

Bureau of Sanitarian Services: Operations

Greg Richard, R.S.

Sanitarian Chief – Field Operations

Agenda

- A Brief History
- Mandates
- Field Operations
- Specialty Operations
- Enterprise Environmental Health

Louisiana Department of Health

- The Board of Health in Louisiana was primarily influenced by outbreaks of yellow fever and cholera in 1853. These outbreaks highlighted the need for a structured health response to manage public health crises effectively.
- The Board of Sanitarians in the U.S. dates back to the establishment of the American Academy of Sanitarians in November 1956. This organization was formed to represent the interests of sanitarians and has since evolved into various state boards of sanitarians across the country. The State Board of Sanitarians was created by Act 281 of 1957, indicating a formal establishment of the profession in the U.S.

Mandates

- **La. R.S. 40:4 and 40:5 — Sanitary Code and Powers of the State Health Officer** — give LDH broad authority to regulate the following:
 - Safe production of food;
 - Dissemination of clean drinking water;
 - Disposal of wastewater;
 - Prevention of public nuisances;
 - Prevention of the spread of vector-borne diseases;
 - Promotion of public-health measures, including vaccinations;
 - Sanitation in public and private buildings, including jails, prisons, hospitals, schools, clinics, child and adult daycare centers, residential facilities, and nursing homes; and
 - Handling and disposal of infectious waste and human remains.

Field Operations – Retail Food

Retail Food: Any establishment that prepares, sells, or gives away a consumable food product.

- The Retail Food program enforces and regulates the Louisiana Administrative Code (LAC) Title 51 Part XXIII.
- Types of permits include restaurants, grocery stores, bars/lounges, bakeries, meat markets, seafood markets, mobile units, and institution kitchens.
- **Currently, 38,862 permits are active.**
- The Retail Food program also enforces and regulates the Food Safety Certification requirements included in LAC Title 51 Part XXIII Chapter 305.
- Sanitarian Services conducts approximately 80,000 Retail Food inspections annually.



Moldy meat at a retail food establishment

Field Operations – Retail Food

Super Bowl 2025

- 1,487 permitted facilities were identified within a mile radius of the Superdome. All were inspected prior to the Super Bowl.
- Sanitarians conducted inspections at the NFL-sanctioned tailgate party Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.
- All Superdome retail permits were inspected by sanitarians on Super Bowl Sunday during the first half of the game.



Super Bowl sanitarians

Jazz and Heritage Festival

- We are required to permit and inspect the Jazz and Heritage Festival every year.
- Our inspectors visit each vendor to inspect for proper food handling and check temperatures on all food items being stored onsite.



