

TCEQ Analysis of TCEQ Contractor Surface Water Quality Sampling Data Collected on March 29, 2019 (Preliminary lab results)

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) received preliminary surface water quality data for 128 constituents at three (3) different sites. One sample was collected at each site on March 29, 2019 by the TCEQ's contractor. The constituents consist of inorganics, organics, metals, nutrients, total suspended solids, chemical oxygen demand (COD), and oil and grease in water. The sampling sites were the following:

- Upstream Tucker Bayou
- Mouth of Tucker @ Buffalo Bayou
- Tidal Road @ Tucker Bayou

This assessment is based on preliminary results received from the laboratory. These laboratory results are subject to change once the final report is issued. The TCEQ is providing the assessment of preliminary results in abundance of caution to make this information publicly available as quickly as possible. As sample results are received, or additional water quality sampling is completed, the data will be assessed, and results made available.

The TCEQ used the Texas Water Quality Standards and the Texas Risk Reduction Program as references for determining the known health protective concentration levels (PCLs) in surface water. PCLs are very conservative and below levels where we would expect any health impacts. The TCEQ is using these PCLs to evaluate impacts to aquatic life and human health. No public drinking water system draws its source water from the Houston Ship Channel. This methodology was also used for previously reviewed data from samples collected by ITC and will be used to review samples from the TCEQ contractor. The TCEQ used the PCLs listed in the tables below to assess the surface water quality data.

Table 1: Assessment of Preliminary Laboratory Results

	Upstream Tucker Bayou	Mouth of Tucker @ Buffalo Bayou	Tidal Road @ Tucker Bayou
Number of Constituents	128	128	128
Number of constituents analyzed but not detected (not detected above the method detection limit or quantitation limit)	120	106	109
Number of constituents detected above the method detection limit or quantitation limit	8	22	19
Number of constituents detected but below their known PCLs	2	7	4
Number of constituents that exceeded their known PCLs	2	6	8
Number of constituents that are still pending further TCEQ evaluation	0	0	0
Number of constituents that do not have a PCL or are assessed with other constituents*	4	9	7

*The water quality parameters ammonia nitrogen (as N), total Kjeldahl nitrogen, total phosphate, total organic nitrogen, total sulfides, and total suspended solids are not related to human health; therefore it is not appropriate to develop human health comparison values to evaluate these parameters. Three chemicals on the laboratory target analyte list (4-bromophenyl phenyl ether, 4-chlorophenyl phenyl ether, and benzo(g,h,i)perylene) do not have surface water comparison values and consequently will not be evaluated. These water quality parameters and chemicals are not directly related to the ITC incident, and the TCEQ is evaluating the chemicals that are directly related to the ITC incident (benzene and toluene, for example). C6-12, C12-28 and C28-35 range hydrocarbons, as well as total petroleum hydrocarbons, are included in the assessment of oil and grease. Therefore, these constituents are not assessed individually.

Table 2: Upstream Tucker Bayou

Constituent	Maximum (micrograms/L)	PCL (micrograms/L)
Copper	4.02	3.6
Phenolic	17.7	0.29

Table 3: Mouth of Tucker @ Buffalo Bayou

Constituent	Maximum (micrograms/L)	PCL (micrograms/L)
Chemical Oxygen Demand	1140000	150000*
2-Methylnaphthalene	50.5	30
Naphthalene	162	125
Oil & Grease, HEM	66600	28000
Phenolic	42.1	0.29
Zinc	100	84.2

Table 4: Tidal Road @ Tucker Bayou

Constituent	Maximum (micrograms/L)	PCL (micrograms/L)
Benzene	14800	581
Chemical Oxygen Demand	430000	150000*
2-Methylnaphthalene	76.6	30
Naphthalene	205	125
Oil & Grease, HEM	2770000	28000
Phenolic	122	0.29
Toluene	3400	1000
Xylenes, Total	1720	850

Footnote:

*COD is a measure of the oxygen demand exerted by chemical constituents in water. There was not a known PCL for COD, therefore the permitted technology-based limit was used for comparison purposes. Although COD levels for treated process wastewater vary 150000 micrograms/L for noncontact stormwater was provided for comparison purposes.