

# Safeguarding the Environment

## Low-level Radioactive Waste

The State of Texas has recently licensed a low-level radioactive waste disposal facility that can securely handle radioactive material in a single location that would otherwise be stored throughout the state in various locations.

The low-level radioactive waste disposal facility, in a remote corner of the state, is owned by the State of Texas. Ownership will ensure safe operations and long-term oversight. In addition, all waste disposed of at the facility generates revenue for the State of Texas.

**Figure 1. Aerial view of a Low-level Radioactive Waste Facility**



## Uranium Mining

Uranium mining in Texas now uses an in-situ method for extracting uranium from the ground. This method protects the environment and is a significant improvement over conventional mining methods. The TCEQ issues radioactive materials licenses for in-situ uranium mining, and requires mining operators to obtain Underground Injection Control permits, that include stipulations to protect underground drinking water sources.

## Licensure and Registration

The TCEQ licenses individuals whose occupations may have an environmental impact.

We have:

- licensed 54,945 environmental professionals and registered entities.
- 45,352 active registrations

In 2013 we:

- renewed 14,974 licenses
- processed 10,906 exams
- issued 16,221 petroleum delivery certificates
- reviewed 6,934 incoming data reports

## **Did you know**

Did you know that to ensure safe drinking water, all public water systems have trained and licensed water operators? Last year, the TCEQ issued 1,889 new water licenses and renewed 3,212 licenses to Texas Water Operators. For additional licensing information, please see our [Water Operators Licensing web page](#).

## **Desalination By-products**

Did you know the production of drinking water from desalination plants generates a desalination concentrate high in total dissolved solids that must be disposed of properly? TCEQ has streamlined the process for obtaining a Class I injection well license, which allows users to safely inject the concentrate into waste disposal wells.

In response to the need to safely and effectively dispose of the desalination concentrate, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality issued an Underground Injection Control General Permit to use a Class I injection well to inject nonhazardous brine from a desalination operation or nonhazardous drinking water treatment residuals. The General Permit streamlines the process to obtain authorization to construct and operate a Class I well. This streamlined process ensures the concentrate is managed safely.