

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY Thursday, July 25, 2024 – 10:00 A. M. Houston-Galveston Area Council Virtual Teams Meeting

<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 Waller County – Brooke Bacuetes City of Houston – Win Colbert City of Houston – Nguyen Ly Harris County – Doug Peterson	<u>ALTERNATE PRESENT</u> Port Houston – Kenneth Gathright Harris County Precinct 2 – Pernell Davis Metro – Vincent Sanders City of Houston – Darryl Tate
<u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> Harris County – Shannay Baradaren	<u>STAFF PRESENT</u> Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis Houston-Galveston Area Council – Pharr Andrews Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall Houston-Galveston Area Council – Sydney Ligons Houston-Galveston Area Council – Rodney Sigua Houston-Galveston Area Council – Caroline Bailey 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 – Craig Raborn Houston-Galveston Area Council – Qun Zhao Houston-Galveston Area Council – Marcus Tucker Houston-Galveston Area Council – Gloria Brown TCEQ – Vanessa DeArman TERP – Nate Hickman TCEQ – Denine Calvin

BRIEFING

Overview

- a. RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (TCEQ Update, TERP Update, and Regional Air Quality Monitoring update), and the meeting concluded with no 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)

Meeting summaries held for quorum.

AGENCY REPORTS

Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory Committee
July 25, 2024,

ITEM 2A. EPA Update – (Jeff Riley)

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

<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:

Houston-Galveston-Brazoria (HGB) 2015 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions

On June 20, 2024, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published final approval granting the request from the Governor of the State of Texas to voluntarily reclassify the San Antonio, Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW), and HGB ozone nonattainment areas from Moderate to Serious for the 2015 eight-hour ozone NAAQS, effective July 22, 2024 (89 *Federal Register* 51829).

House Bill (HB) 3297 and Senate Bill (SB) 2102 Implementation and Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program Updates; Proposed I/M SIP Revision

On June 12, 2024, the commission approved proposal of the Vehicle I/M SIP Revision (Non-Rule Project No. 2024-014-SIP-NR) and 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 114, Control of Air Pollution from Motor Vehicles rulemaking (Rule Project No. 2024-013-114-AI). The proposed SIP and rule revision would implement HB 3297, which eliminates the mandatory annual vehicle safety inspection program for noncommercial vehicles and SB 2102, which extends the initial registration and inspection period for rental vehicles from two years to three years. The proposed rule would also adjust the maximum fee that inspections stations are allowed to charge for an emissions inspection. The proposed SIP and rule revisions would impact counties that participate.

The public comment period opened on June 14, 2024 and will close on July 29, 2024. A virtual public hearing was held for the proposed SIP revision and rulemaking on July 24, 2024. Written comments will be accepted via mail, fax, or through the [TCEQ Public Comment System](https://tceq.commentinput.com/) (<https://tceq.commentinput.com/>).

For additional information on the SIP and rulemaking, please visit the [Vehicle I/M Program](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/mobilesource/im.html) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/mobilesource/im.html>).

Revised Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) NAAQS

On February 7, 2024, EPA finalized its revision of the annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS to 9.0 micrograms per cubic meter and published in the *Federal Register* on March 6, 2024.

TCEQ hosted a virtual (online) public information meeting on Wednesday, June 26, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (CDT) for Harris and Montgomery Counties. The purpose of this public outreach meeting was to provide information on the potential impacts of the EPA's new primary annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS of 9.0 µg/m³. Harris and Montgomery Counties may be potentially affected by the PM_{2.5} NAAQS revision.

TCEQ will also hold an informal public comment period on the state designations considered by the commission before being sent to the Governor for his consideration for submittal to EPA. To receive updates on the informal public comment period, please join the TCEQ SIP/Air Quality Update e-mail list:

www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/sipcontact.html.

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

Proposed New Non-Rule Air Quality Standard Permit for Natural Gas Electric Generating Units: Request for Comment

TCEQ is providing an opportunity for public comment and will conduct a public meeting regarding the proposed issuance of a new non-rule air quality standard permit for natural gas fired electric generating units (EGUs). The proposed standard permit would provide applicants with more flexibility when seeking authorization of natural gas EGUs at a site and serves as an alternative option to the existing Non-Rule Air Quality Standard Permit for EGUs. The standard permit would only be applicable to spark-ignited internal combustion engines that fire natural gas and

excludes boilers and turbines. It would include operating specifications and emission limitations for typical natural gas engines during routine operation and planned maintenance, startup, and shutdown.

