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Report to the Governor: Public Water System Capacity Development Program

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Public Water System Capacity Development Program

Prepared by Water
Supply Division

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is the primary state agency authorized to enforce the federal 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). TCEQ enforces the SDWA through the implementation of state and federal rules and regulations for public water systems.

The 1996 reauthorization of, and amendments to, the federal SDWA Section 1420(c)(3) state:

Not later than 2 years after the date on which a state first adopts a capacity development strategy under this subsection, and every 3 years thereafter, the head of the state agency that has the primary responsibility to carry out this title in the state shall submit to the Governor a report that shall also be available to the public on the efficacy of the strategy and progress made toward improving the technical, managerial and financial capacity of public water systems in the state.

The report to the Governor describes TCEQ's implementation and enforcement authority for the public drinking water and capacity development programs. This report will be made available to the public on TCEQ's web site.

BACKGROUND

The 1996 Amendments to the SDWA made significant contributions to the national drinking water agenda. One of these was the introduction of capacity development programs that recognized the importance of creating and maintaining viable public water systems.

Implementation of capacity development programs provided a framework for both states and federal governments to work with public water systems to ensure they acquire and maintain necessary financial, managerial, and technical (FMT) "capacity."

This capacity can provide public water systems with the knowledge and resources to meet the public health goals of the SDWA, while providing customers with reliable and affordable water service. As part of the amendments to the SDWA, states were required to submit capacity development strategies to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These strategies explain how the states addressed FMT issues for new and existing public water systems.

EPA approved TCEQ's Capacity Development Strategy for new and existing water systems on July 16, 1999 and July 6, 2000, respectively. This approval made Texas eligible for the SDWA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) grant funds. The DWSRF grant program provides loan funds for water system improvements through the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). Set-asides from the DWSRF grant help support the Texas drinking water program at

TCEQ, which includes capacity development. To meet the requirements of SDWA Section 1420(a), TCEQ must document that it has implemented a functional Capacity Development Program. This program must include:

- A basis of authority;
- Control points for the execution of authority; and
- A plan or strategy for program implementation and evaluation.

Control Points

EPA grants TCEQ authority as the state primacy agency for drinking water quality through state laws, regulations, and policies. TCEQ's control points for exercising its authority to ensure public water systems have adequate capacity are through facility plan review, operator certification, construction requirements, source water protection plans, and system planning requirements.

In 2013, the Texas legislature passed House Bill (HB) 1600, which transferred the water and wastewater utility regulatory program from

TCEQ to the Public Utility Commission (PUC), effective September 1, 2014. TCEQ kept primacy of the public drinking water programs, including capacity development.

Until 2014, TCEQ used two sets of control points: one was through the public drinking water program, and the other was through the water utility rates and services program.

Since 2014, PUC and TCEQ have continued to coordinate the work on the two control point reviews. Using a Memorandum of Understanding as guidance, the two agencies meet monthly and communicate frequently. TCEQ has oversight and control points for new public water systems, and the PUC has oversight and control points over new water and wastewater utilities.

In addition to submitting plans and specifications, TCEQ's control points include requiring new public water systems to:

- Apply for service from adjacent public water systems and provide written documentation of those applications and responses; and
- Submit a business plan that documents the financial ability to construct the system according to TCEQ requirements.

PUC's control points include requiring new water and wastewater utilities applying for new Certificates of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) to submit FMT information for approval.

Capacity Development Strategy

TCEQ's Capacity Development Strategy is designed to promote the viability of public water systems by developing public water systems' FMT capacity to meet both federal and state drinking water rules and regulations.

The four main objectives of TCEQ's Capacity Development Program are:

- Ensuring that new systems are viable;
- Assessing the viability of existing systems;
- Improving the viability of existing systems; and
- Assisting nonviable systems in restructuring.

In the last three years, TCEQ continued to implement this strategy through a variety of activities, including:

- On-site FMT assistance by both contractors and TCEQ staff;
- Optimization programs, including voluntary and mandatory treatment plant performance evaluations;
- Expedited processing of submittals and projects;
- Monitoring and assisting public water systems affected by hurricanes, drought, and other emergencies;
- Increasing focus on data integrity and process control and training for distribution system operations;
- Presentations at workshops and conferences; and
- Water system restructuring.

