

# **Irrigation Advisory Council (IAC)**

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**

Charles Swanson called the meeting to order at 9:02 am. Council members in attendance are Charles Swanson, Jimmy Burgdorf, David Moulton, James Garvin, Donna Starling, Monique Cogburn, Norman Werback, and DJ Seeger. TCEQ staff members in attendance include Thomas Minucci, Joseph Hopkins, Jayme Martone, Jason Robinson, Paul Munguia, and Teresa Etheredge. There were ten members of the public in attendance.

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved at 9:06 am, the motion was brought forward by James Garvin and seconded by Monique Cogburn.

Jayme Martone presented the Landscape Irrigation Program investigation numbers. Since September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, there has been 65 new complaints received, 71 investigations have been approved, and have six currently open investigations. Ms. Martone and Mr. Minucci discussed some specifics of the open investigations and the locations they were in.

Katherine L. McGlaughlin, of Cross Connection Control Program, was unable to attend the meeting so Ms. Martone gave the updates for the program for her. The updates include, staff conducted DAM 12 (establishing and managing a cross connection control program directed assistance module) in the east Texas area. This is a free training available from our Financial Managerial and Technical (FMT) assistance staff or Texas Optimization Program (TOP) staff. Staff attended the most recent ABPA Annual Conference in Charlotte NC. Of interest were water use surveys information we can review in the CSI training workgroup. That they continue to receive alternate form approvals as a high volume. If you as a backflow tester have questions or concerns about if an alternate form is being used, feel free to reach out to our program. In addition, we are developing criteria to review current preexisting form approvals for digital forms/3rd party record keeping companies. This was discussed at previous meetings. And Lastly, our next XCON Subcommittee Meeting is scheduled for June 6, 9 am. If you need to be on the notification list, email Katherine for getting on the invite list ([katherine.mcgloughlin@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:katherine.mcgloughlin@tceq.texas.gov)).

Teresa Etheredge gave the update for Occupational Licensing (will be included below). Norman Werback had a question about the retesting numbers, and why the inspectors passed test numbers are so low [16.7% passed]. Paul Munguia directed attention to the low number of tests administered. Norman also asked about how the tests are administered and was told that all tests are administered online, the only paper tests that are being administered are for ADA reasons and are by appointment only. Teresa gave an update for water operators that there are new overview courses and two hours of CEU resiliency courses are going to be required for license renewals. They are in the process of rule revisions to 30 TAC chapter 30 and public comment periods are about to open. One of the rule revisions is relating to fingerprinting, and online licensing. Paul Munguia gave an update on the job tasks analysis survey that was sent out, they are working with a subject matter expert on how to revamp the irrigator license exam.

The web content workgroup gave their update which was a flowchart made by DJ Seeger, the flowchart organized groups of related content together. Next, the irrigator inspection survey gave an update as well, we received a total of five responses. We discussed focusing on the top 25 largest cities in the State to get responses from. Donna Starling said that her summer interns will be able to help with getting responses when they start in mid-July, another survey will be sent out next week [week of May 6<sup>th</sup>] to try and get more responses. New workgroup topics were discussed, one being revisions to the RG-466, a regulatory guidance document that has all the irrigation rules in a more simple or common language. The RG-466 also contains sample documents for irrigators with things like contracts, warranties, invoices, etc.

IAC nominations were discussed next. Charles, Donna, and David Moulton all have their terms up in December of this year [2024]. Nominations will be solicited starting at the end of May, we are looking for two irrigators; these individuals can be an irrigation technician (IT), an irrigation inspector, or a licensed irrigator (LI). We are also going to be looking for one public member who does not hold any of the mentioned licenses, isn't married to someone who is, and has no financial interest in the irrigation industry.

New technology regarding automated precision irrigation systems was discussed next. Charles mentioned that there are worries that these kinds of systems do not meet the standards set in 30 TAC 344, such as head to head spacing, pressure requirements, head to head spacing, and uniform spray. Joseph Hopkins gave a statement that according to the Texas Occupations Code (TOC) §1903.053(b), we as an agency are not allowed to approve, or disapprove, of any irrigation component or product.

The meeting was then opened to the public for any comments or questions for the council. There was no public comment, so Charles discussed the water conservation advisory council. In that council they discussed specific water conservation steps or rules that they might recommend.

Charles brought the motion to adjourn at 11:49, which was seconded by Norman.

**Fiscal Year 2024**  
**Landscape Irrigator Program Results**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (December 1, 2023 – February 29, 2024)**

	New Applicatio ns Received	Renewal Applicat ions Receive d	Total Applicati ons Received	Tests Administ ered	Tests Passe d	Perce nt Passe d	New Licen ses Issue d	Re ne wal Licen ses Issue d	Total Curre nt Licen ses
Landscape Irrigation Inspector	8	9	17	6	1	16.7	1	8	74
Landscape Irrigation Technician	115	51	166	181	70	38.7	68	47	1,471
Landscape Irrigator	309	643	952	539	296	54.9	149	602	6,853
<b>Grand Totals:</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>8,398</b>