

Oklahoma DEQ Staff Expertise

Kendal Stegmann earned her bachelor's degree as well as her juris doctorate degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1992 and 1995, respectively. After graduating law school, she started her career at DEQ as an air staff attorney and later as a Senior Environmental Manager of the Compliance and Enforcement Group in the Air Quality Division. After spending 4 years as EHS counsel in the oil and gas industry, she returned to DEQ as the Division Director for the Environmental Complaints and Locals Services. Later, she became the Division Director for the Air Quality Division. She has been serving the State of Oklahoma for 23 years making sure that Oklahomans have clean air to breathe.

Beverly Botchlet-Smith is the Assistant Director of the Air Quality Division at the Oklahoma Department of Environment Quality (DEQ). Beverly received Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 1992. She began her career with the state of Oklahoma in 1992 at the Oklahoma State Department of Health as a Disease Intervention Specialist. Beverly moved to the DEQ Air Quality Division in 1994 working as an Environmental Program Specialist in the Rules and Data Analysis Section. She was promoted to her current position in 2003 and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the division including budget, grants, IT oversight, personnel, and policy issues. In addition, Beverly co-chairs the Energy Committee for the Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies.

Cheryl Bradley earned her bachelor's degree in biology from the Central State University in 1989, while working for the Oklahoma Secretary of State. She started working as an environmental regulatory professional for the Oklahoma State Department of Health in its Air Quality Service that same year. Later, she continued her career with the Oklahoma Water Resources Board and then the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). She has worked in DEQ's Air Quality Division for the last 29 years and is currently the Environmental Programs Manager of its Data and Planning Group. She has served the State of Oklahoma for 42 years of which 34 years have been devoted to protecting Oklahoma's public health and its environment.

Melanie Foster is the Rules & Planning Section Manager for the Air Quality Division of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Melanie received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from the University of Oklahoma in 1999. After working as temporary employee for the Oklahoma Water Resources Board for two years, Melanie worked briefly for a private environmental consulting firm in Oklahoma City. After moving out of state, Melanie worked as a Hazardous Waste Compliance Officer for the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality for a year before working for the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality as a manager in the Hazardous Waste Division for over six years. Melanie began her work for the Oklahoma DEQ as an inspector in Compliance & Enforcement for a year before becoming the Compliance Section Manager for 6 years. She then moved over to the Rules & Planning Section and has been in her current position for the last 8 years, working to keep Oklahoma's Air Pollution Control rules and its State Implementation Plan up to date.

Cory Parsons earned his Bachelor of Science in Meteorology from the University of Oklahoma in 2021. He then went on to work as a Maritime Meteorologist/Route Analyst for 2 years. In 2024, he began working for the Department of Environmental Quality to assist on the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant.

Leon Ashford is an Environmental Specialist IV in the Rules and Planning Section of the Air Quality Division of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). He received his bachelor's degree in Wildlife Ecology from Oklahoma State University in 1979 and a Master of Science in Industrial Hygiene & Environmental Management from the University of Oklahoma in 1998. He began his career in 1980, working 15 years in Air Monitoring for the Oklahoma City-County Health Department. In 1995, he moved to the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, working in the Special Projects Section for three years before transferring to his current position for 25 years. While at DEQ, Leon has worked with a wide variety of special projects, and many that involve mobile source pollution reduction.

Alexandria Mills is an Engineer Intern VI in the Air Quality Permits Section at the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). She received her bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Baylor University in 2013 and a Master of Science in Renewable Energy & Sustainability from the University of Southern California in 2014. She began her career in the electric power industry. Working alongside colleagues to procure and design natural gas fired combined cycle generating stations. In 2017, her career shifted to the environmental sector when she began working for the DEQ in the Industrial Wastewater Permits Section in the Water Quality Division. In February 2023, she joined the Existing Permits Section in the Air Quality Division. While at DEQ, Alexandria has worked with a wide variety of industries drafting permits for both air quality and water quality.

