

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, October 31, 2024 – 10:00 A. M.
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Virtual Teams Meeting

<p><u>MEMBER PRESENT</u> Fort Bend County – Joel Patterson Baylor College Medicine – Winifred Hamilton Harris County Pollution Control – Latrice Babin Environmental Defense Fund – Grace Lewis American Lung Association – Charlie Gagen Air Alliance Houston – Jennifer Hadayia City of Houston – Win Colbert City of Houston – Nguyen Ly Harris County – Doug Peterson</p>	<p><u>ALTERNATE PRESENT</u> Port Houston – Kenneth Gathright Metro – Vincent Sanders City of Houston – Darryl Tate Associated General Contractors of America – Marc Anderson Houston Advanced Research Center – Ebrahim Eslami Harris County Pollution Control – Stuart Mueller</p>
<p><u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> World Resources Institute – Kat Carroll HoustonTX – Jorge Gonzalez RMI – Jubing Ge WRI – Zachary Greene</p>	<p><u>STAFF PRESENT</u> Houston-Galveston Area Council – Pharr Andrews Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall Houston-Galveston Area Council – Sydni Ligons Houston-Galveston Area Council – Catherine Grey Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ben Finley Houston-Galveston Area Council – Vincent Polignano Houston-Galveston Area Council – William Matthews Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carlos Lugo Houston-Galveston Area Council – Jamila Owens Houston-Galveston Area Council – Maggie Isied Houston-Galveston Area Council – Gloria Brown EPA – Jeffrey Riley TCEQ – Vanessa DeArman TCEQ – Denine Calvin TCEQ – Alison Stokes TCEQ – Emily Wagoner</p>

BRIEFING

Overview

- a. RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA Update, TCEQ Update, and Regional Air Quality Monitoring update), and the meeting concluded with information items and announcements.
- b. Go to <http://www.h-gac.com/board-of-directors/advisory-committees/regional-air-quality-planning-advisory-committee/meeting-material.aspx> to view the meeting materials for this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ITEM 1A. Introduction

Joel Patterson called the meeting to order, and members were introduced.

ITEM 1B. Approval of Meeting Summary (03-28-2024, 04-25-2024, 06-27-2024, 07-25-2024 &10-31-2024)

Meeting summaries held for quorum.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 2A. EPA Update – (Jeff Riley)

A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed the committee:

DERA FY22 – FY23 National Grant Awards

On October 17, EPA announced selections totaling nearly \$125 million nationally under the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) National Grants Program which will incentivize and accelerate the upgrade or retirement of older diesel engines to cleaner and zero-emission solutions leading to significant emission reductions and air quality and public health benefits. ([EPA's DERA Informational Webpage](#))

Houston Area Selections:

- Port of Houston Authority – Selected for \$3 million to retrofit 8 diesel rubber tire gantry cranes with hybrid diesel-electric motors.
- Fort Bend County – Selected for \$3 million to replace 22 diesel heavy duty on-road freight trucks with 22 electric heavy duty on-road trucks.

Clean Ports Program Selections

On October 29, EPA announced the selection of 55 applicants across 27 states and territories to receive nearly \$3 billion through EPA's Clean Ports Program for zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure, and climate and air quality planning at U.S. ports. Some of you might have caught President Biden's remarks Tuesday afternoon. These selections are from the two funding opportunities announced in February 2024, the Zero-Emission Technology Deployment Competition to directly fund zero-emission port equipment and infrastructure to reduce mobile source emissions & the Climate and Air Quality Planning Competition to fund climate and air quality planning activities. These competitions closed back in May 2024, EPA received requests from applicants totaling over \$8 billion across the country pursuing next-generation, clean technologies at U.S. ports. Selected zero-emission projects nationwide range from battery-electric and hydrogen-powered port equipment (including over 1,500 units of cargo handling equipment, 1,000 drayage trucks, 10 locomotives, and 20 vessels), as well as shore power systems and solar power generation. Selectees will now work with EPA in the coming months to finalize project plans before receiving final awards and moving into the implementation phase. There are two separate "Next Steps" webinars scheduled for selectees on November 7 & November 20. ([EPA's Clean Ports Program Selections Webpage](#))

Houston Area Selections:

- Port of Houston Authority – selected for ~\$3 million in Climate & Air Quality Planning funds, to be used for developing emissions inventory / conducting emissions reduction strategy analysis including truck route analysis, infrastructure cost assessment, climate action planning, and developing a performance measurement framework / stakeholder collaboration with communities, trucking industry, & workforce / resiliency planning.
- Port Freeport – selected for ~\$1.5 million in Climate & Air Quality Planning funds, to be used for developing emissions inventory / port resiliency and implementation plan and electrical feasibility analysis / comprehensive near-port community benefits and workforce plan.

