



TCEQ REGULATORY GUIDANCE

Water Supply Division
RG-590 • Revised July 2023

Guidance for Public Water System Water Haulers

Background

TCEQ's duties relating to the regulation and control of public drinking water systems in the state are described in Title 30, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 290 (30 TAC 290) and the Texas Health and Safety Code (THSC), Chapter 341, Subchapter C.

When drinking water is distributed by tank truck or trailer, it must be obtained from an approved source and TCEQ must approve the equipment utilized to transport the drinking water. The owner of drinking water transport equipment (public water system water hauler) is responsible for meeting additional disinfection, compliance sampling, and record keeping requirements. [30 TAC 290.44(i)]

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that water haulers are considered public water systems if they meet "the minimum standards for number of the outlets or customers served." As public water systems (PWSs), water haulers are regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The Ground Water Rule (GWR) and Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR) requirements are also applicable to water haulers.

Rules Guidance

A water provider that distributes drinking water for human consumption by tank truck or trailer that meets the definition of a PWS under 30 TAC 290.38 will be regulated as a water hauler under 30 TAC 290.44(i). Water haulers must obtain approval from TCEQ before providing drinking water to the public as described below.

Based on the operational characteristics, water haulers are categorized as transient non-community public water systems due to their potential to provide drinking water to individuals in various locations at numerous times. Water haulers may be treated as consecutive systems for the purposes of compliance under TCEQ rules. Water haulers are subject to TCEQ investigations to evaluate compliance with PWS requirements in line with transient noncommunity public water systems.

Equipment

The equipment used to haul the water must be approved by TCEQ [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)].

Owners of a tank truck or trailer equipment which distributes drinking water for human consumption must obtain TCEQ approval for the equipment per 30 TAC 290.39 before providing drinking water for human consumption.

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Water hauler PWSs must submit plans and specifications for review and approval before hauling water. If the water hauler is not registered as a PWS, TCEQ will assign a PWS ID No. with the first submittal of engineering plans and specifications. All engineering documents must have engineering seals, signatures, and dates affixed according to Texas Board of Professional Engineers' rules, for TCEQ review. The equipment must meet these rules:

- A. The tank truck or trailer must be used for transporting drinking water only and labeled "Drinking Water." Tanks which have been used previously for purposes other than transporting potable liquids must not be used for hauling drinking water. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(A)]
- B. The tank must be watertight and of an approved impervious material and easily cleaned and disinfected. Any paint or coating and any plastic or fiberglass materials used as contact surfaces must be approved by the EPA, the United States Food and Drug Administration, or the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF). Any newly installed surfaces must conform to ANSI/NSF Standard 61 and must be certified by an organization accredited by ANSI. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(B)]
- C. The tank must have a manhole and a manhole cover which overlaps the raised manhole opening by a minimum of two inches and terminates in a downward direction. The cover must fit firmly on the manhole opening and be kept locked. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(C)]
- D. The tank must have a vent faced downward and located to minimize the possibility of drawing contaminants into the stored water. The vent must be screened with 16-mesh or finer corrosion-resistant material. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(D)]
- E. Connections for filling and emptying the tank must be properly protected to prevent the possible entrance of contamination. These openings must be provided with caps and keeper chains. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(E)]
- F. A drain must be provided which will completely empty the tank for cleaning or repairs. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(F)].
- G. When a pump is used to transfer the water from the tank, the pump must be permanently mounted with a permanent connection to the tank. The discharge side of the pump must be properly protected between uses by a protective cap and keeper chain. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(G)]
- H. Hoses used for the transfer of drinking water to and from the tank must be used only for that purpose and labeled for drinking water only. The hoses must conform to ANSI/NSF Standard 61 and must be certified by an entity recognized by TCEQ. Hoses and related appurtenances must be cleaned and disinfected on a regular basis during prolonged use or before start-up during intermittent use. Hoses must be properly stored between uses and must be provided with caps and keeper chains or have the ends connected together. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(H)]
- I. The tank must be disinfected monthly and at any time contamination is suspected. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(I)]
- J. At least one sample per month from each tank must be collected and

submitted for microbiological analysis to one of TCEQ's accredited laboratories for each month of operation. (See **Sampling** below) [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(J)]

