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Mississippi Air and Water Pollution Control Law: Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Article Acknowledges 50th Anniversary

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The June/July issue of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (“MDEQ”) publication *Environmental News* contains an article noting the 50th anniversary of the Mississippi Water and Air Pollution Control Act (“Mississippi Pollution Law”).

Environmental News notes that the Mississippi Pollution Law was enacted in 1966.

The article discusses the importance of the Mississippi environmental statute which is still administered by MDEQ. It is cited as a foundation for the Mississippi Commission on Environmental Quality, the Mississippi Environmental Quality Permit Board and MDEQ to “restore and maintain the integrity of the state’s air and water quality resources”.

The article traces the Mississippi agencies that evolved to implement the Mississippi Pollution Control Law and a key rationale for its enactment. It cites former MDEQ Executive Director Jimmy Palmer, who states:

With passage of the Clean Air Act of 1963, and the Water Quality Act of 1965, Mississippi officials and private sector leaders could see ‘the handwriting on the wall,’ and they recommended aggressive new legislation to get ahead of the federal surge. This political groundswell lead directly to the passage of our Mississippi Air and Water Pollution Control Law in 1966.

Like Mississippi, Arkansas also put in place foundational state pollution control legislation prior to the enactment of the modern version of federal statutes such as the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. In fact, the statutory forerunner of Arkansas’s current water pollution control authorities was enacted in 1949. See Ark. Acts 472.

The enactment of the Arkansas Water Pollution Control Act continues to influence Arkansas pollution control in the sense that it was also the foundation for the general procedural framework for Arkansas environmental rulemaking, enforcement and appeals. It created the Water Pollution Control Commission (forerunner to the Arkansas Pollution Control & Ecology Commission) and granted this body broad powers of administration, enforcement, investigation, and regulation over water pollution within Arkansas.

[A copy of the *Environmental News* article can be downloaded here.](#)