



# TCEQ HAS SUCCESSFUL 83RD LEGISLATIVE SESSION

**F**or the TCEQ, this year's legislative session (the 83rd) was relatively calm, especially compared to the last session, when the agency successfully completed Sunset Review.

Total appropriations for the upcoming biennium are \$734 million, which represents a 5 percent increase from the 2012–2013 biennium. FTEs (full-time-equivalent employees) will be reduced by five.

Many of this session's bills fell under the category of growth management—i.e., legislation made necessary by the need to accommodate the state's enormous population and economic growth. HB 4 will ask voters to approve a constitutional amendment to allocate approximately \$2 billion to help address the state's current and future water infrastructure needs through the Texas Water Development Board. The TCEQ's role may include assisting regional water planning groups by providing technical assistance in prioritizing projects from a regulatory and permitting perspective.

Below are brief summaries of some of the legislation that affects the TCEQ.

### **TERP (SB 1727)**

Moves several existing programs (such as the Texas Clean Fleet Program and the

Alternative Fueling Facilities Program) into the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan program, and adds several new programs (such as the Agricultural Product Transportation Program). TERP will also receive an increase of \$24.9 million plus five FTEs.

### **Transfer Certain Water Functions to the PUC (HB 1600)**

Transfers most of the water and wastewater utility rate-making responsibilities to the Public Utility Commission, effective Sept. 1, 2014. Also transfers 20 FTEs and approximately \$1.4 million.

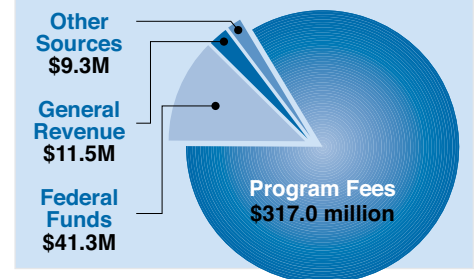
### **Regulation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (HB 788)**

Directs the TCEQ to promulgate rules that will allow it to issue greenhouse gas air permits in accordance with federal law. Contains a subsection providing that should greenhouse gas permits no longer be authorized under federal law, the TCEQ will immediately cease issuing and requiring them.

### **Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Compact Commission (SB 347)**

Makes several fee changes to ensure secure, stable, and consistent funding for the Compact Commission. Also makes several changes to fee, disposal, and operational guidelines.

### **Operating Budget for FY 2014**



### **Reporting and Information Availability for State Water Users (HB 2615)**

Makes changes to the Water Code to increase the penalties for those failing to file annual water-rights-use reports or to timely comply with a TCEQ request for records.

### **Rio Grande Compact Commission (General Appropriations Act, Rider 28 [see page VI-24])**

Provides \$5 million for legal costs for litigation between Texas and New Mexico concerning the 1938 Water Compact.

Further information on these and other bills passed in the 83rd legislative session, as well as information on their implementation, will be posted on the TCEQ website at [www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/legislation](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/legislation) as it becomes available. ↗



Natural Outlook is published monthly by the TCEQ's Agency Communications Division. Articles are not copyrighted and may be reproduced. (Photos and graphics that are credited to other sources may not be used without their permission.) Please credit the TCEQ for material used and send a copy to the editor: Natural Outlook MC 118, TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087. Or e-mail <ac@tceq.texas.gov>, or fax 512-239-5010.

To sign up to receive e-mail alerts of new issues, visit [www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/outlook](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/outlook).

How is our customer service? [www.tceq.texas.gov/customersurvey](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/customersurvey)

The TCEQ is an equal opportunity employer. The agency does not allow discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status.