Conducting an inspection

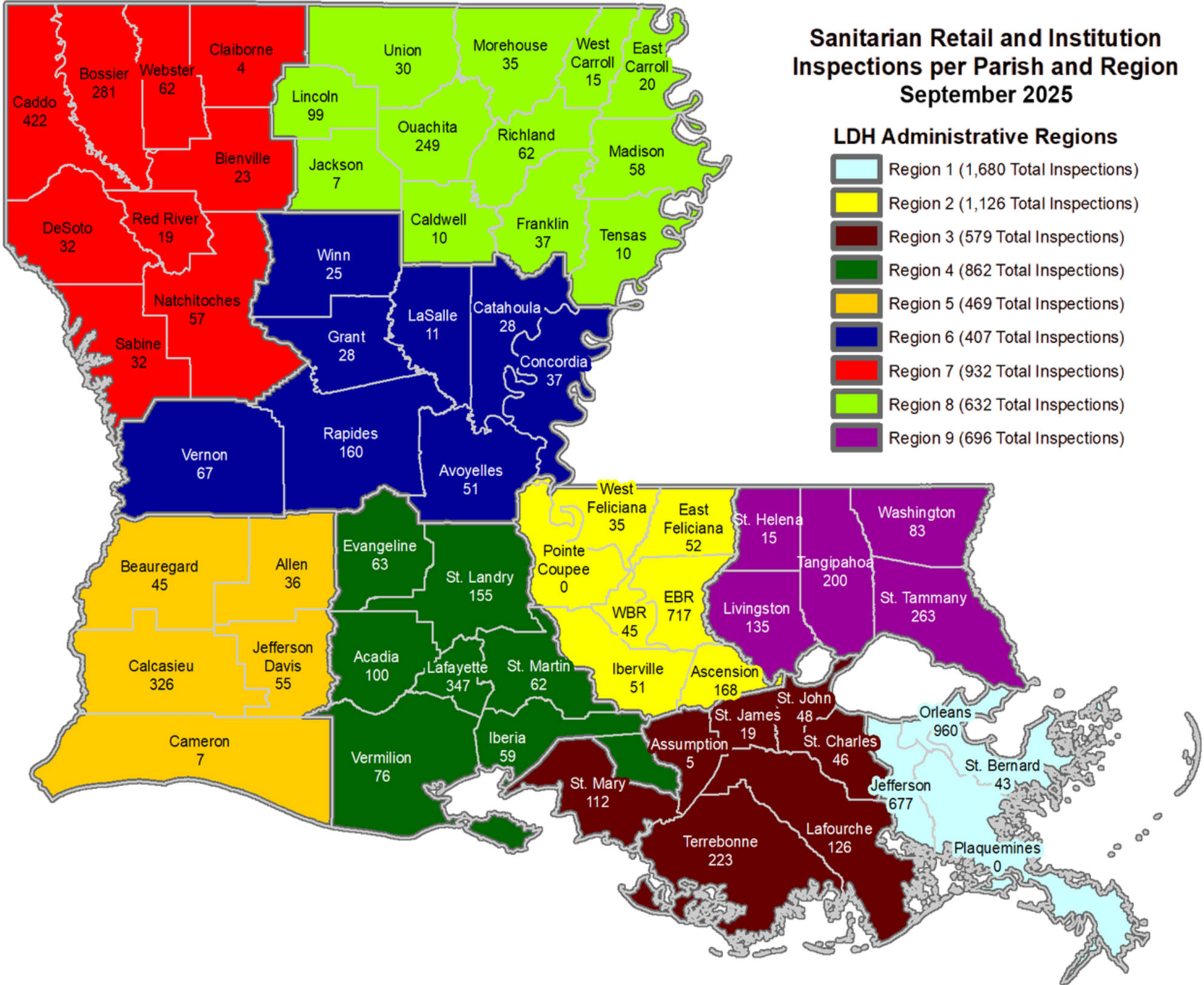
Field Operations – Building and Premises

Building and Premises Program: Controls environmental factors that are detrimental to the health of persons confined to, residing in, or cared for by institutional facilities, including daycares, nursing homes, hospitals, jails/detention centers, and schools.

- The program inspects 6,558 institutions annually. Schools and jails are inspected biannually.
- Institutions are licensed by other regulatory agencies that require our recommendation prior to license approval/renewal.
- The Infectious Waste Program ensures that medical waste generators, transporters, and storage sites meet the requirements set forth by the Louisiana State Sanitary Code.



Retail Food & Building and Premises



Field Operations – Onsite Wastewater

Onsite Wastewater: Residential sewage treatment and commercial units <3000 gpd.

