

IRRIGATOR ADVISORY COUNCIL (IAC) MEETING MINUTES
November 17, 2005
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)
12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg. A Room 328, Austin, Texas
9:30 am

Attendees:

Council Members: William Gossett (Chairman), Carole Baker, Doug Goodwin, Jerry Lewis, Michael Murr, Suzanne Santo, Don Weiss

TCEQ Staff: Manuel Flores, Sandra Hernandez, Richard Allen, Wanda Kurio, Linda Saladino, Terry Thompson, Bob Mann

Visitors: Gene Reagan, Carl Causey, Richard Harbuck

1. **The Chairman of the IAC will call the meeting to order, and recognize persons in attendance.**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gossett at approximately 0930 and introductions of attendees proceeded.

2. **The IAC will approve the minutes from the August 17, 2005 meeting.**

Mrs. Baker made a motion to approve the minutes and the motion was seconded by Mr. Weiss. The council unanimously voted to approve the minutes as they were.

3. **The Chairman will introduce the new members of the IAC.**

Ms. Suzanne Santo (licensed irrigator/El Paso), Mr. Doug Goodwin (licensed irrigator/Magnolia), Mr. Michael Murr (public member/Houston) and Mr. Carmon McCain (public member/Lubbock)

4. **TCEQ staff will discuss the functions of the IAC.**

Mr. Bob Mann, Regulatory Compliance Section, Compliance Support Division, provided attendees with a brief overview of the IAC mission.

5. **Chairman will review the current subcommittees of the IAC and receive reports from the Agency Relations, Education, Water Conservation, Legislative, and Rules Subcommittees.**

Agency Relations Committee:

Ms. Baker (Chair) – Ms. Baker sent out an email to committee members requesting a list of issues that need to be addressed. She will be reviewing the issues list with Mr. Gossett.

Water Conservation Committee:

Ms. Baker (Chair) – Ms. Baker has been communicating with committee members via email but no agenda has been finalized. Mr. Murr discussed his deep interest in water conservation, especially new technology, education, grey water and reclaimed water for irrigation.

Education Committee:

Mr. Jerry Lewis (Chair) – No items for discussion.

Legislative Committee:

No report

Rules Committee:

No report

6. **TCEQ staff will discuss licensing, training, and enforcement activities.**

Ms. Sandra Hernandez, Regulatory Compliance Section, Compliance Support Division, provided the IAC with an update of the enforcement activities of Fiscal Year 2005 (FY 2005) and 2006 (FY 2006) as follows:

FY 05 Incidents Received - 211	FY 06 Incidents Received – 30
FY 05 Investigations - 85	FY 06 Investigations - 13
FY 05 Notice of Violations - 20	FY 06 Notice of Violations - 5
FY 05 Notice of Enforcement - 35	FY 06 Notice of Enforcement - 1

Ms. Linda Saladino, Operator Licensing Section, Compliance Support Division, informed the IAC that one of the basic training providers, Mr. Phil Sheppard, is updating his manual in the next two months. Ms. Saladino asked the IAC to provide feedback to Mr. Sheppard if they were aware of any information in his manual that needed to be updated.

Mr. Goodwin asked if RG – 373 had been changed. Mr. Thompson responded by saying that no work can begin on changing the rules which govern landscape irrigation until the revisions to other parts of Chapter 30 are completed. Mr. Thompson estimated that possibly by April 2006, the agency might be in a better position to begin the rules change process if so directed by the Commission.

Ms. Wanda Kurio, Operator Licensing Section, Compliance Support Division, informed the IAC that for the period from August 17, 2005 to November 17, 2005 there have been 174 applications for the licensed irrigator exam and two for licensed installer exam, for a total of 176. During this period there were 616 applications for renewal. To date, there are a total 5743 licensed irrigators, and

222 licensed installers. In FY 04 there were 3527 applications and in FY 05 there were 3275.

Mr. Lewis asked Mr. Thompson about the agency's policy regarding granting of time extensions for renewal deadlines. Mr. Thompson responded by saying extensions are granted on a case by case basis. The agency has a policy in place that grants individuals, who are active duty military personnel, additional time to receive their CEUs. In addition, extensions are granted to individuals who display a hardship due to illness, death in the family or natural disaster.

7. **The IAC and Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) will discuss irrigator examination procedures.**

Mr. Richard Harbuck, Program Supervisor Wastewater Training, Texas Engineering Extension Service, provided an overview of how TEEX administers the irrigator and installer exams. He handed out copies of a "Summary of Landscape Irrigator Examination Procedures" to all attendees.

The Council members asked numerous questions about the testing procedures. A discussion ensued about allowing examinees permission to leave the room during the test. Mr. Harbuck reassured the Council that all measures are taken to eliminate the possibility of cheating. Mr. Harbuck also invited all IAC members to stop in and observe one of the exams.

8. **The Chairman asked new TCEQ staff for an introduction.**

Mr. Manuel Flores, Regulatory Compliance Section, Compliance Support Division, gave a brief introduction of himself.

9. **The IAC discussed House Bill 2914**

Ms. Baker gave a brief history of the house bill. Ms. Baker stated that she had spoken to TCEQ Chairman White and Commissioner Soward and they had expressed a desire to put the rules changing process back on the table.

10. **The IAC, guest(s), and TCEQ staff will discuss additional items of interest.**

Mr. Lewis passed out an article from the Texas Department of Licensing and Registration (TDLR) titled "TDLR Sting Nets 16 Unlicensed Contractors in DFW". He asked if TCEQ could conduct a similar operation.

Mr. Lewis asked Mr. Mann about the expiration date of the TEEX Memorandum of Understanding. Mr. Mann responded by saying the agreement is in place from Sept 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006. Mr. Lewis is concerned that changes will be made to the test and how it is administered, when nothing is broken with the

system. Mr. Mann responded by saying that the agency is looking at how other exams are administered within the agency and the cost of the exams.

Mr. Gene Reagan addressed the IAC as a representative of Texas Turf Irrigation Association. He expressed his concern about having TCEQ staff conduct sting operations since their time is limited.

Chairman Gossett appointed Mr. Lewis as chair of the “Sting Committee”.

Ms. Santo brought up the issue of Southwestern Bell Yellow Pages allowing individuals to advertise as licensed irrigators without providing documentation to that effect. Chairman Gossett asked that TCEQ staff research the issue.

Ms. Hernandez notified the IAC that they should be receiving the TCEQ “Fiscal Year 2006 Travel Guidelines” concerning reimbursement within the next few weeks.

Chairman Gossett scheduled the November 2006 IAC meeting for Wednesday 15th and asked staff to schedule the room for the entire day.

Upcoming meetings in 2006-	March 22
	July 25
	November 15

11. **IAC will adjourn.**

Mr. Gossett asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Weiss made a motion to adjourn and the motion was seconded by Ms. Baker.