<https://assessments.epa.gov/isa/document/&deid=359536>

ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update – (Vanessa DeArman)

TCEQ staff gave an update to the members on the latest information:

Potential State Designations for the 2024 Primary Annual Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) NAAQS

TCEQ held an informal comment period from July 30, 2024, through August 30, 2024, to solicit information relevant to the development of the designations submission for the 2024 primary annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS of 9.0 µg/m³.

TCEQ Air Quality Division staff are currently evaluating available data and potential designations to be considered by the commission in December 2024. Once approved by the commission, the designations will be sent to the governor for approval before submission to EPA by February 7, 2025.

For more information, please visit the [Air Pollution from Particulate Matter](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/criteria-pollutants/sip-pm/#latest) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/criteria-pollutants/sip-pm/#latest>).

TCEQ to Hold Stakeholder Meetings for Comments on Proposed Rulemaking and State Plan for Existing Crude Oil and Natural Gas Facilities

TCEQ will conduct stakeholder meetings on November 6, 14, and 20, 2024, to seek informal comments on proposed rulemaking and input on EPA’s proposed model rule and the potential impacts on individuals, communities, and regulated entities. The proposed rulemaking is to add a new Division 7 to Chapter 113, Subchapter D, to implement the requirements of 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 60, Subpart OOOOc. A formal public hearing and comment period will occur on a date following the stakeholder meetings.

The proposed rulemaking will address applicability, emission standards, monitoring, recordkeeping, testing, and reporting requirements for designated oil and gas facilities. The rules would set emission standards and/or control requirements for emissions of greenhouse gases (primarily methane) from existing facilities in this industry.

For more information on this rule project along with any meeting or rulemaking updates, please visit the [rule project](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/rules/2024-oooooc-rulemaking-oilgas-stakeholder) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/rules/2024-oooooc-rulemaking-oilgas-stakeholder>). For additional information on this proposed rulemaking, please contact David Munzenmaier via email at david.munzenmaier@tceq.texas.gov or at (512) 239-6092 and refer to rule project number 2024-027-113-AI.

TCEQ Invites Feedback for Proposed Well Prioritization Plan for Texas Voluntary Marginal Conventional Well Plugging (TxMCW) Program

TCEQ is preparing for the launch of the [TxMCW program](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/txmcw/well-plugging-grants) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/txmcw/well-plugging-grants>) and requesting public feedback on the [Well Prioritization Plan](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/txmcw/well-plugging-grants) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/txmcw/well-plugging-grants>). This new federally funded program aims to reduce methane, criteria pollutants, and other air emissions across the state. Currently in development, the Well Prioritization Plan details how TxMCW will select wells for plugging to maximize methane emission reductions, focusing on factors such as emissions, and well age.

Starting in 2025, TxMCW will open its application process, offering financial incentives for owners and operators to voluntarily plug low-producing conventional oil and gas wells, commonly referred to as marginal conventional wells.

To provide comments, please reference the Well Prioritization Plan and submit them to: TxMCW@tceq.texas.gov by 5:00 p.m. CST on Thursday, November 7, 2024. The final Well Prioritization Plan will be published in November 2024 and posted on the program website.

For more information about program opportunities, please visit the new [TxMCW website](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/txmcw/well-plugging-grants) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/txmcw/well-plugging-grants>) and [join the email list](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXTCEQ/subscriber/new?topic_id=TXTCEQ_365) (https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXTCEQ/subscriber/new?topic_id=TXTCEQ_365) to receive the latest updates and information about the application process.

Oil and Gas Methane Rule Compliance Reminder

Updates to the [New Source Performance Standards \(NSPS\) Part 60 Subpart OOOOb](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/08/2024-00366/standards-of-performance-for-new-reconstructed-and-modified-sources-and-emissions-guidelines-for) (<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/08/2024-00366/standards-of-performance-for-new-reconstructed-and-modified-sources-and-emissions-guidelines-for>), effective May 7, 2024, require storage vessels or tank batteries to demonstrate 95% reduction in methane and volatile organic compounds emissions.

Form(s) and additional guidance can be found on the [New Source Review \(NSR\) and Permits by Rule Notification and Verification Forms and Instructions](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/forms/newsourcereview/nsr_notice_verify_forms.html) (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/forms/newsourcereview/nsr_notice_verify_forms.html) and the [Oil and Gas Facilities: Air Compliance Information pages](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance/industry/oil-and-gas/oilgas_air.html) (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance/industry/oil-and-gas/oilgas_air.html).

