



CITY OF KENNER

PRESS RELEASE

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KENNER RECEIVES KUDOS FOR SEWERAGE SYSTEM REHABILITATION PROGRESS

Kenner, LA. - Significant progress has been made on Kenner's citywide sewer repair program, and top officials with the state Department of Environmental Quality couldn't be any happier with work completed or underway since Mayor Michael Yenni took office in 2010.

At Thursday night's Kenner City Council meeting, DEQ officials were in the audience to listen to an update on Kenner's sewerage system that was so badly in disrepair that the department issued a compliance order in 2009 directing Kenner to make the necessary repairs or face potential of fines and penalties.

The bulk of the work is being paid for with a pair of extremely low-interest loans from the state, along with a bond issue dedicated to the sewerage system.

"I certainly bring a good report with me today, and I am very pleased to announce that on behalf of my colleagues and DEQ, with respect to the work that's been done on the sewer projects, we are very pleased," said Deputy DEQ Secretary Alex Appeaning.

He added that the DEQ is "more than satisfied with the progress this municipality is making under the leadership of this mayor, this administration, and this council to get Kenner into environmental compliance, and that is something you should be very proud of."

The sewer program has been divided into two phases. So far, 15 lift stations have been built or rehabilitated, along with the construction of seven new force mains and the purchase of six permanent generators and 16 portable generators in Phase 1. Another 13 projects are either being designed, under construction or already completed under Phase 2, according to updates provided by Rob Delaune of Digital Engineering and Sid Trouard of GEC.

Sam Phillips, assistant secretary of Environmental Permits for DEQ, said he also was impressed. "... (W)e are very pleased with the progress you all are making. It seems like we are making more progress each and every year so we are very proud of that."

Appeaning said a quality sewer system is not only important for residents but for economic development as well. "It's hard to attract new businesses if you don't have the right infrastructure." The deputy secretary also said it's clear that Yenni understands that connection.

Appeaning said he deals with Louisiana mayors on a regular basis, and it's common for a mayor to hand off all details of a project to an administrator or department head. That hasn't been the case with Yenni, however.

"I can assure you (that) your mayor has been engaged with me every step of the way," Appeaning said. "And from DEQ's perspective, we are definitely very appreciative because it allows open lines of communication."

Appeaning described the cooperation from Yenni as a "strong working relationship. One that I believe I have not seen prior to the six years with the department."

"Finding the money necessary to pay for these sewer improvements was one of my top priorities when I took office in 2010, and I am proud of the great progress we have made, as well as the cooperation and compliments from the state DEQ," Yenni said. "I will continue to work just as hard until every single project is finished."

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