



SMALL BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSISTANCE DIVISION, MC 106
TEXAS NATURAL RESOURCE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
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Small Business **The Advocate**

For and about small businesses affected by environmental regulations

Healthy Environment. Strong Business. Good Sense.

PD-006/99-2

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Do You Need to File a TRI?

Three industries that may include some small businesses have been added to the list of who must file Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) reports each year. Also known as "Form R," a TRI report tells about a facility's air emissions, waste disposal, and wastewater discharges.

The three new industries are solvent recovery services, commercial hazardous waste treatment facilities, and chemical distributors. These industries must file TRI reports for calendar 1998.

Complete details about who must report are available on the Internet at http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/oppr/tri/tri_basics.html

The calendar 1998 TRI report for all affected industries is due in to the TNRCC's TRI Program by July 1. For answers to your questions about the TRI, call 512/239-3100. ■

Notes from Austin

House Bill (HB) 766 would ensure that **businesses get fair, courteous treatment** from state employees (much like SBAP's 1996 "Customer Bill of Rights") and create a **small-business ombudsman** to record complaints ... **HB 1083** would define "microbusiness" as "not more than 20 employees" ... **Senate Bill 503** would **exempt from property tax evaluation** equipment that reduces wastewater volume, reuses and recycles wastewater, or treats wastewater for reuse in certain operations... **HB 1471** would call for an **impact statement** telling how a proposed bill would affect small businesses, if requested by a legislative committee chair ... **HB 1549** would **move Dept. of Economic Development's Small Business Assistance Program to Workforce Commission** ... Get the full text of any proposed bills on the Web at <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>. ■

CONFIDENTIALLY SPEAKING:

Free Help with Regs!

Would you like to spend less time worrying about environmental regulations so you can focus on the rest of your business? Then the TNRCC's Small Business and Environmental Assistance (SBEA) Division has the help you need.

By calling the SBEA at 1-800-447-2827, you can get a professional environmental consultant to visit your business, tell you whether you comply with the rules, and suggest changes to make if you don't.

Your consultant will also give you tips to reduce waste and prevent pollution. Often, these tips will help you reduce the "compliance burden" on your business and thus save money.

Best of all, this site assistance visit is free—and confidential! No information from this visit is shared with the TNRCC's Enforcement Division. Also, if you correct any problems the consultant finds, you could qualify for a one-year reprieve from routine TNRCC inspections.

To qualify for this program, you must own your own business and have 100 or fewer employees.

This program is supported through August 31 with an EPA grant. Call the SBEA at 1-800-447-2827 and schedule your site assistance visit today! ■

Gas Stations Fight East Texas Ozone

The TNRCC is enlisting more help from gas stations in its new campaign to reduce air pollution in Texas. Called the Texas Clean Air Strategy, this new campaign uses a regional approach to cut levels of pollutants that form ground-level ozone, or “smog.” One source of these pollutants is gasoline fumes. These fumes consist of volatile organic compounds, or VOCs.

For some time, the TNRCC has attacked levels of VOCs with a rule called Stage I vapor recovery requirements. This rule now applies to gas stations that pump at least 10,000 gallons a month in the Beaumont-Port Arthur, El Paso, Houston-Galveston, and Dallas-Fort Worth areas.

To help reduce ground-level ozone, the TNRCC plans to extend this rule to 95 counties in the eastern half of the state. Most of these counties are along and east of I-35, but a few are farther west. Look for your county in the list under “Who Is Affected?” in the box at right.

This proposed rule will not apply to about 92 percent of the stations in this 95-county area—those that pump less than 125,000 gallons a month. But even these smaller stations can help cut VOC levels with voluntary actions.

Why a Regional Program?

Research shows that air pollutants travel much farther than we once thought. (Remember last summer’s smoke from fires in Mexico?) As a result, it’s hard to solve air-quality problems by working on one city at a time. Recent scientific models show that controlling VOCs in this 95-county area would reduce ozone levels in much of east and southeast Texas.

How Does Stage I Work?

