mighty Mississippi River. The poster should emphasize the need for our Baton Rouge residents and businesses to be diligent in avoiding discarding FOG and other items down the drain that should not go into the wastewater system.

Most importantly, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. All middle and high school students in East Baton Rouge Parish are eligible to participate. Multiple submissions from the same school are allowed and encouraged.

2. Posters can be created by one or multiple students.
3. Use standard-size poster board only (22 x 28 inches).
4. On the back of the poster, please include a brief description (300 words or less) that explains your poster design and any ideas you have for preventing harmful substances from entering the wastewater system. This description should be typed and printed on a regular sheet of paper and glued to the back of the paper. At the top of the description, please include the names of group members, school name, grade, and contact information (phone and email) for one group member.
5. Illustrations must be hand-drawn or painted. Lettering and the brief essay can be printed from computer.
6. Illustrations should cover most of the poster board, with “empty space” or white space kept to a minimum.
7. The poster should be creative and eye-catching in its illustration and clearly demonstrate objectives with carefully chosen statements, diagrams, or images that are easily understood by the general public. It can also include (but is not required to include) creative or catchy phrases to be used in public education and outreach efforts.

Posters must be completed and turned in **by Tuesday, April 18th**. Posters can be dropped off at the DES Office on the 8th floor of City Hall (222 St. Louis Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802) between 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. or you can email Michael Lowe with the Department of Environmental Services at mlowe@brgov.com to schedule a pick-up.

All submissions will be displayed at the DES booth during Baton Rouge’s Earth Day celebration at the Baton Rouge Zoo from 9:30 – 5:00 p.m. on Saturday April 22nd. All submissions will be judged by a panel of experts based on the guidelines listed above. Winners will be notified by Monday April 24th.

The winning group’s school will receive a proclamation from Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome. This proclamation will be presented to students from the winning group at a future Metro Council meeting. Additionally, the winning group’s school will receive a \$600 Amazon gift card to be used for science classroom supplies. This gift card is made possible by generous donations from the following companies:



The winning poster will be placed on display at the Louisiana Arts and Science Museum and may also be used by the DES for future public outreach and education efforts on this important topic.

For any questions about this poster competition, please contact Michael Lowe at mlowe@brgov.com.