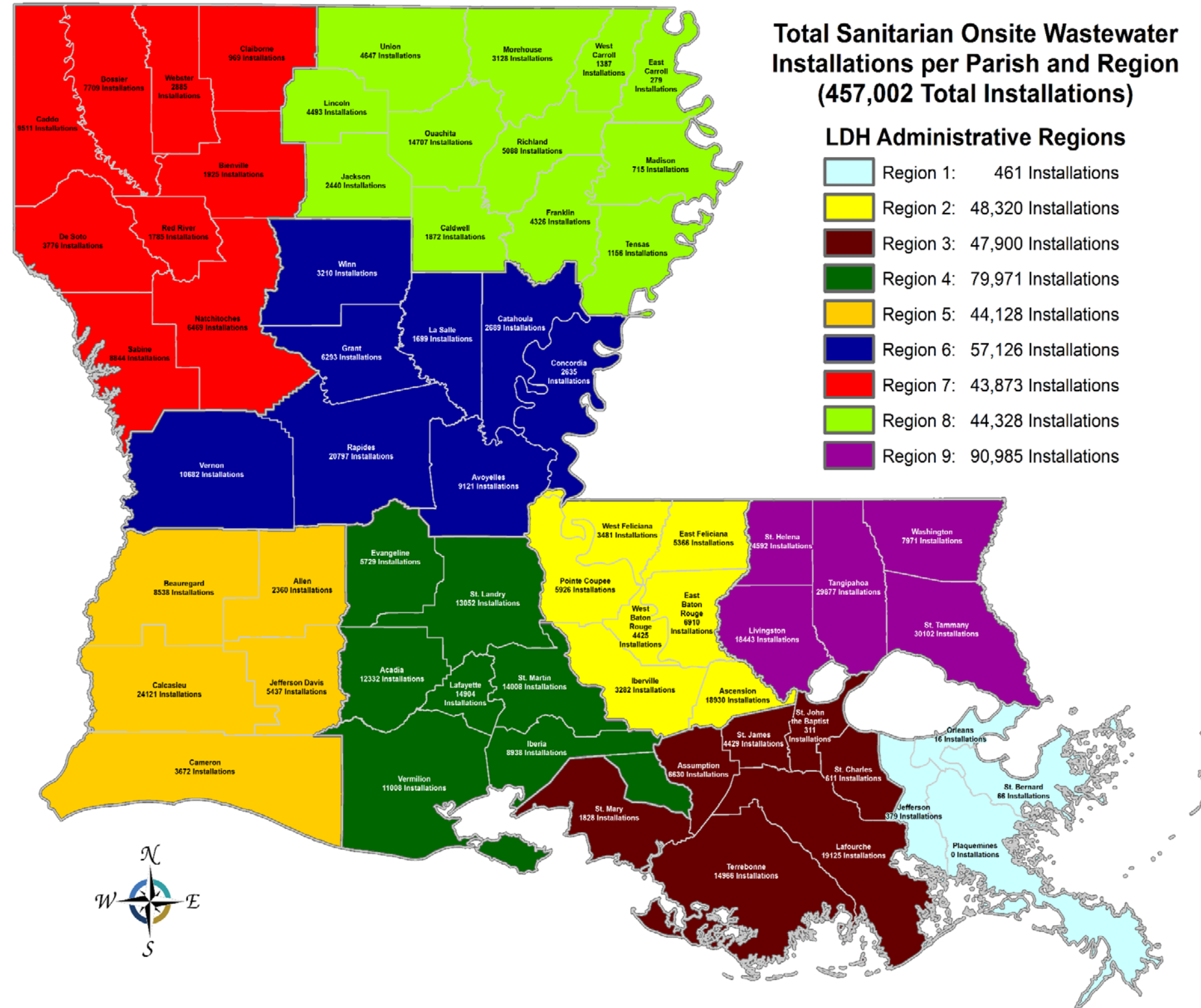
- Reviews plans and specifications of approximately 12,000 proposed sewage treatment systems annually
- Issues final permits on approximately 10,000 approved installations annually
- Conducts approximately 13,000 inspections annually on existing onsite systems for verification of installation, electrical service reconnections, loan closures, or complaints
- **Has approved over 457,000 systems statewide**
- Licenses approximately 400 sewage installers annually

Private Water Wells

- Inspects and samples private residential water wells as requested
- Inspects private water wells for proper distances from sources of contamination