Christina Hagens is an Environmental Programs Specialist in the Rules and Planning section at the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). She graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a bachelor's in Environmental Sustainability and a minor in Political Science. She began her career with DEQ shortly after graduating in 2018 and has been in the Air Quality Division (AQD) ever since. She began assisting with grants under the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) and the Volkswagen (VW) Settlement, eventually managing each program. After training additional staff, she shifted to the role of project manager for the new Alternative Fuel School Bus (AFSB) program under VW funding. She has been involved with DERA and AFSB for 5 years where her duties included: developing grant solicitations, applications, scoring guides, fact sheets as well as communicating with staff and awardees throughout the application, award, and project phases.

Cecelia Kleman is an Environmental Programs Specialist IV in the Air Quality at the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). She received her bachelor's degree in Field Biology and Geography from Pittsburg State University in Kansas in 2013. She began working at the Oklahoma DEQ in early 2015 in the Emissions Inventory Section. She transferred to the Compliance and Enforcement section in 2016 and then finally to the Technical Resources and Projects Section in October 2018. She has worked on the Oklahoma Clean Diesel (DERA) Grant Program for the last five years. Serving as the project manager since June 2019.

Malcolm Zachariah is an Environmental Programs Specialist IV in the Air Quality Division at DEQ. He has a B.S. in Biochemistry from the University of Oklahoma followed by graduate studies in Medicinal Chemistry at the University of Utah. He joined Oklahoma DEQ's Air Quality Rules and Planning section in 2015 with a focus on public outreach, rulemaking, and planning projects. Since 2017 he has been the Air Quality lead webmaster and coordinated outreach and graphics for Oklahoma's Volkswagen Settlement and Clean Diesel (DERA) grant programs. He has also organized rulemaking, public meetings, industry

outreach, and state plan development to incorporate federal landfill gas regulations into state rules. He also serves as a technical lead for DEQ in hosting virtual and hybrid public meetings.

Lloyd Kirk has more than 35 years of diverse experience from regulatory agencies, tribes, and Fortune 500 corporations. During his time at DEQ he was the previous manager of the Radiation and Brownfield sections, and currently is the Division Director of the Office of Business & Regulatory Affairs. Kirk also assists the agency and Secretary of Energy and Environment in special projects involving the clean energy transition such as CCUS, hydrogen, produced water, critical minerals, EV, battery, solar, etc. Most recently he has been involved with the Governors Hydrogen Task Force, the HALO Hydrogen Hub and currently the CPRG grant team. Lloyd is a graduate of Oklahoma State University where he earned a bachelor's degree in Engineering Technology. He went on to earn a Master's in Management from Southern Nazarene University and an Executive Master's in Leadership from the McDonough School of Business, Georgetown University. Recently Mr. Kirk earned a certificate from Georgetown University in the Business of Sustainability.

Angela Hughes's shared passion for environmental stewardship and seeing businesses thrive in Oklahoma led to her career in public service. She currently is the Senior Manager for the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Business and Regulatory Affairs. As the project manager for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant, she has worked with multiple state agencies, Tribes, industry, and citizens to create a plan that will ultimately support all Oklahomans to reduce pollution in our state. Hughes has more than 25 years of state and federal environmental experience, which includes oversight of multi-million-dollar projects at both Superfund and hazardous waste sites across Oklahoma. Hughes started the Site Cleanup Assistance Program that remediated National Guard armories so they could be safely used by the local communities for community events or business opportunities. During her time at the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Hughes managed the complex buyout of communities in northeastern Oklahoma as part of the Tar Creek Superfund site. In Hughes's role with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, she managed military construction projects at Tinker Air Force Base. She also has experience plugging gas wells and planning recreation sites for the Bureau of Land Management in Texas.

Joseph Daniel, a native Oklahoman, graduated from the University of Tulsa in 2015 with degrees in business administration and psychology. Joseph worked in human capital management before beginning law school at the University of Oklahoma in 2018. After graduating law school and passing the bar in 2021, Joseph sought out prospective positions serving the State of Oklahoma. In early 2022, he accepted a position with the Oklahoma DEQ as an Air Quality Attorney. One of his job duties is legal advisor to the State's Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Grant Program. Beyond his role at DEQ, Joseph currently serves as Chair-Elect for the Environmental Law Section of the Oklahoma Bar Association. Joseph is excited to assist with projects that foster growth in his home state while ensuring the air remains clean and safe for all Oklahomans to enjoy.