

# Regulatory Guidance in Response to Hurricane Alex and Tropical Depression 2 from the Executive Director of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality: Wastewater

If you must respond to damage from Hurricane Alex, its remnants, or Tropical Depression 2, use this document to understand relevant environmental rules. This document is intended to help you decide a reasonable course of action to follow. If you have any questions, please contact your TCEQ regional office. For your convenience, the table below lists each county that was mentioned in Gov. Rick Perry's disaster proclamation for these storm events and the TCEQ regional office that serves that county.

<b>In these counties:</b>	<b>Mail written notices to this TCEQ regional office:</b>	<b>Call or fax:</b>
Maverick, Val Verde, Webb, Zapata	TCEQ Region 16 707 East Calton Rd. Ste. 304 Laredo TX 78041-3887	<b>Phone:</b> 956-791-6611 <b>Fax:</b> 956-791-6716
Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Willacy	TCEQ Region 15 1804 West Jefferson Ave. Harlingen TX 78550-5247	<b>Phone:</b> 956-425-6010 <b>Fax:</b> 956-412-5059
Jim Wells, Kleberg	TCEQ Region 14 NRC Bldg. Ste. 1200 6300 Ocean Dr. Unit 5839 Corpus Christi TX 78412-5839	<b>Phone:</b> 361-825-3100 <b>Fax:</b> 361-825-3101
Bexar	TCEQ Region 13 14250 Judson Rd. San Antonio TX 78233-4480	<b>Phone:</b> 210-490-3096 <b>Fax:</b> 210-545-4329
Brazoria	TCEQ Region 12 5425 Polk Ave. Ste. H Houston TX 77023-1452	<b>Phone:</b> 713-767-3500 <b>Faxes:</b> 713-767-3761 (Air) 713-767-3691 (Water) 713-767-3646 (Waste)
Cottle, Foard	TCEQ Region 3 1977 Industrial Blvd. Abilene TX 79602-7833	<b>Phone:</b> 325-698-9674 <b>Fax:</b> 325-692-5869
Floyd, Garza, Lamb, Lubbock, Lynn, Motley, Terry	TCEQ Region 2 5012 50th Street Suite 100 Lubbock TX 79414-3421	<b>Phone:</b> 806-796-7092 <b>Fax:</b> 806-796-7107

If you were affected by either of these storm events and your county does not appear in this table, find contact information for the regional office that serves you online at [www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/region](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/goto/region).

**If an unauthorized discharge to water in the state occurs due solely to flooding associated with Hurricane Alex, will I be in violation of my permit?**

Under Texas Water Code Section 7.251, an event is not a violation of a permit if a person can establish that an event was caused solely by an act of God or other catastrophe. Discharges due to flooding from Hurricane Alex as well as discharges necessary to release water that accumulates in storage tanks, containers, or vessels as a result of Hurricane Alex should be handled as follows: As soon as practicable, permittees must review the conditions at the facility and take actions to minimize and eliminate the potential danger to human health and safety and the environment. To the extent practicable, discharges should not exceed effluent limitations.

**If I have an accidental discharge or spill as a result of Hurricane Alex, do I need to report it to the TCEQ within 24 hours?**

If circumstances prevent you from reporting within this timeframe due to the need to provide a prompt response to the threat posed by Hurricane Alex, report the incident no later than 72 hours after discovery. Permittees should keep records of this information:

- Description of the noncompliance.
- The known or potential danger to human health and the environment.
- Period of noncompliance.
- If the noncompliance has not been corrected, the time it is expected to continue.
- The steps taken and planned to be taken to minimize the discharge and comply with the regulations.

**Am I required to continue to comply with the effluent sampling requirements under my water quality permits following Hurricane Alex?**

People should not be put in danger. If meeting permit effluent sampling requirements would pose a threat to human health or safety, the permittee may interrupt any required sampling. The permittee should reinstate sampling as soon as it is safe to return to the facility.

**If my wastewater treatment facility is damaged or destroyed as a result of Hurricane Alex, do I need a permit amendment or an authorization to construct?**

If the construction is to replace either an existing damaged unit or the entire plant and this construction is needed to protect human health and the environment, a permit amendment or authorization to construct is not required provided that the repair or

replacement is in accordance with previous TCEQ-approved design specifications. Within 30 days of initiating such repairs or replacement, the owner or operator shall notify in writing the TCEQ regional office serving the county in which the facility is located ([see list on page 1](#)). Also notify the TCEQ Water Quality Division in writing at MC 148, PO Box 13087, Austin TX 78711-3087. All notifications should describe the location and nature of the work and provide the name, address, and telephone number of the representative of the permittee to contact concerning the work.