

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

PDW PROGRAM STAFF GUIDANCE

Guidance Title: BOTTLED WATER SOURCE APPROVAL

PAGE 1 of 1

Background

The bottled water industry has experienced explosive growth nationally and in Texas. This growth can be attributed to consumers' perceptions of poor quality tap water and/or aesthetic preference.

Most bottled water sources are already inventoried, municipal water systems which are inspected and approved by the TCEQ. However, due to increased consumer demand, a growing number of water bottlers have requested the commission to approve "stand alone" springs and well sources. These "stand alone" sources often do not meet the TCEQ definition of a Public Water System (PWS). We have observed substantial regional and central office variations in how the commission handles these requests. These variations are, in part, related to the fact that two state agencies (TDH - Bureau of Food and Drug Safety and the TCEQ - Water Supply Division) are involved. No interagency agreement or clear agency guidance has been established.

The Bureau of Food and Drug Safety requires bottled water sources to be "approved" by the commission (25 TAC 229.87).

Staff Guidance

We are, therefore, offering the following information to guide the process for systems which do not otherwise meet the PWS definition:


1. Existing or proposed "stand alone" sources must be approved by the TCEQ in the conventional manner (i.e. plan review and a subsequent sanitary survey to validate that the facilities conform to the approved plans).
2. Engineering plans and specifications for any proposed bulk water trucks used for transporting the treated source water to a bottling facility must be reviewed and approved by the TCEQ.
3. The TCEQ will require mechanical chlorination of all "stand alone" sources unless an exception has been granted due to system configuration. On a case-by-case basis, site specific treatment such as filtration and clearwell storage facilities may also be required.
4. Letters of source approval or denial will be generated by TCEQ Water Supply Division staff after appropriate consultation with regional staff.
5. The TCEQ will inventory and survey these "stand alone" sources in order to maintain accountability. The supplier must submit monthly bacteriological samples of treated source water collected before the bottling facilities which will be monitored by the commission. The supplier must comply with any repeat sampling requirements specified in 30 TAC §290.109. These samples are a supplement to finished product samples of bottled water required and monitored by the Bureau of Food and Drug Safety.
6. The Bureau of Food and Drug Safety will assume monitoring and accountability of the water once it enters transport trucks or bottling plants.

END

April 1, 2004

Effective Date

Expiration Date


Buck Henderson, Section Manager
Public Drinking Water Section
Water Supply Division