Onsite Wastewater



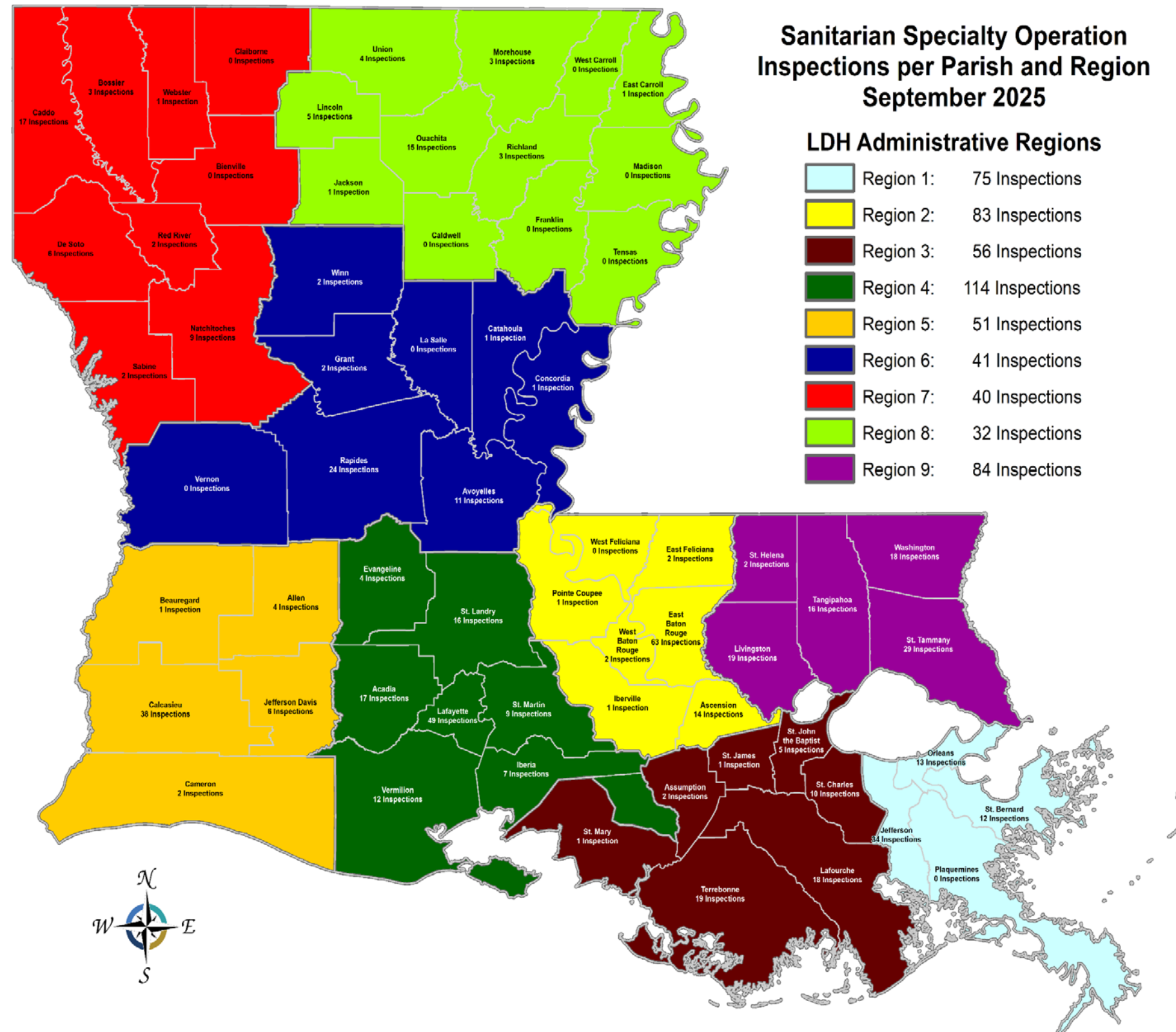
Specialty Operations – Food and Drug

Food and Drug Program: Oversees food manufacturers, drug manufacturers, food storage warehouses, drug warehouses, and distribution facilities. The program also regulates commercial body art and UV tanning locations.

- The program permits and inspects approximately **915 food manufacturers** statewide.
- The program permits and inspects approximately **850 food and drug warehouses** statewide.
- Approximately **390 commercial body art facilities** are permitted.
- Approximately **700 UV tanning locations** are permitted.



Specialty Operations



Specialty Operations – Milk and Dairy

Milk and Dairy Program: Responsible for permitting, inspecting, sampling, and certifying all dairy farms, pasteurization plants, frozen dessert plants, single-service container manufacturing plants, bulk milk tank trucks, and milk haulers and receivers in Louisiana.

