

# Panhandle Water News

JANUARY 2019

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## New PGCD Rules in Effect

A regular Board of Directors meeting followed by a Rules Hearing was held at the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District (PGCD) Office on December 20, 2018. In a vote of four in favor and one against, the Directors passed and adopted the proposed rules changes.

While many of the rule changes were clarifying and non substantive changes, the new rules do impact all operators throughout the District. The following is a list of the major changes, and also a guide for operators to come into compliance with the new rules. 2019 serves as an opportunity for operators to apply for Operating Permit(s) and install meters before enforcement begins on January 1, 2020.

### Major Rule Changes:

- Operating Permits are required for all wells, new or existing, pumping more than 17.5 gallons per minute and are 2-inches in pipe diameter or greater. Operating Permits must be applied for by December 31, 2019 and must be granted before any production takes place in 2020.
  - ◇ The District encourages operators of the above specified well(s) to call the District and begin the Operating Permit process. PGCD Staff is currently taking appointments as well as walk-ins.
  - ◇ Operators will be required to meet the metering requirements before any Operating Permit will be granted. They will also be required to verify their **Contiguous Acreage Tract(s) (CAT)**. CAT(s) will be used to calculate each operator's Maximum Allowable Volume, which may not exceed one acre-foot per contiguous acre per year. *For reference, one acre-foot equals 325,851 gallons.*
  - ◇ Once all the requirements of the Operating Permit are met, PGCD General Manager will approve the Operating Permit. If there are any changes to your Operating Permit or CAT, operators are required to contact the District Office to begin the amendment process.
- Meters are now required on all wells, new or existing, pumping more than 35 gallons per minute. Alternatively, meters may be installed at the center pivot sprinkler, drip irrigation system or a central collection point, as long as all production is captured.
  - ◇ PGCD Board of Directors has allocated \$350,000 this fiscal year for a 50/50 meter cost-share program. The program will be available through September 30, 2019. Please read more about the cost-share program on Page 3.
  - ◇ Operators are required to maintain all meters according to District Meter Standards. All of the Meter Standards can be found at <https://www.pgcd.us/metering>. Part of Meter Standards mean, meters must be within +/- 10 percent of manufacturer's specifications, reporting non-operational meters to District Staff within three working days and requiring operators to send an initial meter reading at the beginning of each calendar year or pumping season to ensure all meters are operational.
- Production compliance will be calculated on a 3-year rolling average. In an effort to treat all operators the same, the District will begin calculating the average on January 1, 2020. Data will be collected in 2020, 2021 and 2022. On January 1, 2023, any operators outside of the allowable volume of one acre-foot per contiguous acre per year will be subject to enforcement. From there forth the 3-year rolling average will be in place.

The new rules are currently in effect, however enforcement for Operating Permits and metering requirements will not take place until January 1, 2020. Again, this allows the District and all operators the entirety of 2019 to make necessary changes for compliance. It is important to note, the Maximum Allowable Volume of one acre-foot per contiguous acre per year will remain the same as it has since 2004. The Maximum Rate of Production will remain at 2,880 gallons per minute/section or 4.5 gallons per minute/acre. Spacing rules for drilling new wells will also remain the same. For more information or any questions, please call the District at 806-883-2501.

