



PAUL D. WORKMAN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
District 47

October 12, 2016

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E., Chairman
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, MC 100
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, TX 78711-3087

RE: Project No. 2016-033-PET-NR

Dear Chairman Shaw:

I am writing to request your support of the City of Austin rule-making petition proposing to modify chapters 222 and 309 of Title 30 of the Texas Administrative Code relating to wastewater effluent disposal via land application. The proposal will help Texas meet the goals of our State Water Plan in a cost-effective manner that does not require the expenditure of additional public dollars.

Because dedicated land disposal fields may be only partially utilized by wastewater permittees who also utilize beneficial reuse authorizations, current TCEQ regulations act in part as an impediment to expansion of land application facilities and do not fully encourage maximum reuse of wastewater effluent for beneficial purposes. Rapid population growth especially in central Texas not only puts increasing pressure on wastewater treatment facilities to expand capacity, but also increases demand on already limited potable water supplies.

Texas faces an immediate need for 3.6 million ac-ft/year of additional water in the event of a severe drought, and is projected to need an additional 8.3 million ac-ft/yr of additional water supplies by 2060. Annual economic losses from not meeting water supply needs could be as much as \$115.7 billion by 2060 with the potential loss of more than 1 million jobs¹. Reuse of water is an important water supply strategy included in the State Water Plan, which identifies approximately 2.5 million ac-ft/year of additional water supply augmentation or potable demand reduction strategies involving water reuse programs by 2060.

Current TCEQ regulations require 100% redundancy for wastewater land application permit holders that also utilize a beneficial reuse authorization. Thus, current regulations do not reflect current industry practices, add unnecessary burden on permit holders seeking to maximize

¹ 2012 State Water Plan

beneficial reuse, and result in unnecessarily higher costs for wastewater land application without increasing the level of protection of public health or the environment.

The proposal is a minimal modification of existing rules, combines two existing TCEQ wastewater regulatory programs, and if adopted would provide a clear pathway to permitting for applicants wishing to maximize reuse of wastewater effluent. The City of Austin in collaboration with multiple governmental entities, environmental advocates and wastewater permit holders has developed the draft rules that propose a new, entirely optional means to more sustainably manage wastewater and conserve water supplies.

The petition proposes to provide partial credit for beneficial reuse of effluent against the required size of dedicated land disposal fields and effluent storage volumes. Because the proposed credit would only be for the volume of effluent that can be demonstrated through engineering analysis, even in wet conditions, to never need to go to the dedicated disposal fields, their proposal not only encourages better water conservation but also is protective of water quality. Thus, permittees can allocate limited capital dollars towards water reuse infrastructure instead of redundant and increasingly expensive disposal fields that in some cases would not otherwise be irrigated with potable water.

Finally, because this proposal is consistent with the TCEQ philosophy to ensure that regulations are effective and current, and provides better flexibility in achieving environmental goals without compromising public health or water quality, I urge your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul D. Workman", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Paul D. Workman