The public comment period will close at 11:59 p.m. on July 30, 2024. Written comments will be accepted via mail, fax or through the [TCEQ Public Comment System](https://tceq.commentinput.com/) (<https://tceq.commentinput.com/>).

TCEQ will hold a hybrid, virtual and in-person, public meeting on this proposal in Austin on Tuesday, July 30, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in Building F, room 2210, at the commission's central office located at 12100 Park 35 Circle. Individuals who plan to attend the meeting virtually and want to provide oral comments and/or want their attendance on record must register by Friday, July 26, 2024. To register for the meeting, please email rules@tceq.texas.gov and provide the following information: your name, your affiliation, your e-mail address, your phone number, and whether or not you plan to provide oral comments during the hearing.

For more information on the proposed rulemaking and the public meeting, please visit [TCEQ's Standard Permit webpage](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/nav/standard.html) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/nav/standard.html>).

TCEQ Seeks Stakeholder Input on Upcoming Proposed Rulemaking

TCEQ hosted an in-person stakeholder meeting on July 18, 2024 at H-GAC to solicit informal comments on the non-statutory changes included in the proposed rulemaking to amend 30 TAC Chapter 39, Public Notice; and Chapter 55, Requests for Reconsideration and Contested Case Hearings; Public Comment. There was also a hybrid Zoom meeting on July 15, 2024.

The proposed rulemaking (Rule Project Number 2024-003-039-LS) will implement changes required by TCEQ's Sunset bill, SB 1397, and changes recommended in the Sunset Commission's report relating to public notice. It is these proposed changes for which the agency is soliciting comments.

The comment period closes 11:59 p.m. on August 2, 2024. Written comments will be accepted via mail, fax or through the [TCEQ Public Comment System](https://tceq.commentinput.com/) (<https://tceq.commentinput.com/>).

For additional information on this proposed rulemaking, please contact Amy Browning at amy.browning@tceq.texas.gov or at 512-239-0891 and refer to rule project number 2024-003-039-LS.

Upcoming TCEQ Stakeholder Meetings: Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) Section 185 Fee

TCEQ will host two identical virtual stakeholder meetings for the FCAA Section 185 Penalty Fee, tentatively set for August 6, 2024, and August 8, 2024.

Become a stakeholder member by signing up for the [FCAA Section 185 Fee email group](https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXTCEQ/subscriber/new?topic_id=TXTCEQ_347) (https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/TXTCEQ/subscriber/new?topic_id=TXTCEQ_347) and stay up-to-date on the Section 185 fee rule development. Registration and other details for the virtual events will be sent to this email group approximately two weeks prior to the meetings.

For more information, please visit the webpage [Stakeholder Group: Federal Clean Air Act Section 185 Fee](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/point-source-ei/185-fee) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/point-source-ei/185-fee>). If you have questions, please contact 185Rule@tceq.texas.gov or call the Point Source Emissions Inventory helpline at 512-239-1773.

TCEQ Advanced Air Permitting Seminar

TCEQ will host the Advanced Air Permitting Seminar on October 17, 2024 at the Commons Conference Center in Austin. The Air Permitting team is looking forward to this biennial event to share their expertise and guidance on air permitting rules, regulations, and other topics of interest.

The seminar will be a hybrid format. Please join us in person or virtually. Certain aspects of the seminar will be exclusive to in-person attendees such as a keynote speaker luncheon, Q&A sessions, and the opportunity to network with peers and TCEQ staff.

For more information, please visit TCEQ's [event website](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/air-permitting.html) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/air-permitting.html>).

2025 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards (TEEA)

TCEQ is now accepting applications for the 2025 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards. The TEEA is an annual awards program that honors achievements in environmental preservation and protection.

The categories for nomination include Agriculture, Civic/Community, Education, Environmental Educator of the Year, Individual, Innovative Operations/Management, Pollution Prevention, Technical/Technology, Water Conservation, and Youth.

