

The Advocate

Take Care of Texas
 For and about small businesses and local governments affected by environmental regulations

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TCEQ Seeks Stakeholder Input on Upcoming Rulemaking Related to Backflow Prevention Methods and Devices

Dec. 2017 - The TCEQ will conduct stakeholder meetings across the state in January to solicit informal comments on rulemaking for 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 344, Subchapter F, Landscape Irrigation - Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection.

This rulemaking is the result of petitions approved at the Oct. 4, 2017, Commissioner's Agenda. The petitions seek to amend acceptable methods for backflow prevention in 30 TAC 344.52, Installation of Backflow Prevention Devices, including:

- eliminating authorization of double check valves,
- adding spill resistant vacuum breakers as an allowable alternative,
- including requirements for the use of in-line filters or strainers, and
- changing terminology from backflow prevention "devices" to "assemblies" to align with 30 TAC 290, Public Drinking Water.

Additionally, the petitions seek to revise 30 TAC 344.50, Backflow Prevention Methods, to align current TCEQ rules with existing national and international standards concerning the health hazard classification of irrigation systems, the backflow assemblies acceptable for use in protection against an irrigation system, and the terminology used to refer to a backflow prevention assembly.

Information on cross-connection and backflow prevention, a link to the current TCEQ rules, and copies of the Commission's decision on the petitions can be found on the [Landscape Irrigation Regulation Stakeholder](#) page on the TCEQ's website.

Stakeholder meetings are an opportunity for the public to provide informal comments to staff prior to the start of formal rulemaking. While staff will review all comments received, the TCEQ will not formally respond to any informal comments.

Stakeholder meetings will be held at following locations and times:

Jan. 9, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Region 4
2309 Gravel Drive, Public Meeting Room
Fort Worth, Texas 76118

Jan. 10, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Region 5
2916 Teague Drive
Tyler, Texas 75701

Jan. 11, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.

Magnolia Multi-Service Center
7027 Capitol Street
Houston, Texas 77011

Jan. 16, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

Tesoro Building

8700 Tesoro Drive, 1st Floor Conference Room
San Antonio, Texas 78217

Jan. 17, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Region 14
TAMUCC-NRC Building
6300 Ocean Drive
Corpus Christi, Texas 78412

Jan. 18, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.

Harlingen Water Works Building
114 North L Street
Harlingen, Texas 78550

Jan. 22, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

El Paso Public Library
501 North Oregon Street
El Paso, Texas 79901

Jan. 23, 2018, at 6:00 p.m.

Wolfforth Public Library Community Room
508 East Hwy 62/82
Wolfforth, TX 79382

Jan. 29, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Region 11
12100 Park 35 Circle, Building E, Room 201S
Austin, Texas 78753

* Please note: The Austin meeting will also be [webcast](#) .

TCEQ will accept comments through Feb. 28, 2018. Written comments should reference Rule Project Number 2018-004-344-CE and be submitted to:

Derek Baxter
TCEQ - Office of Legal Service
P.O. Box 13087 - MC205
Austin TX 18177-3087

Or faxed to 512-239-4808.

Electronic comments may be submitted via the TCEQ [eComments](#) system.

For additional information please contact Melissa Keller, Program Support Section, at 512-239-1768 or the Program Support Section Main Line 512-239-0400.

Clean and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds Project Priority Invitation State Fiscal Year 2019

Dec. 2017 - The Texas Water Development Board is currently requesting information for projects to be funded in the upcoming fiscal year's State Revolving Fund programs' Intended Use Plans.



To be included in the initial Project Priority List for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2019, entities must submit a completed Project Information Form through the online application or by completing the Microsoft Word application. Project Information Forms must be received by **5:00 p.m. on March 2, 2018**.

The Clean and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds financial assistance programs help communities save money by providing cost-effective funding for wastewater and water infrastructure projects. Entities that use these programs achieve substantial savings by receiving below-market interest rates and, in some instances, principal forgiveness.

Principal forgiveness may be available for entities that qualify as disadvantaged communities, for projects with green components, or for projects addressing disaster recovery or urgent need situations. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund also includes principal forgiveness for Very Small Systems. While these programs are accessible year round, the principal forgiveness subsidies available are generally allocated to projects on the initial Project Priority List each year.

Reminder: Project Information Forms submitted in previous years must be updated to be included in the SFY 2019 lists.

You may access Project Information Forms or update forms through the following links:

- [Online Loan Application](#)
- [Word Document](#)

For assistance regarding the State Revolving Fund programs, please contact:

- Issa McDaniel, Clean Water State Revolving Fund program coordinator
(512) 463-1706 or Issa.McDaniel@twdb.texas.gov
- Matthew Schmidt, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program coordinator
(512) 463-8321 or Matthew.Schmidt@twdb.texas.gov

Regional financial assistance workshop to be held in Edinburg on December 12

Nov. 2017 - The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) will hold a financial assistance workshop in Edinburg, Texas, on Tuesday, December 12, 2017.



