

## **Requirements for Quality Assurance in Nonpoint Source Projects**

A QAPP is required for all "environmental data operations" funded by this program, including

- generating data through measurement of water volume or quality, including laboratory, field, or automated analysis of water flow, chemistry, or other parameters (collectively known as monitoring)
- generating new geospatial data
- mathematical/statistical analysis using environmental monitoring and/or geospatial data (includes modeling)
- gathering (acquiring) existing data - monitoring, geospatial, or other data - and including it in new mathematical/statistical analysis (secondary or acquired data)

In other words, all work that involves the acquisition of environmental data shall be performed in accordance with a TCEQ-approved QAPP meeting all applicable TCEQ and EPA requirements. Environmental data includes any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions or ecological or health effects and consequences. Environmental data includes information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and compiled from other sources such as data bases or literature. No data collection or other work covered by this requirement may begin prior to receipt of the QAPP signed by TCEQ, and if necessary, the EPA, in addition to any other approval required for work to begin. Without prejudice to any other remedies available to TCEQ, TCEQ may refuse reimbursement for any environmental data acquisition performed prior to approval of a QAPP by TCEQ, and if necessary, EPA. Also without prejudice to any other remedies available to TCEQ, failure to meet the terms of the QAPP may result in TCEQ's suspension of associated activities and non-reimbursement of expenses related to the associated activities. Project budgets and timelines should account for the development and review of QAPPs accordingly.

The TCEQ must approve the plan before the environmental data operations may begin.