

AUGUST 2006

## Small Businesses and Local Governments: Use Hotline for Confidential Assistance

Small businesses and local governments can receive confidential technical assistance on air, water, waste, and pollution prevention issues by calling the Small Business and Local Government Assistance Program (SBLGA) hotline at 1-800-447-2827. This toll-free hotline is confidential and allows the regulated community the opportunity to ask questions without the threat of enforcement.

SBLGA also offers a variety of publications, posters, self-help tools, and compliance checklists. In addition, this program provides updates and clarification on new or revised rules and offers common sense compliance options for many small businesses. For more information, visit the Small Business and Local Government Assistance web site at [www.sblga.info](http://www.sblga.info).



- approving pollution abatement plans to ensure protection of the underground water supplies (aquifers) in certain designated areas of the state;
- administering the Dam Safety Program;
- responding in a timely manner to statewide emergencies and natural disasters, such as oil and hazardous substance spills, and hurricanes;
- responding in a timely manner to statewide air emissions events;
- responding to alerts from the Texas Department of Homeland Security concerning critical infrastructures, such as dams;
- maintaining and providing the Strike Team's specialized personnel and equipment for response to large-scale emergencies and natural disasters in any region in the state; and
- providing environmental education and technical assistance to communities as needed.

If you have questions, contact your regional office for assistance at [www.tceq.state.tx.us/about/directory/region/reglist.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/about/directory/region/reglist.html).

## TCEQ Regional Offices Provide Local Assistance

It is essential for Texans to have access to TCEQ staff, and in a state the size of Texas that could pose a problem. So, to protect the public and the local environment, the TCEQ has 16 regional offices and three special project offices. The major responsibilities for the regions include:

- conducting investigations for compliance at the permitted and registered air, water, and waste facilities located across the state;
- investigating complaints at permitted and non-permitted facilities and operations, based on requests for assistance from citizens, entities, or other concerned parties;
- developing enforcement action referrals for violations identified during investigations;
- monitoring the quality of ambient air and surface water (rivers, lakes, and bays);
- monitoring the quality of public drinking water;
- overseeing and ensuring compliance with water rights and, when drought conditions exist, allocating the limited water resources in certain designated areas of the state;

## Hot Tips for a Cool Summer!

It's summertime in Texas and school is out. Even so, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Stephen L. Johnson offers sound advice: "Although school is out, our environmental responsibility never hears the dismissal bell. By learning the environmental ABC's of summer, we can keep green in our wallets and help green our communities."

Would you like to find out how to have a healthy and safe summer and help your wallet while protecting the environment? EPA's web site presents tips on how to do just that. You can find information on:

- ways to conserve and protect our water
- making purchases to save energy
- enrolling in a green energy program (home energy purchased from renewable energy resources)
- protecting yourself from overexposure to the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays
- maintaining your vehicle
- using pesticides safely
- maintaining a healthy lawn

To find out how, visit [www.epa.gov/epahome/hi-summer.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epahome/hi-summer.htm).



An environmental message brought to you by the Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division.

## Attend TCEQ Agenda Meetings Online with New Webcast

Want to know what is going on at the TCEQ or teach your students about state agencies? Well, the TCEQ can help. The TCEQ is the first state agency offering a live webcast of its agenda meetings over the Internet. These live webcasts began June 14 and will transmit twice a month, according to the agenda-meeting schedule. By viewing these meetings online you will get a feel for how the agency really works. As the webcasts continue, the public can access online a six-month webcast archive of previous meetings. TexasAdmin.com provides its services at no cost to the agency or the state. You can access webcasts at [www.texasadmin.com/cgi-bin/tnrcc.cgi](http://www.texasadmin.com/cgi-bin/tnrcc.cgi) and at [www.tceq.state.tx.us](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us).

## Teachers, Recycle your Crayons!

Do you have old, broken crayons from the school year? Don't throw them away. Crayons are petroleum products that take years to biodegrade, so recycle them. Below is a quick project to do with your students or youth group.



- Have your students first sort the crayons by color, then have them break the crayons into 1/2 inch pieces.
- Place one sorted pile of crayons in a small crock pot and turn the heat on low until it melts. This should take about 30 minutes.
- While the crayons are melting, talk to the student about recycling and what they can do to recycle.
- Once the crayons are melted, pour or spoon the melted crayons into molds. These molds can be anything from silicone baking molds to cupcake tins.
- Once the melted crayons are poured into molds carefully place the molds into a refrigerator, freezer or ice chest.
- Leave them for about 10 minutes or until you can flip the molds over and release the crayons.

Now you have new crayons in fun shapes to use in your classroom—the best part about the new crayons is they are really made from something old; they are RECYCLED. For more great ways to teach environmental science in your classroom, go to our web site [www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/education/k-12education/lessonplans.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/education/k-12education/lessonplans.html) or contact us at [educate@tceq.state.tx.us](mailto:educate@tceq.state.tx.us).

## Space Available for Water Quality Seminar

The TCEQ will hold its Water Quality/Storm Water Seminar on September 14-15, 2006, at the Austin Marriott North. Topics for discussion include Phase II MS4 Storm Water Permits, Wastewater Permitting, New EPA Initiatives, and Compliance Improvement Strategies. Twelve hours of continuing education credit is available for Wastewater Operators and Professional Engineers. For more information, visit [www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/events/seminars/wtrquality\\_stormwtr.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/events/seminars/wtrquality_stormwtr.html).

## Updated TCEQ Publications

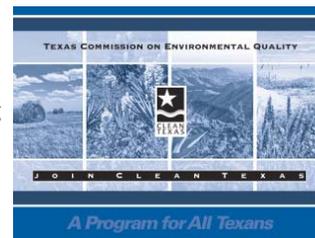
**TCEQ Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2007-2011 (SFR-037/07)** is a legislatively mandated report submitted biennially to the Governor's Office of Budget, Planning and Policy and the Legislative Budget Board, which assesses TCEQ activities and plans for goals and objectives. To view the Strategic Plan, visit [www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/comm\\_exec/pubs/sfr/035\\_07.pdf](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/comm_exec/pubs/sfr/035_07.pdf).

Do you live in a floodplain? Do you know what to do in case of a flood? **Living in a Floodplain – Risks, Planning, &**



**Recovery (GI-084)** includes information on what a floodplain is and how to prepare for a flood event before, during, and after. To view a copy of the pamphlet, visit [www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm\\_exec/forms\\_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-084.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-084.html).

Is your organization committed to a cleaner future for the Texas environment? If so, become a part of CLEAN TEXAS—an environmental leadership program offered by the TCEQ. The overall goal of the program is to produce real environmental improvements, such as reducing air emissions, improving water quality, preventing pollution, and improving compliance with environmental regulations. For more information about this program, order a copy of **Join Clean Texas, A Program for All Texans (GI-258)**. To view the pamphlet online, visit [www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm\\_exec/forms\\_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-258.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-258.html).



You are currently on our subscription list to receive the monthly newsletter, *Environmental News You Can Use*. Instead of receiving the paper copy in the mail, you now have the option of receiving e-mails from us when we post the latest issue in PDF format on our Web site at [www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm\\_exec/forms\\_pubs/pubs/pd/pd-025.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/pd/pd-025.html).

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