The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) will hold a financial assistance workshop in Edinburg, Texas, on Tuesday, December 12, 2017. The workshop will provide valuable information and one-on-one opportunities to discuss your project needs. The TWDB regional project team for your area, along with TWDB program coordinators, will be at the workshop to discuss specific projects and answer any questions you may have.

The workshop will take place at the Edinburg Conference Center at Renaissance, Main Conference Room, 118 Paseo Del Prado, Edinburg, TX at 9:00 a.m.

The workshop will include:

- Disaster recovery response: amendments to the State Revolving Funds
- A brief but informative overview of the TWDB and the types of financing available
- A handout with financial program updates
- One-on-one meetings with TWDB staff to explore funding options for your projects
- A one-hour presentation. Meetings with TWDB staff will follow the presentation.

Registration information

Please email your name, title, entity, email, telephone number, and the workshop location you are planning to attend to srfworkshops@twdb.texas.gov. General questions may be directed to your [regional project team manager](#).

Please register as soon as possible, as venues are subject to capacity limitations.

Please visit the [TWDB website](#) to view future dates and locations for TWDB financial assistance workshops.

TCEQ Approves Publication of Proposed Petroleum Storage Tank Rules

Nov. 2017 - On Nov. 15, 2017, TCEQ commissioners approved publication of the proposed rules for petroleum storage tanks.

The proposed rulemaking amends Title 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 334. This required rulemaking will incorporate necessary changes to 30 TAC Chapter 334 in accordance with the EPA's 2015 revisions to the [federal underground storage tank \(UST\) regulations](#) in Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 280.

The rule revisions include:

- Periodic operation and maintenance requirements for UST systems to conduct walkthrough inspections and test UST system components,
- New requirements to annually test specific release-detection equipment,
- Changes to comply with existing EPA release-detection requirements to monitor at least every 30 days (instead of every 35 days), and
- Minor rule revisions relating to the fee on delivery of petroleum products to reflect changes that were statutorily implemented in the Texas Water Code in 2015.

The public comment period will be Dec. 1, 2017 through Jan. 9, 2018. Comments may be [submitted electronically](#) (link removed) beginning Dec. 1, 2017.

A formal public rule hearing is also scheduled for **2:00 p.m. on Jan. 9, 2018**, at the TCEQ's Central Office located at 12100 Park 35 Circle, Austin, TX 78753, in Building E, Conference Room 201S.

Visit the TCEQ website for more information about the [proposed rule](#).

TCEQ Seeks Comments on Rules Proposed to Consolidate Public Notices for Certain Case-by-Case Air Permit Applications

Nov. 2017 - On Nov. 15, 2017, TCEQ commissioners approved publication of proposed rules on consolidated public notice for certain air permits.

The proposed rulemaking amends 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapters 39 (Public Notice) and 55 (Requests for Reconsideration and Contested Case Hearings; Public Comment) and implements Senate Bill 1045 from the 85th Texas Legislature, 2017 regular session.

The proposed rule requires anyone applying for a new permit, or amending an existing permit, under 30 TAC Chapters 116, Subchapters B or G (relating to New Source Review Permits and Flexible Permits), to publish one consolidated public notice (instead of two public notices, the *Notice of Receipt of Application and Intent to Obtain Permit* and *Notice of Application and Preliminary Decision*) only when the TCEQ performs all the following within 15 days of receipt of the application:

- Declares the application administratively complete;
- Declares the application technically complete; and
- The executive director has prepared a draft permit.

This consolidated public notice would allow the public to submit comments, request a public meeting, and request a contested case hearing within 30 days from the date it was published in the newspaper. [See more information about the proposed rulemaking.](#)

The TCEQ will hold a public hearing for the proposed rulemaking on Jan. 3, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. in Building E, Room 201S, at the commission's central office (12100 Park 35 Circle, Austin, TX 78753).

Comments may be [submitted electronically](#). The last day to submit comments is Jan. 3, 2018.

New Online Reporting Tool for the Regulatory Assessment Fee

Nov. 2017 - Online reporting to collect assessment fees from retail customers

Investor-owned utilities (IOUs), water districts, water supply corporations (WSCs) and certain counties are required to collect assessment fees from retail customers and then forward those fees on to the TCEQ. These fees are used to pay the costs and expenses incurred in the regulation of these public utilities and to provide on-site technical assistance and education to these retail public utilities.

The TCEQ is in the process of transitioning the RAF reporting from a paper “coupon” to an electronic submission. In December 2017, utilities will have the option to use either the paper report or the online reporting system for the 2017 calendar year.

Beginning in 2018, the TCEQ will no longer accept paper reports. Utilities will receive a postcard reminding them that online reporting for the year will begin in December 2018.

