



Opportunities for Meaningful Public Input in TCEQ Matters

The following summary is a non-exhaustive inventory of potential opportunities for public input on various types of TCEQ matters:

Permits and Permit Applications

Persons may access the agency's calendar of public meetings and hearings at this link which provides dates and locations of events as well as notices describing public participation opportunities- [Calendar of Public Meetings and Hearings on Permitting Cases - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)

Guidance on how to participate in environmental permitting proceedings may be found in English and Spanish at this link: [Overview: Public Participation in Environmental Permitting--for Applications Filed on or after Sept. 1, 2015 - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)

- Written public comments- comments on pending permit applications may be submitted within the timeframe set forth in the notice.*
- Written request for public meeting- persons may submit a request to the agency that a public meeting be held on a pending permit application. Requests may be submitted via hand delivery, mail, e-comment, or fax.*
- Public meetings on permit applications- the general format begins with an informal session where persons may ask questions and the applicant and/or the agency staff will respond. Persons may then make formal oral comments or provide written comments. For virtual meetings, written comments may be submitted via hand-delivery, mail, e-comment, or fax.*
- Notice and comment hearings- persons may make oral comments or provide written comments on applications for Title V permits (initial issuance, significant revisions, re-openings and renewals). For virtual meetings, written comments may be submitted via hand-delivery, mail, e-comment, or fax.* Announcements and notices related to Title V may be accessed at this link: [Title V Public Announcements and Public Notices - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Informational meetings- typically held on applications for which there is no public meeting provided by statute or rule, for example, standard permit rock crushers. The meeting may include a question-and-answer session and discussion of the application. No formal comment is taken.

* On permitting matters, written comments (at any time the application docket is opened and including comments during virtual meetings), written requests for a public meeting, and requests for a contested case hearing may be filed using any of the following methods:

- (1) Electronic "e-comment" filing: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/comment>;
- (2) Courier or hand delivery: Office of Chief Clerk, TCEQ, 12100 Park 35 Circle, Building F, Austin, TX 78753;
- (3) U.S. Mail: Office of the Chief Clerk, MC 105, TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087;
- (4) Fax: 512-239-3311 (Filing by fax can help the public meet applicable deadlines, however, it must be supplemented by mail or hand delivery to the Office of the Chief Clerk of the original document and the appropriate number copies within 3 business days.)



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- Request for contested case hearing- persons may submit a written request to the agency for a contested case hearing on a pending permit application that must identify the person's personal justiciable interest affected by the application. Request may be submitted via hand-delivery, mail, e-comment, or fax. *
- Requests for reconsideration - any person may ask the commission to reconsider the Executive Director's (ED) preliminary decision to issue a permit. This allows individuals who may not meet affected person requirements to point out errors in the draft permit.
- Participation in contested case hearings- affected persons granted party status may engage in discovery process, provide oral and written testimony, and written briefing including motions, closing arguments, and a response to the Administrative Law Judge's (ALJ) proposal for decision and proposed order.
 - Members of the public who are not parties may observe contested case hearings at the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH). All non-confidential proceedings held by SOAH are open to the public.
- Agenda for review of ALJ's proposed order after contested case hearing- parties are able to file exceptions and replies to the proposed order that are considered by the commissioners at a Commission agenda meeting. Parties to a contested case hearing may also make oral argument at this meeting.
- Motion for rehearing- parties to a contested case hearing and hearing requesters may file a motion for rehearing of the Commission's decision on a PFD. Parties to the motion may file briefing and, if the motion is set for an agenda, provide oral argument.
- Certain water quality registrations- persons may submit written comments, and, if a public meeting is held, may provide oral comments.
- Waste Registrations- persons may submit written comment, request public meeting to give written or oral comments, and if the registration is issued, may file a motion to overturn.
- Draft air standard permits- persons may submit written comments, and, if a public meeting is held, may provide oral comments (for rule-based or non-rule standard permits).
- Draft water quality general permits- persons may submit written comments, and, if a public meeting is held, may provide oral comments.
- Petitions for revocation- a person affected by the issuance of certain permit types or other orders of the Commission may initiate proceedings for revocation or suspension by forwarding a written petition to the executive director to be filed with the Commission. When the matter is initially set for agenda, the Commission may allow comments from the petitioner and members of the public hearings. If the Commission referred the petition for revocation to SOAH and was considering the ALJ's recommendation, only parties to the SOAH proceeding would be allowed to make arguments before the Commission.