The 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA), Section 2012, requires state drinking water programs to consider, and include as appropriate, asset management into their state capacity development strategies. Consistent with this statutory change, state drinking water programs must revise their capacity development strategies to include a description of how asset management will be promoted through addressing the five-core-question framework of asset management by December 31, 2021.

DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND

TCEQ and the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) both have programs associated with the DWSRF. TWDB administers the DWSRF loan program. The objectives of the loan program are to address public health priorities, achieve compliance with the SDWA, assist systems in providing affordable drinking water, and maintain the long-term viability of the fund.

To support the loan program, TCEQ worked closely with TWDB on DWSRF project ranking, reviewing applicant FMT reports, pre-application meetings, TWDB financial assistance workshops, needs assessments, and set-asides. The primacy drinking water agency is required to prepare reports assessing the FMT capacities of DWSRF loan applicants.

- In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, TCEQ staff completed 47 FMT reports on DWSRF applicants;
- In FY 2019, TCEQ staff completed 54 FMT reports on DWSRF applicants for TWDB; and
- In FY 2020, TCEQ staff completed 28 FMT reports on DWSRF applicants.

DWSRF Set-Asides

The DWSRF set-aside program is outlined in Section 1452 of the SDWA, which authorizes states to use a portion of the Federal Capitalization Grant to set-aside funds to support various drinking water programs. As much as 31% of a State's Federal Capitalization Grant can be used for a combination of Administrative Activities (4%), Technical Assistance (2%), State Program Management (10%), and Local Assistance (15%). The set-asides provided important funding for capacity development activities.

INTRODUCTION: PUBLIC DRINKING WATER SYSTEMS IN TEXAS

TCEQ has defined three different types of public water systems:

Community Water System: A public water system that supplies water to the same population year-round.

Non-Transient Non-Community Water System: A public water system that regularly supplies water to at least 25 of the same people at least six months per year. Some examples are schools, factories, office buildings, and hospitals which have their own water systems.

Transient Non-Community Water System: A public water system that provides water in a place such as a gas station or campground where people do not remain for long periods of time.

Regulated Public Water Systems in 2018

During FY 2018, approximately 28,052,142 customers were provided drinking water from 7,004 public water systems (PWSs). TCEQ regulated:

- 4,647 community water systems;
- 895 non-transient non-community water systems; and
- 1,465 transient non-community water systems.

FY 2018 PWS Classifications and Populations Served

EPA Classification	Population Range	Number of PWSs	Population Served
Very Small	25 - 500	4,206	675,971
Small	501 - 3,300	1,764	2,563,539
Medium	3,301 - 10,000	691	3,919,603
Large	10,001 - 100,000	306	7,999,685
Very Large	Over 100,000	37	12,893,884
Total		7,004	28,052,142

Regulated Public Water Systems in 2019

During FY 2019, TCEQ regulated 7,031 PWSs that provided drinking water to 28,343,182 customers. Of these customers, approximately:

- 4,647 community water systems provided service to 27,558,348 customers;
- 893 non-transient non-community water systems served 500,101 customers; and
- 1,491 transient non-community water systems served 284,733 customers.

FY 2019 PWS Classifications and Populations Served

EPA Classification	Population Range	Number of PWSs	Population Served
Very Small	25 - 500	4,196	654,781
Small	501 - 3,300	1,796	2,582,880
Medium	3,301 - 10,000	690	3,922,920
Large	10,001 - 100,000	310	7,948,073
Very Large	Over 100,000	39	13,234,528
Total		7,031	28,343,182

Regulated Public Water Systems in 2020

During FY 2020, TCEQ regulated 7,049 PWSs that provided drinking water to 29,402,012 customers. Of these customers, approximately:

- 4,654 community water systems provided service to 28,608,899 customers;
- 884 non-transient non-community water systems served 504,081 customers; and
- 1,511 transient non-community water systems served 289,042 customers.