The online portal will offer utilities:

- auto calculation of the fee owed, and
- a seamless transition from online reporting to online payment with credit card or electronic check using the TCEQ’s ePay, or invoice by mail.

For updates and instructions, visit the RAF webpage at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/raf. For questions, please email wufees@tceq.texas.gov or call 512-239-4691 and ask for the RAF Coordinator.

Upcoming Disaster-Recovery Financial Assistance Workshops

Nov. 2017 - The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) will host financial assistance workshops in Corpus Christi, Houston, Woodville, and Beaumont to focus on disaster recovery for water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities.



The workshops will provide valuable information and opportunities for one-on-one conversations to discuss your recovery project needs. The TWDB outreach team, regional team personnel, and program coordinators will be attending to discuss specific projects and answer any questions you may have.

Upcoming disaster-recovery workshops:

Corpus Christi

Nov. 30, 2017, at 10:00 a.m.
Coastal Bend Council of Governments
2910 Leopard Street
Corpus Christi, TX

Houston

Dec. 5, 2017, at 1:00 p.m.
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Conference Rooms B & C, 2nd floor
3555 Timmons Lane
Houston, TX

Woodville

Dec. 12, 2017, at 9:00 a.m.
Tyler Nutrition Center
Room 19
201 Veterans Way
Woodville, TX

Beaumont

Dec. 13, 2017, at 9:00 a.m.
South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
2210 Eastex Freeway
Beaumont, TX

The workshop will include:

- Disaster-recovery response: amendments to the State Revolving Funds
- A brief overview of the TWDB and the types of financing available
- A handout with financial program updates
- One-on-one meetings with TWDB staff to explore funding options for your projects

Registration information

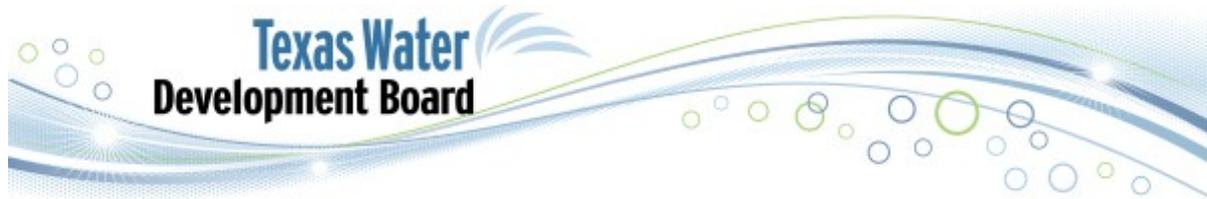
Please email your name, title, entity, email, telephone number, and the workshop location you are planning to attend to srfworkshops@twdb.texas.gov. General questions may be directed to your [regional project team manager](#) or Mark Evans at Mark.Evans@twdb.texas.gov.

Please register as soon as possible, as venues are subject to capacity limitations.

Please visit the [TWDB website](#)  to view future dates and locations for TWDB disaster-recovery financial assistance workshops and general program financial assistance workshops.

Water Development Board regional financial assistance workshop to be held in Yoakum on Nov. 7

Oct. 2017 - Regional financial assistance workshop to be held in Yoakum on Nov. 7



The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) will hold a financial assistance workshop in Yoakum, Texas, on Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2017.

The workshop will provide valuable information and one-on-one opportunities to discuss your project needs. The TWDB regional project team for your area, along with TWDB program coordinators, will be at the workshop to discuss specific projects and answer any questions you may have.

The workshop will take place at the Texas Department of Transportation, Training Room, 403 Huck Street, Yoakum, TX at 10:00 a.m.

The workshop will include:

- Disaster recovery response: amendments to the State Revolving Funds
- A brief but informative overview of the TWDB and the types of financing available
- A handout with financial program updates
- One-on-one meetings with TWDB staff to explore funding options for your projects
- A one-hour presentation. Meetings with TWDB staff will follow the presentation.

Registration information

Please email your name, title, entity, email, telephone number, and the workshop location you are planning to attend to srfworkshops@twdb.texas.gov. General questions may be directed to your [regional project team manager](#).

Please register as soon as possible, as venues are subject to capacity limitations.

Please visit the [TWDB website](#) , to view future dates and locations for TWDB financial assistance workshops.

TCEQ Offers Select License Exams in Spanish

Oct. 2017 - The following license exams are available in Spanish.

- Public Water System Operator Class D
- Wastewater Collection System Operator Class I
- Wastewater Treatment Facility Operator Class D

The Spanish exams will not be available via Computer Based Testing (CBT) and therefore applicants will be required to sit for a paper exam.

[See information to register for the exam and for test locations.](#)

For additional information, please contact TCEQ Occupational Licensing at 512-239-6133 or by email at licenses@tceq.texas.gov, or Small Business & Local Government Assistance at 800-447-2827 or by email at TexasEnviroHelp@tceq.texas.gov.