



**State of Louisiana**  
Department of Health and Hospitals  
Office of Public Health

January 10, 2016

Honorable Senator Troy Brown  
Louisiana State Senate  
P.O. Box 974  
Napoleonville, Louisiana 70390

Dear Senator Brown,

This letter is in response to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 128 of the 2015 Regular Session for the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals and the Office of Public Health to study the lack of availability of state inspectors to timely complete inspections involved with construction projects. This response is based on plans review and inspection information for the Sanitarian Services Program of the Office of Public Health.

Sanitarian Services plans review are divided into two basic categories; retail food and wastewater. Retail Food plans include, but are not limited to restaurants, bars, institutional kitchens (daycares, schools, prisons, etc.), food manufacturers, processing facilities, and warehouses. Wastewater plans includes onsite wastewater treatment systems (individual residences) and small commercial plants sized less than 3,000 gallons per day of flow.

In the fiscal year 2015, Sanitarian Services received and reviewed approximately 3,222 retail food plans and 10,000 wastewater plans. In an effort to reduce plans review time, Sanitarian Services self-imposed a 10 business day turnaround time several years ago. This expectation has been and continues to be met. The turnaround time is defined by the period of time beginning the day the plan application is submitted to the local Sanitarian Office through the initial review and correspondence with the applicant. This turnaround time does not mean the plan review will be completed and approved within this 10 business day time frame. Delays in approval can result from incomplete applications and Code infractions on the plan submitted by the applicants.

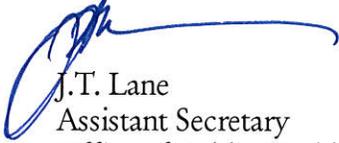
Recommendations to decrease the actual approval time of a reviewed plan; establish three tri-regional retail food plans review/training officers and re-establish onsite wastewater coordinators within each of the nine regions (currently we have five coordinators and need an additional four).

The three retail food tri-regional positions would function to oversee all plan reviews in the respective regions ensuring standardized reviews and providing personalized education to the applicants. Due to the volume, complexity and urgency of providing service to private residences and small businesses, coordinators are needed in each region. These positions would also function to provide standardized reviews and much needed home owner education to ensure long term environmentally safe operation and maintenance of onsite wastewater treatment systems.

Anticipated added values of these measures would be shortened approval time for plans, projects running smoother and ultimately moving commerce in Louisiana forward.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to present this report to you. Tenney Sibley, Chief Sanitarian, is available to discuss the report with you should you have any questions or comments. Feel free to contact her at [tenney.sibley@la.gov](mailto:tenney.sibley@la.gov) with any questions or comments you make have.

Sincerely,



J.T. Lane  
Assistant Secretary  
Office of Public Health