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- Motion to overturn Executive Director's action- after the Executive Director takes action on delegated permit application or other authorization, a person may file with the chief clerk a motion to overturn the Executive Director's action. Pending and approved items on the Executive Director's Agenda are posted on the agency's website at this link: [Executive Director's Agenda and Marked Agenda - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)

Enforcement Matters and Environmental Complaints

- Environmental Complaint- using the forms at the following link, persons may make an environmental complaint in English or in Spanish, track the complaint once filed, learn about complaint procedures, and learn where to go for complaints that fall outside the agency's jurisdiction. [Make an Environmental Complaint - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Citizen Collected Evidence- Persons who believe someone is causing an environmental problem and possibly violating the law, may either file a complaint with the TCEQ (as described above), or may submit information documenting the problem. The executive director is authorized by statute to initiate an enforcement action based on information provided by a private individual. Procedures are provided in English and Spanish at this link: [Gathering and Preserving Information and Evidence Showing a Violation - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Administrative enforcement orders and agreed civil enforcement orders- persons may submit written public comment on administrative enforcement orders (entered by TCEQ) and agreed civil enforcement orders (negotiated with the Office of the Attorney General). Instructions on the comment process is set forth in the Texas Register notice for the specific matter.
 - Members of the public may observe contested case hearings on enforcement matters at SOAH. All non-confidential proceedings held by SOAH are open to the public.
- Agreed and Default Orders- persons may provide oral public comments at agenda for all agreed and default administrative enforcement orders being considered by the Commission.

Rulemaking

- Rulemaking public meeting- persons may provide written and oral comments at meetings on proposed rules. This webpage on TCEQ rulemaking provides a tracking tool for all pending and adopted rules- [Rules and Rulemaking - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Written comments may be submitted through eComments, fax, hand-delivery, or mail. [How to Comment on TCEQ Rulemakings - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Petitions for rulemaking - interested persons may submit a written petition to the commission to request the adoption of a rule. Requirements for petitions at this link: [Rule Petitions - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
Oral comment opportunity at commission agenda for rule petitions and any subsequent proposal and adoption of rules



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- Participation in rulemaking work groups- members of the public may participate in rulemaking work groups, which are typically formed as part of larger stakeholder or advisory group

General Public Comment

- A general public comment item is posted for work session or agenda at least once per month. The public may comment on issues within the commission's jurisdiction, with the exception of pending contested enforcement or permitting matters. Details regarding upcoming agenda meetings are available at this link: [Agenda Meetings and Work Sessions - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/agenda)
- The commission generally allows public comment on specific items at agenda except contested case items. The commission determines whether to allow public comment on specific items at work session on a case-by-case basis.
- A member of the public may submit correspondence or request to meet with agency staff on any matter and with individual Commissioners on non-contested matters. [Contact Us - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/contact)

Stakeholder Meetings and Advisory Groups

- Participation in Stakeholder meetings and advisory groups. Meeting details are usually provided through GovDelivery [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality \(govdelivery.com\)](http://govdelivery.com) or a listserv, and are posted on the webpage for the specific stakeholder or advisory group. Examples include:
 - [Tax Relief: Advisory Committee - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/tax-relief)
 - [Water Rights Advisory Work Group - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/water-rights)
 - [Advisory Committee for Water Utility Operator Licensing - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/utility)
 - [Industrial and Hazardous Waste Fees Stakeholder Group - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/industrial)

State Implementation Plan

- Public hearing on State Implementation Plan (SIP) revisions [Texas SIP Revisions - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/sip). The hearings are structured for the receipt of oral or written comments by interested persons. Open discussion is not permitted during the hearings; however, commission staff members are available to discuss the proposal 30 minutes prior to each hearing.
 - Persons who have special communication or other accommodation needs who are planning to attend a hearing should contact Air Quality Division at (512) 239-3935 or 1-800-RELAY-TX (TDD). Requests should be made as far in advance as possible.