- Facilities must be inspected and sampled at required intervals to be able to ship their product out of state.
- **Approximately 180 facilities** in the state are permitted and inspected by this program.



Specialty Operations – Commercial Seafood

Commercial Seafood Program:

Regulatory and enforcement agency for all seafood products produced and processed in Louisiana.

- All products must adhere to quality standards set forth in the Louisiana Sanitary Code and the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP).
- The program issues permits and inspects facilities for processing crabs, crawfish, shrimp, oyster, alligator, fish, and caviar. It also permits and inspects wholesale seafood distributors.
- **Approximately 630 permits are active.**



Rotting alligators

- Oyster shucking facilities, shellstock dealers, and reshippers must be permitted and inspected under federal regulations to be approved for interstate commerce.

Specialty Operations – Molluscan Shellfish

Molluscan Shellfish Program: Tests oyster waters to ensure that shellfish from growing areas are not contaminated with pathogenic bacteria.

- The program uses marine vessels to sample oyster growing areas (800 monthly sample) for high levels of bacteria.
- The program performs camp, shoreline, and marina surveys to identify possible contamination points.
- The program opens and closes harvest areas during adverse weather events.



Specialty Operations – Beach Monitoring

Beach Monitoring Program: Tests inland recreational waters for bacteria indicative of contamination utilizing funds from an EPA grant.

- This program is 100% federally funded by a grant issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Clean Water Act.
- Louisiana is an active participant along with other Gulf states in monitoring coastal beaches in the U.S.
- The Louisiana Beach Monitoring Program advises the public to swim at their own risk when enjoying Louisiana's recreational waters.

Specialty Operations – Beach Monitoring



Specialty Operations – Cannabis Program

Cannabis Program: The licensing authority responsible for registering compliant consumable hemp products for sale in Louisiana. It is also the regulatory authority of Louisiana's medical (therapeutic) marijuana program.

- Consumable hemp products are required to be approved and registered by the Louisiana Department of Health.
- Medical marijuana retailers are also required to be permitted and inspected by the Louisiana Department of Health.
- LDH personnel are responsible for conducting inspections of medical marijuana production facilities and reviewing finished product test results to verify compliance.



FY 25 Annual Inspection Count

Permit Type	Number of Inspections
Body Art	574
BP - Child Day Care	2332
BP - Detention or Incarceration	462
BP - Hospital/Clinic	1984
BP - Infectious Waste Storage	21
BP - Infectious Waste Vehicle	89
BP - Nursing Home	309
BP - Public Building	166
BP - Residential Adult Daycare	1057
BP - School	3736
BP - Swimming Pool	14
Cosmetic Manufacturer	12
Cosmetic Warehouse	81
Dairy Farm	393
Drug Manufacturer	128
Drug Warehouse/Lab	292
Food Manufacturer	1375
Food Warehouse	769
Oyster	413
Pasteurization Plant	73
Retail Food	84874
Seafood Plant	621
Tanning	223
Water Vending	27
Grand Total	100025

Region	Positions/Employees
1	24
2	18
3	17
4	23
5	14
6	15
7	20
8	18
9	18
Specialty	32
Grand Total	199

Enterprise Environmental Health

Software upgrade to improve public service offerings through an online portal by:

- **Streamlining processes:** Easily configures and automates workflows to meet unique business processes.
- **Engaging with business owners:** Allows clients to submit applications, process payments, and see inspection results.
- **Simplifying processes:** 24/7/365 applications and renewals for licenses and permits, fee payments, and online access to inspection results.
- **Updating electronic processes:** Online tools that ensure effective communication with residents and contractors.
- **Saving time and boosting efficiency:** Automatically sends notices and emails to free up staff time.

Sanitarian Services Director



Tiffany Meche, R.S.

Director

Phone: 225-342-7542

Email: tiffany.meche@la.gov

THANK YOU

Greg Richard, R.S.
Sanitarian Chief – Field Operations