TCEQ GENERAL INFORMATION
External Relations Division
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Public Meetings on Wastewater Permit Applications

Purpose of this Meeting

This public meeting provides information about a wastewater permit application and allows members of the public to ask questions of the applicant and TCEQ and provide formal comments on the application.

What Wastewater Permits Cover

TCEQ is federally delegated by the EPA to control the discharge of pollutants to surface waters. Pollutants are generated from domestic activities such as restroom usage, bathing, food preparation, and laundry, or from industrial or commercial activities. TCEQ wastewater permits are designed to control pollutants and ensure that wastewater is treated sufficiently to protect the environment.

To determine the appropriate limits to include in the draft permit, TCEQ reviews each permit application for the proposed wastewater effluent discharge route, the designated uses and associated water quality standards of receiving waterbodies, and the type of wastewater (domestic or industrial).

Effluent is wastewater that has been treated, cleaned, and disinfected. Effluent limits are the maximum amount of a pollutant that can be in the effluent when it's returned to the receiving waterbody.

The permittee is required to measure and report the following parameters to TCEQ on a recurring schedule to ensure effluent limits are not exceeded. Typical domestic effluent parameters include:

- **Ammonia-nitrogen and total phosphorus** – Nutrient parameters used to protect aquatic life and limit nuisance aquatic vegetation.
- **Biochemical oxygen demand** – How much readily decomposable organic content is in the effluent being discharged. This is also a measure of how effective a given treatment is.
- **Discharge flow rate** – How much effluent is being released. This is often measured in gallons per day.
- **Dissolved oxygen and pH** – Parameters that ensure the effluent is protective of aquatic life.
- **Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) and Enterococci** – Pathogen indicator parameters that measures the disinfection effectiveness.
- **Total suspended solids** – The amount of solids in the effluent.

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These permits are designed to protect the public from harm when using state surface waters; for example, recreationally, such as for swimming, wading, or boating. These permits are also designed to protect aquatic life, including by addressing impacts on any endangered species in a water body. Nuisance odors are controlled by establishing buffer zones or separation distances to the nearest property line.

Issues TCEQ Cannot Consider for Wastewater Permit Applications

TCEQ does not have the authority to regulate flooding. TCEQ also cannot consider potential effects on property values, future use plans, or zoning when determining whether to approve or deny a wastewater permit application. Applicants must comply with local government requirements for zoning. Traffic patterns, roadway design, and traffic safety are regulated by the Texas Department of Transportation.

For More Information

For questions about the permitting process, call or email our Public Education Program at 800-687-4040 or pep@tceq.texas.gov.

You can also view pending permit applications, find information on public meetings and contested case hearings, provide comments, request accommodations, and more on our website at www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/participation.