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- Written comments on proposed SIP revisions may be submitted through the [eComments](#) system for rule projects during the public comment period.
- Persons may provide oral comments at commission agenda for consideration of proposal and adoption.

General

- TCEQ's Public Participation Plan- the purpose for the plan is to engage Texans through public participation and language access and to meet Title VI requirements. TCEQ aims to work with communities to provide reasonable access to decision-making processes. As required by federal and state laws and regulations, the agency does not allow discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or retaliation in the administration of its programs or activities. The following link provides information in English and Spanish on non-discrimination requirements for participation in programs and processes, how to report concerns, request accommodations, and be involved in decision making: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/decisions/participation/title-vi-compliance#collapseSix>
- Customer satisfaction survey: members of the public may provide input on the agency's performance through the customer satisfaction survey: [Customer Satisfaction Survey - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](#). Survey results are used internally and are reported to the legislature.
- Report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse using this link: [Report Allegations of Fraud, Waste, or Abuse Related to TCEQ - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](#)

Information Resources

In addition to the opportunities above, TCEQ offers numerous avenues for the public to be better informed and therefore better prepared for providing meaningful input. These information resources include:

- Public information requests- while the self-service options below may be more efficient, members of the public may [request documents](#) under the Public Information Act.
- Govdelivery subscription service- persons may subscribe using this link for email or text updates on a variety of TCEQ related matters that may be of interest. [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality \(govdelivery.com\)](#)
- Toll free information lines- separate numbers covering topics such as small business assistance, television recycling, customer service concerns, and spill reporting. [TCEQ Toll-free Numbers - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](#)
- Various public notices mailed out by the agency's Chief Clerk's Office may be searched by certain parameters including type of notice, date issued, program area at this link: [Search for TCEQ Public Notices - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](#)
- The public may review agency records in accordance with the Public Information Act. [Access Records from our Central File Room - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](#).



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- The public may access a variety of maps and mapping tools and resources, including, for example, maps depicting major river and coastal basins and areas that are experiencing or may be expected to experience groundwater problems. [Maps - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Central Registry- persons may search for basic information on many of the facilities, organizations, and people TCEQ regulates. [TCEQ Central Registry Query \(texas.gov\)](http://texas.gov)
- Commissioners Integrated Database- persons may track the status of all matters pending before the Commission and Executive Director for approval, after notice issued, if applicable. The database includes enforcement cases, rules, permit and license applications, registrations, and actions involving water districts. [Commissioners' Integrated Database - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Environmental Data and Records- persons may access this link to review a listing of various environmental-quality data and records available on the TCEQ website- [TCEQ Data and Records - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Environmental Research Library- persons may access a specialized collection of materials to provide scientific, technical, and legislative information in support of all TCEQ programs. The library's primary purpose is to assist agency staff, but also serves other organizations and entities, including interested citizens. [Environmental Research Library - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Various TCEQ forms and publications- persons may access through this link forms and publications such as *How Can a Superfund Site Affect my Property*, *Texas Clean Rivers Program*, and *Particulate Matter: The Facts- Air Pollution from Particles* [Forms and Publications - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)
- Reports to the Legislature- persons may access multiple years of a variety of reports the TCEQ has made to the legislature including its Strategic Plan and Biennial Report- [Reports to the Legislature - Texas Commission on Environmental Quality - www.tceq.texas.gov](http://www.tceq.texas.gov)

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