



Our mission is to serve Texas by our stewardship of natural resources and the environment, our concern for personal and community safety, and our support of enhanced development and economic vitality for the benefit of Texans.

## Public Comment Period Open for Proposed Overhaul of Oil & Gas Waste Management Rules

The Railroad Commission (RRC) takes environmental safety and ground water protection extremely seriously. Which is why on August 15th, RRC Commissioners voted to publish proposed amendments for public comment critical to updating the agency's rules regulating waste management facilities. The public comment period ends at 5 p.m. on September 30, 2024.

The amendments pertain to waste from oil and natural gas operations (such as rock and other materials pulled up from the ground during drilling) and encapsulate waste from other operations for which the Legislature has given the RRC jurisdiction. Examples include geothermal, carbon sequestration, and brine mining wells.

Groundwater protection is also a significant factor in the rule amendments. This update considers the need for historical rules to adapt to technological advancements being used in the modern-day oilfield.

The proposed rule also allows residents more time to protest waste management permit applications, extending the time frame from the current 15 days to 30 days.

"This proposed rule reflects the hard work and dedication of agency staff and stakeholders," said Chairman Christi Craddick. "I am grateful to Commissioner Wright for his leadership on this important matter and look forward to reviewing public input as we work toward final adoption of our solid waste rule amendments."

"The Railroad Commission continues to prove that a robust, responsible oil and gas industry can thrive while also ensuring a safe and clean environment for all," said Commissioner Wayne Christian. "As an EPA-commended agency for groundwater protection, the Commission takes safeguarding water extremely seriously. I'm proud of the hard work by our Commission staff and look forward to this rule continuing to bolster the RRC's historic legacy as a world-class regulatory agency."

"Today's draft rule represents an important step forward for the Railroad Commission's expectations regarding waste management practices," said Commissioner Jim Wright. "It has been 40 years since the Commission last made significant updates to this rule, and today's proposal is an acknowledgment that considerable changes have occurred in terms of technology and industry practices now being utilized. I look forward to reviewing the public's feedback on this important issue as we work towards final adoption."

The proposed rule and information on public comments can be found on the RRC website at <https://www.rrc.texas.gov/general-counsel/rules/proposed-rules/> under Chapters 3 and 4.

## Regulatory Conference Breaks Attendance Record

Over 775 industry leaders attended this year's annual conference, which is an important opportunity for RRC staff to inform and train oil and gas and pipeline operators on the laws, rules, and procedures for hydrocarbon production in Texas, including updates on rules, regulations, and filings. This year's conference featured over 60 sessions covering oil and gas and pipeline safety topics, ranging from injection control permitting, to state severance tax incentives and specialized pipeline inspections.



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