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Complying with the Edwards Aquifer Rules

Technical Guidance on Best Management Practices

Field Operations Division

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TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Complying with the Edwards Aquifer Rules

Technical Guidance on Best Management Practices

Prepared for
Field Operations Division

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Preface

The Edwards Aquifer is one of the most valuable resources in the central Texas area. This aquifer provides water for municipal, industrial, and agricultural uses as well as sustaining a number of rare and endangered species. To preserve these beneficial uses, Texans must protect water quality in this aquifer from degradation resulting from human activities.

The Edwards Aquifer rules are an effective mechanism we can use to protect this valuable resource. Found in Title 30 Texas Administrative Code Chapter 213, these rules address activities that could pose a threat to water quality in the Edwards Aquifer, including wells and springs fed by the aquifer and water sources to the aquifer, including uplands areas draining directly to it and surface streams. These rules apply specifically to the Edwards Aquifer in eight counties and are not intended for any other aquifers in Texas.

To keep this manual current, we will periodically review and revise material that needs updating in response to changes in the rules or the availability of new or improved technology. We will make these updated portions available through our Publications Unit and through the Edwards Aquifer Protection Program page on our Web site (http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/eapp).

We would like to thank Michael E. Barrett, Ph.D., P.E., Center for Research in Water Resources, Bureau of Engineering Research, University of Texas at Austin for his contribution of drafting and editing the chapters containing technical guidance (see his note below). We would also like to thank the members of the regulated community who participated through our Technical Review Work Group in the development of this manual.

Dr. Barrett adds:

The material in the technical guidance chapters of this manual was adapted primarily from guidance documents adopted by other state, regional, and municipal agencies. Preference was given to materials developed in Texas. Primary source included the City of Austin, the Lower Colorado River Authority, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments. Material from other parts of the country was modified to conform to specific climatic, soil, geologic, and other constraints present in the contributing and recharge zones of the Edwards Aquifer.

This guidance document was greatly improved by the contributions and comments of many readers. In particular, the staffs of the Austin and San Antonio regional offices of the TCEQ provided material as well as comments. Helpful suggestions were also received from municipalities, agencies responsible for water quality, and many in the consulting industry. I will refrain from naming these parties for fear of implying their approval of all aspects of this manual; nevertheless, their contributions were greatly appreciated.

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