FY 2020 PWS Classifications and Populations Served

EPA Classification	Population Range	Number of PWSs	Population Served
Very Small	25 - 500	4,177	657,484
Small	501 - 3,300	1,802	2,600,444
Medium	3,301 - 10,000	705	4,009,138
Large	10,001 - 100,000	324	8,189,101
Very Large	Over 100,000	71	13,945,845
Total		7,049	29,402,012

WATER SYSTEM ASSISTANCE AND OPTIMIZATION

Financial, Managerial, and Technical Assistance

The FMT Assistance Contract remained a vital tool to assess and assist public water systems. The contractors were the Texas Rural Water Association (TRWA), which, in turn, subcontracted with other assistance providers. The FMT Assistance Contract works to improve the FMT capabilities of public water and wastewater systems through five primary objectives:

- FMT Capacity Assessments;
- Consolidation Assessments;
- FMT On-Site Assistance;
- Drinking Water Operator Training (DWOT); and
- Special Assistance.

FMT Capacity Assessments are required for water systems applying for certain types of funding from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). The assessment outlines a public water system's strength and identifies areas in need of improvement. The FMT Assistance contractor meets with the public water system's staff to evaluate the FMT capabilities of the system. Free

on-site assistance is offered following this assessment to help the system meet or maintain regulatory compliance.

Consolidation Assessments provide a resource for struggling systems to solve long-running problems through restructuring. The assessments can include examining options to consolidate with a neighboring system, looking for a buyer or turning the system over to the customers, and helping them form a water supply corporation.

FMT On-site Assistance provides free, one-on-one, on-site support and education on a wide variety of topics to improve public drinking water and wastewater systems. If a system is experiencing operational difficulties, for example, assistance could help to avoid regulatory compliance violations.

Drinking Water Operator Trainings (DWOT), also known as Directed Assistance Modules (DAMs), are training materials designed to enhance public water systems knowledge on highly technical topics. TCEQ’s Water Supply Division staff train the FMT Assistance contractors on how to deliver this training to public water system staff.

Special Assistance assignments do not fall into one of the previous four types of assistance. For example, TCEQ staff may issue a special assignment to help coordinate a meeting between a troubled water system, the community it serves, and TCEQ staff. Special Assignments have also been used to facilitate training workshops.

FMT Assistance Assignments Completed for FY 2018 through FY 2020

	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Contract Objective	Completed	Completed	Completed
	Assignments	Assignments	Assignments
FMT Capacity Assessments	51	48	27
Consolidation Assessments	14	30	2
FMT On-site Assistance	620	604	507
DWOT	169	107	67
Special Assistance	28	43	97
Total	882	832	700

On-Site Assistance & Optimization

TCEQ’s Water Supply Division, in the Office of Water, has provided extensive on-site assistance to public water systems struggling with compliance with state and federal rules, water outages, backflow events, and other serious issues. The division has made important contributions to the capacity development of many public water systems by improving their ability to produce and distribute safe drinking water. One of the ways this is accomplished is through Comprehensive Performance Evaluations and Special Performance Evaluations.

A Comprehensive Performance Evaluation (CPE) is an in-depth investigation, including special scientific studies, of the design, operations, maintenance, and administrative factors that limit the performance of a surface water treatment plant to remove potential pathogens during the process of treating surface water to produce potable water. A Special Performance Evaluation (SPE) is an investigation of the design, operation, maintenance, and administrative components of a surface water treatment plant that affects the removal of potential pathogens during the process of treating surface water to produce potable water. An SPE does not include identification of performance-limiting factors.

In FY 2018, Water Supply Division staff performed five Special Performance Evaluations (SPEs), five Comprehensive Performance Evaluations (CPEs), and provided 33 customized technical assistance visits covering iron and manganese control, disinfection byproduct management, chloramines and nitrification, diagnosis of treatment failures and mitigating contamination of source water and distribution systems. TOP staff and contractors provided on-site assistance to 42 water systems that triggered Level 2 Assessments under the Revised Total Coliform Rule (RTCR.) Staff participated in 43 operator technical training events at various Texas Water Utility Association (TWUA) District meetings, including presentations covering RTCR, coliform sample siting plans, chloramines, free chlorine conversions, and sanitary control of distribution systems.

In FY 2019, Water Supply Division staff performed two SPEs, one CPE, and provided RTCR on-site assistance to 22 water systems that triggered Level 2 Assessments, three Membrane Special Performance Evaluations, four Disinfectant Byproduct Evaluations, and provided 25 customized technical assistance visits. Staff participated in 25 operator technical training events at TWUA District meetings. Staff participated in train-the-trainer events, investigator training, and the 16th Annual EPA Drinking Water Workshop in coordination with EPA Region 6 Area Wide Optimization Program (AWOP).