Instructions on how to apply, or nominate, are available on the [TEEA webpage](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/about-teea) (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/about-teea>)

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

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

Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP)

To-date, TCEQ has successfully opened and closed the [Light-Duty Motor Vehicle Purchase or Lease Incentive Program \(LDPLIP\)](#), the [Alternative Fueling Facilities Program \(AFFP\)](#), the [Texas Hydrogen Infrastructure, Vehicle, and Equipment Program \(THIVE\)](#), the [Rebate Grants Program](#), and the [Texas Clean School Bus Program \(TCSB\)](#).

Each TERP program TCEQ has implemented this biennium has received sufficient demand to award all available funding under each of the grant programs (with the exception of the LDPLIP, which had limited demand for grants for natural gas vehicles).

TCEQ is currently accepting applications under the [Seaport and Rail Yard Areas Emissions Reduction Program \(SPRY\)](#)

SPRY is offering grants on a first-come, first-served basis to replace older drayage trucks and equipment operating at eligible seaports and rail yards. SPRY will accept grants until the earlier of **March 4, 2025**, or until all available funds have been awarded.

Coming Soon:

- TCEQ plans to open the [Emissions Reduction Incentive Grants \(ERIG\)](#) in this week. ERIG will offer grants to repower or replace older locomotives, marine vessels, stationary equipment, or select non-road equipment to reduce NO_x emissions in ozone nonattainment areas and affected counties in Texas (competitive selection).
- TCEQ anticipates opening the [Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program \(TNGVGP\)](#) in September 2024. TNGVGP will offer grants in eligible counties to repower heavy-duty or medium-duty vehicles with natural gas engines or replace the vehicles with natural gas vehicles.
- Visit www.terpgrants.org for the latest information on new program openings and other announcements, as well as program requirements, application forms, and project summary reports. Contact TERP staff by phone at (800) 919-TERP (8377) or by email at terp@tceq.texas.gov.

Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Plan (TxVEMP) Program

Currently Open: [TxVEMP All-Electric Grant Program](#) has over \$30 million remaining to upgrade or replace qualifying vehicles and equipment operating in eligible areas with new electric models. Grants can reimburse up to:

- 100% of the cost for government entities
- 75% of the incremental cost for non-government entities
- Eligible project categories include the replacement or repower of:
 - Class 8 Local Freight Trucks and Port Drayage Trucks
 - Class 4-8 School Bus, Shuttle Bus, or Transit Bus
 - Class 4-7 Local Freight Trucks
 - Airport Ground Support Equipment
 - Forklifts and Port Cargo Handling Equipment
 - Applicants purchasing on-road vehicles or non-road equipment may request additional funding for electric charging or hydrogen refueling infrastructure.

Coming Soon: TCEQ plans to open the [TXVEMP Ferry, Tug, and Switcher Grant Program](#) this week, along with the TERP ERIG program. This new program will provide grants in priority areas to replace or repower older locomotives or repower marine vessels to reduce NO_x emissions in Texas, with the option to request additional funding for on-site electric charging infrastructure.

Sign up for TxVEMP updates to learn more about this program. Please contact us at 1-800-919-8377 or VWsettle@tceq.texas.gov with any questions.

Visit www.txvwfund.org for the latest information on new program openings and other announcements, as well as program requirements, application forms, and project summary reports.

ITEM 2D. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update– (Andrew DeCandis)

Andrew 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 five exceedances of the 2008 75 ppb ground-level ozone standard and six exceedances of the 2015 70 ppb standard.

So far for 2024, the region’s maximum 4th highest value is 81 ppb as measured at both the Bayland Park and Harvard Street monitors, followed by 80 at the Park Place 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 of 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. Rider 7 Particulate Matter Air Quality Planning Grant Efforts – (Pharr Andrews, H-GAC)

Pharr Andrews gave an overview to the committee with a presentation on the organization's plan to use Rider 7 grant funding for a regional speciation study to analyze PM2.5 sources and their impact on human health. The presentation detailed the proposed eight phases of the project, the timeline for project commencement and conclusion, and the next steps, such as finalizing the grant, developing a scope of work, recruiting partners, and collecting stakeholder feedback.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 5A.

Andrew DeCandis notified the members that we weren’t awarded the grant for the regional implementation project. In turn, it was given to a group led by the City of Austin. In the meantime, we will continue our efforts for the comprehensive climate action plan. As well as continue developing our Rider 7 scope of work.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A.

None

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 7A.

Next meeting: August 29, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:43 A.M.