For additional assistance, please contact the Air Permits division at 512-239-1250 or at airperm@tceq.texas.gov. The Small Business and Local Government Assistance section also provides technical assistance and resources for compliance via email at texasenvirohelp@tceq.texas.gov, its [website](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance>), or their confidential hotline at 800-447-2827.

Automated Permanent Allowance (Stream) Trade Applications

Permanent Allowance (Stream) Trade applications submitted through the [State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System \(STEERS\)](https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/) (<https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/>) will now be processed automatically.

Stream trades may be submitted for the Mass Emissions Cap and Trade (MECT) Program, Highly Reactive Volatile Organic Compound Cap and Trade (HECT) Program, or Emissions Banking and Trading of Allowances (EBTA) Program.

Once a trade has been successfully submitted and verified through [STEERS](https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/) (<https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/>), a confirmation letter will be sent via email. Stream Trades are required to be submitted electronically through STEERS.

For more information and any questions, please contact Emissions Banking and Trading at ebt@tceq.texas.gov.

Annual Reporting Requirements for Certain Air Permits and NSR Groups

The [STEERS](https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/) (<https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/>) functionality is now available to report the operational status for the new annual reporting requirement for certain temporary permits or permits without an expiration date (open-ended). The initial report is due by December 31, 2024. Then, annual reporting will be required by December 31 of each year. Operational status should be reported electronically through STEERS.

For more information on the requirements, please visit the [Annual Reporting Requirement: Certain Air Permits](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/annual-reporting-requirements-airpermits) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/annual-reporting-requirements-airpermits>).

Final TCEQ Air Target Risk Level Policy

On September 25, 2024, TCEQ adopted the [Air Target Risk Level Policy](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/toxicology/policy.pdf) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/toxicology/policy.pdf>) developed by the Toxicology, Risk Assessment, and Research Division. It sets a target cancer risk level of 1 in 100,000 (1×10^{-5}) for developing screening levels that are used in TCEQ's air permitting program and that are compared to ambient air monitoring data.

For more information and to view the Air Target Risk Level Policy, Public Comments, and Responses to Public Comments, please visit the [Air Target Risk Level Policy](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/toxicology/tceq-air-target-risk-level-policy) website (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/toxicology/tceq-air-target-risk-level-policy).

ITEM 2C. TERP Update (*Nate Hickman*)

No TERP update was provided at this month's meeting.

ITEM 2D. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update– (*Vinny Polignano*)

Vinny notified the committee members that all these charts can be found on the “RAQPAC Meeting Agendas and Materials” website under the heading for today’s meeting. Since our last meeting in June, there have been 36 exceedances of the 2008 75 ppb ground-level ozone standard and 58 exceedances of the 2015 70 ppb standard.

So far for 2024, the region’s maximum 4th highest value is 97 ppb as measured at the Aldine monitor monitors, followed by 92 at the North wayside monitor. For the year to date, the regional design value for the 2022 through 2024 period is 84 ppb as measured at the Houston Bayland Park monitor.

Finally, here is our day-by-day design value chart showing the current design value compared to the same time over the last 20 years. You can see the 2004-2023 average in green and the current design value in red.

Moving on to the PM2.5 monitors, you can see the annual PM2.5 concentrations for all the region’s regulatory particulate monitors since 2001 as well as the monthly average PM 2.5 over the last year.

ACTION ITEMS

**ITEM 3A. RAQPAC Officer Elections (*Joel Patterson*)
Elections held for Quorum.**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM 4A. Virtual Power Plants 101: Unlocking Grid Resilience and Local Government Opportunities- (*Kat Carroll, World Resources Institute*)

Kat Carroll gave an overview from the World Resources Institute on virtual power plants (VPPs) and their role in energy resilience and emissions reduction. Kat Carroll and Jubing Ge explained how VPPs can optimize energy consumption and enhance grid reliability, citing examples from Texas and California.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 5A.

Pharr Andrews informed the RAQPAC committee members regarding the changes in liaison roles within the committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A.

Ben Finley gave an overview to the RAQPAC members regarding Clean Cities coalition role.

1. Federal Tax Credits for Alternative Fuels & Clean Vehicles Webinar

Wednesday, November 13, 2024

12:00 noon to 1:00p.m.

Please register at Houston.cleancities.org

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 7A.

Next meeting: December 12, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 A.M.