- K. The water being hauled must maintain a minimum free chlorine residual of 0.5 mg/L, or, if chloramines are used as the primary disinfectant, a chloramine residual of 1.0 mg/L (measured as total chlorine). Chlorine or chlorine containing compounds may be added on a "batch" basis to maintain the required residual. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(K)]
- L. The water hauler PWS must maintain operational records detailing the amount of water hauled, purchases, microbiological sampling results, chlorine residual readings, dates of disinfection, and source of water. [30 TAC 290.44(i)(2)(L)]

Source

Water must be obtained from an approved source [30 TAC 290.44(i)(1)]

Drinking water distributed by a tank or trailer must be obtained from a TCEQ approved PWS that provides finished treated drinking water (also from a TCEQ approved source). See the definition of drinking water under 30 TAC 290.38.

Sampling

The water hauler PWS must ensure that one microbiological sample is collected from each drinking water tank truck or trailer during each month of operation. If a routine sample is coliform or *E. coli* positive, three repeat samples must be collected from the tank truck or trailer. The three repeat samples should be collected on the same day several minutes apart. The RTCR microbial sampling requirements for repeat sample monitoring apply to each tank truck or trailer during each month of operation per 30 TAC 290.109.

When a monthly microbiological sample obtained from a drinking water tank truck or trailer tests positive for total coliform organisms, and the drinking water was received from a PWS which provides groundwater, the owner of the tank truck or trailer must notify the groundwater system within 24 hours of being notified of the positive coliform sample [30 TAC 290.109(d)(4)(C)]. This is important because the groundwater wholesale system must collect raw microbiological samples from each well in use the day the positive sample occurred.

Inactive Status

If a water hauler is inactive for an entire month, the water hauler PWS must notify TCEQ at TCRDATA@tceq.texas.gov about the status of the system. The system must provide a water usage report that reflects no water was used or sold. This will ensure proper review of monthly required microbiological sampling.

Nitrate and Nitrite Compliance Monitoring

The TCEQ third-party sampler must collect a minimum of one nitrate sample from each drinking water tank truck or trailer annually under 30 TAC 290.106(c)(6) and one nitrite sample from each drinking water tank truck or trailer every nine years under 30 TAC 290.106(c)(7).

Public Notice

A PWS that is required to issue a public notice, per 30 TAC 290.122, must provide the notice to its customers and a copy to the owner or operator of a consecutive water system.

Water haulers are part of a consecutive system, and as such must also provide a copy of the notice to affected customers according to 30 TAC 290.122(g).

Emergency Temporary Water Haulers

TCEQ can grant that temporary operations provide drinking water for sanitary purposes to communities or businesses experiencing low pressure or water outage only. TCEQ will consider temporary approval of water hauling with food grade equipment previously used for hauling other consumable beverages such as juice or milk.

To apply for temporary approval, provide all of the following information about your proposed temporary system to PTRS@tceq.texas.gov:

- Water hauling truck or tank:
 - Types of liquids previously hauled by the truck.
 - Capacity of tank.
 - Date of last disinfection of tank, if known.
 - Microbiological test results following the last disinfection.
- Short description of proposed temporary system, including:
 - Specific information about the number of individuals to be serve.
 - The approved water source.
 - Facilities used to transfer the water including pumps and hoses.
 - The license number for the truck and trailer (if applicable).
 - Description of how water from the tank will be pumped into the system and how pressure will be maintained.

Please include other information you feel is relevant to describe your proposal. If the hauled water will be provided to a public water system, also provide relevant information for the public water system.