In FY 2020, Water Supply Division staff performed 1 SPE and 2 CPEs. Staff and contractors provided assistance for Revised Total Coliform Rule Level 2 Assessments at 15 water systems, conducted three disinfection byproduct evaluations, presented operator training at 6 TWUA District meetings, participated in 3 train-the-trainer events for assistance providers, conducted customized technical assistance events for 18 water systems, and hosted two training workshops for EPA Region 6/7's Area Wide Optimization Program.

Cross-Connection Control

TCEQ Water Supply Division staff assisted public water systems with protecting their potable water supply by providing guidance on complying with TCEQ's backflow, prevention regulations. Each year, staff activities included:

- Technical presentations on cross-connection control and backflow prevention;
- Assistance to water systems during backflow events;

- Providing technical assistance at the annual TCEQ Public Drinking Water Conference;
- Participation in TCEQ Office of Compliance and Enforcement Investigator training;
- Updates to regulatory guidance documents; and
- Facilitation of TCEQ's Cross-Connection Control Subcommittee.

In FY 2018, cross-connection control staff activities included visits to 34 public water systems of varying sizes and complexities in seven TCEQ regions. In FY 2019, staff visited 14 public water systems in five TCEQ regions, and in FY 2020, staff visited four public water systems in three TCEQ regions.

Regionalization and Restructuring: At-Risk Systems

The Water Supply Division identifies, assists, and helps to restructure at-risk or failing public water systems and promote regionalization. Assistance is provided through free, on-site FMT Assistance referrals, which include consolidation assessments, restructuring assistance, and addressing compliance issues. Staff members also assist these systems by coordinating community meetings and connecting the systems with funding agencies. Systems that are determined to be “at-risk” include one or more of the following issues:

- Frequent outages;
- Lack of disinfection;
- Other public health threats - e.g., illegal sewage discharges;
- Abandonment by the owner or board of directors;
- Multiple compliance issues;
- Dwindling or loss of water source; and/or
- Mismanagement.

Voluntary restructuring is always the preferred method to get an at-risk or non-compliant system under new management. TCEQ provided free on-site assistance for systems wanting to restructure or form new entities.

The FMT program assists at-risk systems in exploring consolidation, restructuring, or forming new entities, seeking funding, and addressing compliance issues. In FY 2018, five consolidation assessments were conducted, six systems were assisted with capacity assessments or capital improvements, and an additional 23 received help with compliance violations. TCEQ staff also provided on-site assistance to two water systems, attended one community meeting, and coordinated with the PUC, funding agencies, and other agencies.

In FY 2019, 13 consolidation assessments and four capacity assessments or capital improvement assessments were conducted for the at-risk systems. Additionally, 13 systems received help with compliance violations, and the program monitored and assisted another 112 water systems in the at-risk category.

In FY 2020, one consolidation assessment and one capacity assessment or capital improvement assessment were conducted for the at-risk systems. Additionally, 14 systems received help with compliance violations, and the program monitored and assisted another 94 systems in the at-risk category.

Receiverships and Temporary Management

Sometimes the situations of the at-risk systems are grave enough that traditional assistance such as consolidation assessments do not work. For these types of cases, more formal restructuring through enforcement and the appointment of temporary managers or receivers were required. TCEQ and PUC worked closely together on these issues. Temporary management and receivership were used as a last resort to prevent water outages or public distribution of insufficiently treated water.

In FY 2018, TCEQ appointed or re-appointed two temporary managers and tracked 11 active cases of receivership and three cases of temporary management.

In FY 2019, TCEQ tracked four systems under temporary management and 11 systems in receivership.

In FY 2020, TCEQ appointed or re-appointed three temporary managers and tracked 11 active cases of receivership and eight cases of temporary management.

