By BOB ANDERSON
Environmental editor

The state Department of Environmental Quality has cited the city-parish for failure to properly operate the Devil's Swamp Landfill.

Three inspections conducted earlier this year revealed uncovered waste of a type that can cause odors, as well as other problems with proper cover, including erosion of the dirt cap that is supposed to keep garbage covered, according to the order.

"The final cover, in many areas of the site, has eroded, exposing waste and creating leachate problems," the order states.

The city-parish also has failed "to control litter by the proper application of cover, litter fences or policing the site," DEQ alleges, also citing the city-parish for failure to cover all foul-smelling waste on a daily basis and employing "inadequate dirt and foam cover."

The Department of Public Works is taking action to correct the problems, a spokesman said.

"We have just received bids on 400,000 cubic yards of dirt for cover and are trying to get the contract signed," the spokesman said, adding that DPW also is making progress picking up litter at the site, though that is a constant battle.

The order does not propose a penalty, but says such a penalty, up to $50,000 a day, may still be issued in connection with the problems, which are violations of a previous order to keep waste covered.

The Devil's Swamp Landfill has a history of environmental problems and DEQ officials have instructed the city-parish to close the site by Feb. 1, 1991. There has been some question as to whether the local government can get another landfill permitted and operating by that time.

The city-parish is proposing to build a new landfill near U.S. 61 and Irene Road on property now owned by Kaiser Aluminum.

The two parties have reached an agreement under which the city-parish will purchase the land if it is determined by DEQ to be a suitable site for a landfill.