



"RE-BUILDING THE CITY'S WATER SYSTEMS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY"

Sewerage & Water Board OF NEW ORLEANS

*Mitchell J. Landrieu, President
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Editor
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Dear Editor:

I experienced extreme dismay as I read the opinion column of Mr. Jarvis DeBerry entitled "When it's urgent, Sewerage & Water Board, pick up the phone!" While I share the frustration of all residents over a matter as important as a boil water advisory my dismay comes from the incorrect conclusion drawn by Mr. DeBerry that served as the foundation for most of his undeserved, false and malicious statements.

I can only assume that because a previous Times Picayune story only referenced emails as its basis, that Mr. DeBerry, usually an informed writer, falsely concluded that no phone calls were made. Let me set the record straight. In an emergency the telephone is the most essential means of communication with emails usually serving as a quick follow up to transmit additional information, findings and or developments. Phone calls were made to the administration, Board Staff, DHH officials and the media. Several phone calls were made at the onset of the emergency to Deputy Mayors Grant and Sneed without a response. .

It is unfair for Mr. DeBerry to jump to such a conclusion without being aware of the facts or at least making the inquiry of whether calls were made. They were. And I think at the very least Mr. DeBerry owes me and the Sewerage and Water Board an apology and correction.

In addition, it should be mentioned that since the recent experience we have enhanced our means of contacting essential City officials through a more comprehensive notification/communication procedure that includes additional contact numbers and contacts as well as, if necessary, dispatching public safety officials to the homes of Senior City leadership.

The Sewerage and Water Board has provided over 100 years of quality of life services: water, sewer and drainage to the citizens of New Orleans and we are committed to do so in the future.

Marcia A. St. Martin, Executive Director
Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans

Cc: J. DeBerry
M. Krupa