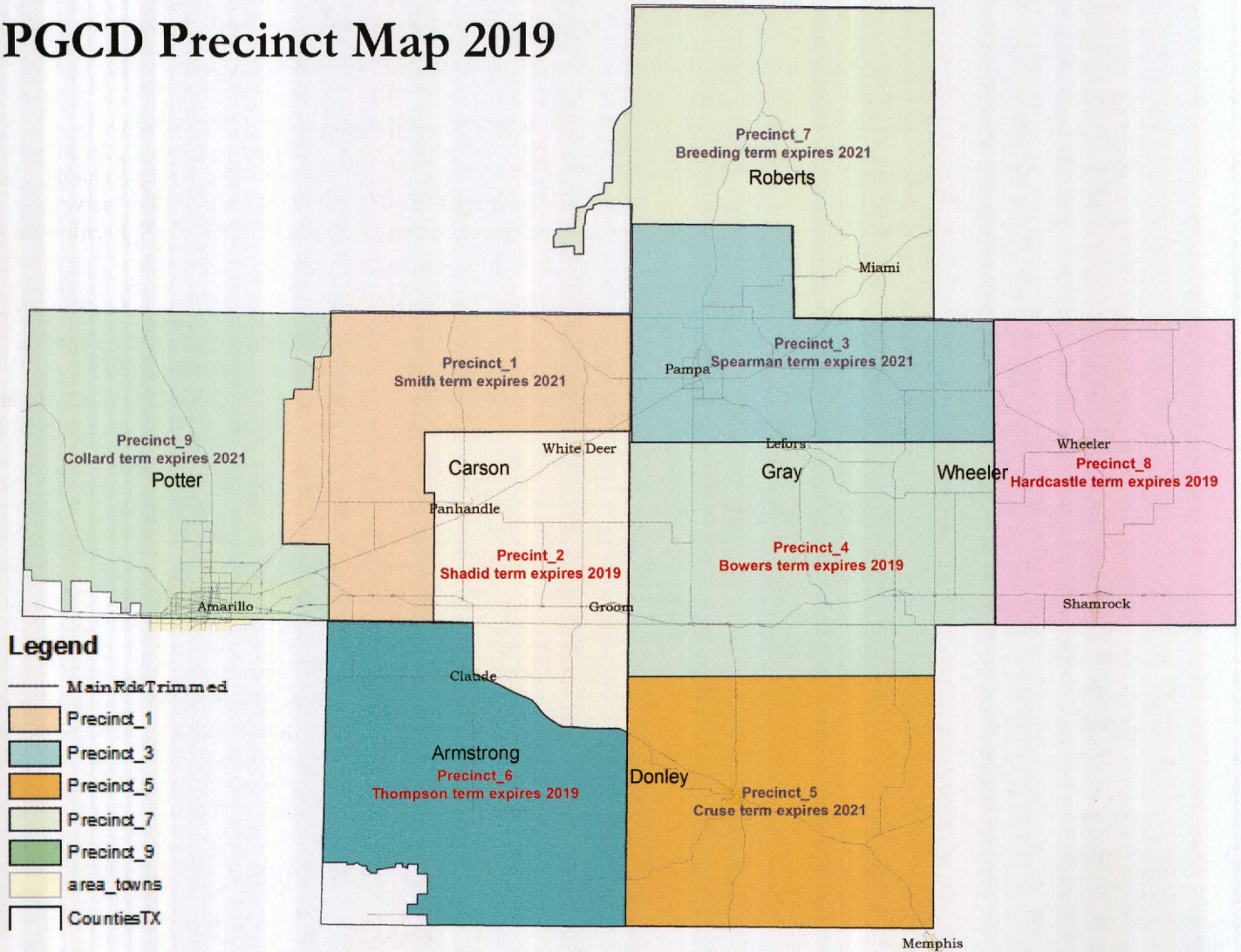


# 2019 PGCD Board of Director Elections

PGCD Board of Director Elections are scheduled for Saturday, May 4th. The four year terms of four District Directors expire this year. These four include: Joy Shadid - Precinct 2, Charles Bowers - Precinct 4, Jim Thompson - Precinct 6, and Danny Hardcastle - Precinct 8.

The filing period begins January 16 and runs through February 15, 2019. Forms needed to file for a seat are available at the District office. For additional questions and information, please call 806-883-2501.

## PGCD Precinct Map 2019



## 86th Texas Legislature Outlook

The 86th Texas Legislative Regular Session begins this month on January 8 and is set to end on May 27, 2019. PGCD General Manager C.E. Williams will spend much of the next few months at our state Capitol tracking any bills relating to groundwater issues. The last day to file a bill is Friday, March 9th.

Speaker of the House, Joe Staus will be replaced by Dennis Bonnen a 22-year House veteran. Speaker Bonnen's office has announced former state Representative Robby Cook as special advisor to the Texas House. Representative Cook is longtime supporter of groundwater conservation districts in Texas.

Williams will update District constituents on any note-worthy issues or bills. Please follow us on Facebook or Twitter for regular updates or be on the lookout for the next edition of Panhandle Water News.