When a tank truck refills an underground storage tank (UST) at a gas station, the new gasoline pushes VOCs out of the UST. If these VOCs get into the air, they can combine with other pollutants to form

The proposed Stage I vapor recovery rules would apply to stations that pump at least 125,000 gallons of gas a month in these counties:

Anderson	Calhoun	Franklin	Houston	Marion	Refugio	Tyler
Angelina	Camp	Freestone	Hunt	Matagorda	Robertson	Upshur
Aransas	Cass	Goliad	Jackson	McLennan	Rockwall	Van Zandt
Atascosa	Cherokee	Gonzales	Jasper	Milam	Rusk	Victoria
Austin	Colorado	Grayson	Johnson	Morris	Sabine	Walker
Bastrop	Comal	Gregg	Karnes	Nacogdoches	San Jacinto	Washington
Bee	Cooke	Grimes	Kaufman	Navarro	San Patricio	Wharton
Bell	Coryell	Guadalupe	Lamar	Newton	San Augustine	Williamson
Bexar	De Witt	Harrison	Lavaca	Nueces	Shelby	Wilson
Bosque	Delta	Hays	Lee	Panola	Smith	Wise
Bowie	Ellis	Henderson	Leon	Parker	Somervell	Wood
Brazos	Falls	Hill	Limestone	Polk	Titus	
Burleson	Fannin	Hood	Live Oak	Rains	Travis	
Caldwell	Fayette	Hopkins	Madison	Red River	Trinity	

ground-level ozone. Using Stage I vapor recovery, we can capture the VOCs first.

There are two parts to a Stage I vapor recovery system. One part is on the tank truck, and the other part is on the UST.

The tank truck has a system of fittings and hoses called a “vapor balance system.” This system captures gasoline fumes from the UST and routes them back to the truck. When the tank truck is refilled at a gasoline terminal, the captured fumes are again controlled.

For this system to work, it must connect to a corresponding set of fittings on the UST. If you have recently replaced your UST, it might have these fittings already. Check with your UST installer to be sure. If the Stage I rule applies to you and your UST does not have these fittings, you will have to have them installed.

How Much Will This Cost?

The TNRCC estimates the cost of installing fittings on existing USTs to be \$1,500 to \$1,750 a tank. A typical gas station has two or three gasoline USTs, so installing fittings would cost a total of \$3,000 to \$5,250. If you are already installing new tanks, the added cost for Stage I controls would be significantly less than this.

There is also the annual cost of maintenance, taxes, and insurance. This cost is estimated to be \$210 to \$368 per gas station, but you may be able to get a prop-

erty tax exemption for the value of these fittings and other pollution-control equipment. Call 512/239-6348 for more information. The smallest gas stations affected by this rule would incur costs of approximately \$0.04 to \$0.07 per \$100 of gasoline sales.

When Does This Rule Take Effect?

As mentioned above, the Stage I rule is already in effect in the Beaumont-Port Arthur, El Paso, Houston-Galveston, and Dallas-Fort Worth areas. The commission is expected to consider adopting the proposal to extend this rule to the other 95 counties in May.

Once this rule is adopted, larger stations would have to comply by December 31. ■



YES! I would like to receive Small Business' The Advocate

Article V, Section 66C, H.B. 558, 66th Legislature, 1979, requires state newsletters to notify recipients in three consecutive issues that they must formally request the publication in order to continue receiving it. **If you wish to continue receiving Small Business' The Advocate, please return this form to:**

Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division, MC 106
Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, TX 78711-3087

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 22 - Golden Triangle SBAC - Beaumont

April 22 - Earth Day

(Call the TNRCC at 512/239-0028 for a free copy of the Texas Environmental Event Planning Guide, GI-157.)

April 28, 29 - Auto Body/Auto Repair Workshops - Nacogdoches

(Call 1-800-447-2827 for information.)

May 3-5 - Environmental Trade Fair - Austin

(Call 512/239-6691 for information.)

May 4 - Texas Environmental Excellence Awards Luncheon

(Call 512/239-3164 for information.)

May 11, 12 - Auto Body/Auto Repair Workshops - Del Rio

(Call 1-800-447-2827 for information.)

May 12 - Fort Worth SBAC

May 22 - Dallas SBAC

June 3 - Houston-Galveston SBAC, Houston

For details, call the SBEA at 1-800-447-2827.

The Small Business Advocate is published bimonthly by the Small Business Assistance Program.

Comments or suggestions for future articles should be sent to:

The Small Business Advocate Editor
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Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

Toll Free 1-800-447-2827

(All calls are confidential)

Fax: 512-239-1065

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