TRAINING AND COORDINATION

Annual Public Drinking Water Conference

Every August since 2003, TCEQ has held the Annual Public Drinking Water Conference in Austin. This popular, free conference attracted over 800 attendees every year for the first 15 years. In 2019, the PDW Conference changed locations to allow more attendees and a bigger exhibit space; attendance was over 1,100. Participants over the years have included water system operators and managers, TCEQ staff, other state and federal agencies, exhibitors, speakers, laboratory professionals, and engineers from across the state. Each year the focus is slightly different, but there are always updates on rules and regulations and pertinent topics such as the RTCR, lead and copper rule, chloramines, cross-connection control, corrosivity, optimization, funding, and source water protection.

In FY 2020, the PDW Conference moved to an online format due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were over 1,100 participants and 27 presentations. The presentations were recorded and are available online.

Texas Water Infrastructure Coordination Committee (TWICC)

FY 2020 marks TWICC's tenth year, and TWICC continues to provide a "one-stop-shop" for funding and other assistance for water and wastewater providers. TWICC members include representatives from Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), EPA, PUC, TWDB, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development, Texas Section of the American Water Works Association (TAWWA), North American Development Bank, Communities Unlimited Incorporated (CUI), General Land Office, Federal Emergency Management Agency and TRWA. TWICC holds meetings every other month, with members taking turns hosting. Entities seeking funding and other types of assistance are encouraged to attend TWICC meetings as guests either in person or by telephone.

The TWICC website (www.twicc.org) provides information on financial and technical assistance available to water and wastewater systems as well as contact information for member agencies.

EMERGENCY AND DROUGHT RESPONSE

Emergency Response

TCEQ continues to assist and support public water systems through activities of the Response and Capacity Development Team (RCDT), drinking water homeland security coordinator, TCEQ's Critical Infrastructure Division, a partnership with Texas Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (TXWARN), and Texas Department of Emergency Management's Public Works Response Team (PWRT). TCEQ staff provide analytical reports following emergency events and support for natural disaster responses, including extensive assistance to public water systems during emergencies.

Every year staff attended emergency response training and conferences, including hurricane response, disaster and emergency management, and terrorism awareness.

In FY 2018, TCEQ Water Supply Division (WSD) provided assistance and support to 38 water systems that experienced water outages or loss of pressure for more than 24 hours caused by extreme weather conditions. Freezing conditions caused line breaks, and excessive heat caused well failures. In FY 2019, that number was 23, and in FY 2020, that number was 19.

At TCEQ's 2018 Public Drinking Water Conference, approximately 800 attendees were provided with the 2018 Homeland Security Emergency Contact Update Form, and TCEQ staff updated the Emergency Contact information to 612 facilities in FY 2018.

TCEQ mailed a total of 7,000 Homeland Security Emergency Contact Update Forms, and staff updated the Emergency Contact information to 4,558 facilities in FY 2019.

In FY 2020, TCEQ updated 1,440 public water system points of contact and 293 emergency contacts.

Hurricane Harvey

Hurricane Harvey made initial landfall near Port Aransas, Texas, on August 25, 2017, as a category four storm. The hurricane slowly moved out of Texas, leaving behind record-setting rainfall totals of 20-64 inches and significantly damaging public water systems in 58 counties. Port Aransas, Houston, and Beaumont were impacted the most. The first week after landfall, TCEQ, with the assistance of EPA, contacted approximately 2,070 water systems located in the affected counties to determine their operational status and to conduct initial assessments of each facility. TCEQ completed tracking of the drinking water systems impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

At the storm's peak, 61 public water systems and 40 wastewater-treatment facilities were rendered inoperable or destroyed. In addition, more than 200 public water systems issued boil water notices. TCEQ staff members partnered with the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide additional aid to damaged water systems, specifically with on-site technical support and funding assistance.

TCEQ staff supported the American Water Works Association (AWWA) creation of the 2018 Hurricane After Action Report by participating in a workshop with several of the impacted utilities, mutual aid providers, EPA, and TXWARN representatives to review lessons learned. The workshop was held in San Antonio, Texas, the week of January 29, 2018.

TCEQ provided assistance to water systems before and after the landfall of Hurricane Harvey. They contacted five surface water systems and forty groundwater systems in areas predicted to be highly affected. Systems were provided guidance on protecting their assets and water supplies. Post landfall, TOP members provided on-site assistance by locating an emergency intake, confirming sanitary conditions in the distribution system, and restoring treatment to surface water treatment plants for several cities in the affected area.