## Meter Cost-Share Program

PGCD Board of Directors have allocated \$350,000 this fiscal year to be used in a 50/50 meter cost-share program. The District will cost-share meters on all wells that were not required to have a meter in the past. The program will be available through September, 30 2019.

With the recent rule changes, all wells, new or existing, producing more than 35 gallons per minute are now required to be metered. Alternatively, meters may be installed on a center pivot sprinkler, drip irrigation system or a central collection point, as long as all production is captured. Meters must be installed prior to December 31, 2019.

The District will contribute up to \$1,500 total cost of the meter only. Please contact the District Office today for additional information or if you have any questions regarding meters or the new rule changes.

## Annual Winter Level Measurements

Each year Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District takes measurements on a network of 800+ wells throughout the District to determine yearly aquifer changes in water levels. The measurements are taken not only to determine the water level in the aquifer, but also to collect data, provide information for future planning and to determine IRS depletion allowances. The measurements are taken during the winter months when demands for irrigation are lower so that a more representative static water level can be obtained.

Our field technicians began water level measurements in November and will finish next month. The winter water level measurements play a critical role in in gauging our compliance with the 50/50 goal, to have 50 percent of the water left in the aquifer 50 years from now, by allowing us to monitor the decline in the aquifer over the past year.

The measurements taken can be viewed in our July 2019 newsletter. If you have questions please call the office for assistance 806-883-2501.

## PGCD Scholarship Reminder

Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District offers a scholarship to all high school graduating seniors living within the District (Armstrong, Carson, Donley, Gray, Potter, Roberts and Wheeler counties) planning to further their education. With rising tuition costs, scholarships can tremendously help in reducing financial burdens, so take advantage of the PGCD scholarship program and apply by **Friday, February 15th**.

PGCD established a scholarship program in 2002 and has since given away \$144,000 to District students. First place is awarded a four year scholarship of \$4,000, second place receives \$3,000 and \$2,000 goes to third place. Only graduating seniors from the District are eligible to apply. Applicants must write a 500-1,000 word essay on the topic chosen by the District. In order to receive the scholarship, recipients are required to enroll as a full-time student, attend the college of their choice the fall semester immediately following selection and maintain at least a 2.5 grade point average. To apply, please visit [www.pgcd.us](http://www.pgcd.us) and click on the Scholarship Link under Programs. For questions regarding the scholarship, please contact Britney Britten at 806-883-2501 or by email at [Britney@pgcd.us](mailto:Britney@pgcd.us).

The 2018/2019 essay topic is:

**“Why is the Texas Constitutional Amendment of 1917, known as the ‘Conservation Amendment’, important to groundwater conservation districts in Texas?”**

## PGCD Annual Report Now Online

PGCD’s 2017-2018 Annual Report is now available online at [www.pgcd.us](http://www.pgcd.us). Each year the District has a set plan of goals and objectives that must be completed. The Annual Report serves as an outline for those goals.

Each objective is listed as well as marked *Complete* or *Incomplete*. PGCD is proud to show District’s constituents our accomplishments throughout the year, as well as the areas we would like to improve. For questions regarding the Annual Report, please call 806-883-2501.

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## 2018 Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show

Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District (PGCD) attended the 2018 Amarillo Farm and Ranch show November 27 - November 29 at the Amarillo Civic Center. The booth displayed District information for show attendees, such as our 2018 five year average decline maps that were published in the Panhandle Water News July 2018 Newsletter, District programs, information about xeriscaping and rainwater harvesting, and other District information. Much of the discussion was dominated by the rule changes that took place last month.

Visitors that stopped by the booth received giveaways, informational brochures about the District, take home copies of last year's editions of Panhandle Water News and were able to sign up to receive a free subscription to the Panhandle Water News. If you are not signed up for our newsletter already, visit [www.pgcd.us](http://www.pgcd.us) and fill out the form at the bottom of our homepage.

PGCD looks forward to this event each year and enjoys meeting and interacting with the public and educating them on the importance of water conservation whether it be at home, in the field or within our cities.



*(Left) Join us next year December 3 -5, 2019 for the annual Farm & Ranch show.*



*(Left) Booth visitors signing up for the PWN newsletter.*