

TEXAS GROUNDWATER PROTECTION COMMITTEE
Public Outreach and Education Subcommittee
Subcommittee Charge

Date Approved

July 19, 2017

Sponsor

Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC)

Co-Chairs

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service (AgriLife Extension)
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)

Members

Participating and interested agencies and individuals.

Subcommittee Purpose

The primary goals of the Public Outreach and Education (POE) Subcommittee are to develop and implement educational outreach programs for landowners concerned with groundwater protection and environmental health issues, and to facilitate interagency communication and coordination in order to provide support for landowner educational outreach projects related to groundwater.

Activities include developing educational materials, coordination of outreach programs, and special projects. Special effort should be devoted to areas of the state with high levels of naturally occurring constituents of concern such as arsenic and radionuclides, and landowners with on-site wastewater treatment in rapidly growing suburban fringe areas.

The POE Subcommittee will work in cooperation with AgriLife Extension, TCEQ, and the Texas Department of Licensing and Registration (TDLR) to develop educational materials and facilitate development of outreach programs to address the following items:

- Abandoned water well closure;
- Private well owner drinking water health impacts;
- On-Site Sewage Facility (OSSF) maintenance by the home owner;
- Domestic drinking well sampling; and,
- Texas Well Owner Network (TWON) groundwater quality protection program.

Expected Results

The POE Subcommittee will direct and coordinate the following educational efforts, which include, but are not limited to, the following activities and deliverables:

- Abandoned water well closure;
- Continue outreach regarding proper water well plugging;
- Private/domestic water wells – develop educational materials, as appropriate (e.g., brochures/videos/workshop curricula) to address the following:
 - Areas where private/domestic water wells are potentially impacted by naturally occurring constituents of concern which exceed a Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL);
 - Health effects; and,
 - Treatment options.
- OSSF – develop educational materials, as appropriate (e.g., brochures/videos/workshop curricula) to address the following:
 - Operation and maintenance of older systems; and,
 - Operation and maintenance for first-time OSSF owners.
- Domestic drinking well sampling program including:
 - Work with AgriLife Extension and the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD) members to provide educational materials related to voluntary outreach and water well owner sampling efforts; and,
 - Help identify funding sources and facilitate voluntary sampling efforts in areas where naturally occurring constituents of concern are present.
- TWON, including:
 - Coordinate outreach and on-site demonstration activities utilizing the existing program; and,
 - Provide educational materials developed by the POE Subcommittee for use by County Agents using TWON materials.

Subcommittee deliverables include, but are not limited to:

- A biennial Activities Plan which would align its efforts with the current TGPC Legislative Report’s recommendations related to the public outreach and education of landowners and local governments and include:
 - Subject Matter Experts (name, affiliation, email address, and phone number);
 - The most important groundwater-related messages about each topic that need to be delivered;
 - The most important audiences for each topic; and,
 - Actions that would deliver these messages to these audiences.
- An annual report on the previous year’s activities, to be presented to the TGPC at its First Quarter Meeting of each fiscal year.

Scope and Boundaries

The POE Subcommittee may utilize additional staff from appropriate agencies as needed in order to address specific procedures and to maximize expertise related to its Charge. The Subcommittee shall coordinate with the Groundwater Issues Subcommittee

regarding the development of educational materials, publications, and outreach activities. The POE Subcommittee should coordinate with agency program areas, contractors, and interest groups regarding the development of educational materials.

The POE Subcommittee shall hold quarterly meetings, must meet all requirements of open meetings, and must maintain written records of all meetings.

The POE Subcommittee may elect to form Task Force work groups in order to address individual issues, as needed. These Task Force work groups shall meet as necessary in order to support the POE Subcommittee.

Reporting to the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee

The POE Subcommittee shall report on its activities at the regularly scheduled TGPC quarterly meetings.

Projected Completion Date

The continuing assessment of the state's educational needs to address public health issues and reduce contamination of groundwater is open-ended.