To ensure Hurricane Harvey's recovery efforts were not delayed, the Water Supply Division expedited the review and approval of engineering plans and specifications for hurricane-impacted systems. Other emergency applications for new wells, waterlines, and interconnection with other water sources, as well as for repairs or replacement of various types of infrastructure, were also expedited. The Water Supply Division approved 16 emergency projects typically within 1-2 days of receipt.

Drought Response

Although significant rains, beginning in May of 2015 and continuing into 2017, provided relief from drought, mild drought conditions returned to the state during the summer of 2018, and while drought conditions have remained, they have not worsened because of periodic rainfall. TCEQ staff continued to monitor public water systems from the previous drought and provided assistance to systems that were newly affected. During the peak of the drought in FY 2014, there were 58 public water systems that self-reported having less than 180 days of water supply.

- At the end of FY 2018, there were three systems on the high-priority drought list, six being monitored on the Drought Watch List, and 128 systems were moved to the Drought Resolved/Success List.
- At the end of FY 2019, only one system remained on the High Priority Drought List, and three were being monitored on the Drought Watch List. Additionally, 134 systems were moved to the Drought Resolved/Success List.
- At the end of FY 2020, there is only one system on the high-priority drought list, two systems are being monitored on the Drought Watch List, and 135 systems were moved to the Drought Resolved/Success List.

COVID-19 Response

Impacts from the COVID-19 Outbreak on Capacity Development

To minimize the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the FMT capacity of public water systems, TCEQ created a centralized website to provide important information to maintain operations during the pandemic. The webpage was developed to provide guidance on continuity of operations, preparing for extended operator absence, technical guidance, how to obtain chemical supplies if shortages occur, and how to obtain emergency approvals.

TCEQ was in close contact with drinking water laboratories and public water system operators to ensure continued operations. To date, drinking water laboratories and public water systems have reported minimal service interruptions.

TCEQ's regional inspectors work closely with the public water systems in their regions to conduct comprehensive compliance investigations in order to determine compliance with the applicable regulations. They provide both verbal and written technical assistance and respond to emergencies and complaints. This work has been made more challenging due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. In order to continue protecting public health and maintaining the safe and sanitary quality of the potable water supply, the investigation process was adjusted so that the investigations could continue on an inhouse basis. Investigators review photos, records, and other documents to determine the compliance status of a public water system.

The Occupational Licensing and Registration Division (OLRD) extended license expiration deadlines and worked with providers to convert classroom courses to online delivery in order to meet the unexpected circumstances brought on by COVID-19.

FIELD INSPECTIONS and COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS

PWS investigators work out of TCEQ’s Office of Compliance and Enforcement (OCE) Regional Offices. Investigators work closely with the PWSs in their regions, and conduct comprehensive compliance investigations, respond to emergencies and complaints, and provide technical assistance.

OCE Region Office Activities FY 2018 through August 2020

Description	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Comprehensive Compliance Investigations	1,668	2,126	1,551
Complaint Responses	687	1,025	859

OPERATOR CERTIFICATION and WORKFORCE ISSUES

The gap between funding new treatment facilities and having operators with enough training and experience to operate new facilities has been a topic of discussion at TWICC meetings. Public water system operators who perform duties in drinking water production or distribution, as well as companies that operate public water systems on a contractual basis, must be licensed with TCEQ, unless exempt, and must comply with the requirements in Chapter 290, related to public water systems drinking water.

In FY 2018:

- There were approximately 16,517 licensed Texas water system operators.
- TCEQ processed approximately 67,533 new and renewal applications for water operator licenses.
- There were approximately 2,180 new water operator licenses issued and 4,029 water operator licenses renewed.

In FY 2019:

- There were approximately 16,916 licensed Texas water system operators.
- TCEQ processed approximately 7,095 new and renewal applications for water operator licenses.

- There were approximately 2,276 new water operator licenses issued and 3,420 water operator licenses renewed.

In FY 2020:

- There were approximately 16,464 licensed Texas water system operators.
- TCEQ processed approximately 6,774 new and renewal applications for water operator licenses.
- There were approximately 1,523 new water operator licenses issued and 3,705 water operator licenses renewed.