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Take Care OF Texas NEWS you can use

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

MARCH 2008

Plan to Attend the TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair and Conference

It's time again for the TCEQ's Environmental Trade Fair and Conference, being held at the Austin Convention Center on April 29-May 1. This annual event is Texas' premier environmental educational forum, considered by many to be one of the best in the country. Conference participants learn about compliance matters by gaining a better understanding of the state's environmental rules, regulations, and issues. Business and industry representatives get an opportunity to meet one-on-one with agency staff and to network with other environmental industry professionals. Attendees also can visit more than 400 exhibits and learn about some of the leading environmental alternatives for business and industry.

This year, 12 concurrent education sessions include speakers from all of the TCEQ's varied programs. The conference is offering up to 12 hours of continuing education credits for professional engineers, professional geoscientists, professional and registered sanitarians, municipal solid waste technicians and supervisors, public water system operators, and wastewater system operators. Attorneys may receive up to 12 hours of Minimum Continuing Legal Education. Leaking petroleum storage tank corrective-action project managers can earn up to 11 hours of continuing education credits. For more information and how to register, visit <www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/events/etfc/etf.html>.



Every year, Texas celebrates its best and brightest environmental leaders with an award in their honor. Please join Governor Rick Perry and the TCEQ commissioners as they recognize the efforts of Texans to preserve this great state's resources and natural wonders. The Texas Environmental Excellence Awards banquet showcases each award-winning endeavor with video vignettes along with dinner and an awards ceremony. These awards spotlight the state's highest achievements in environmental preservation and protection. Recommended by a blue-ribbon committee, the awards recognize outstanding, innovative environmental programs in 10 diverse categories: Agriculture, Civic/Nonprofit, Education, Government, Small Business, Large Business/Nontechnical, Large Business/Technical, Innovative Technology, Individual, and Youth. The celebration banquet will be held on Wednesday, April 30, at the Austin Convention Center. Tickets for individuals and tables may be purchased using the Environmental Trade Fair registration form. For more information on the awards, please visit <www.teea.org>.

Agriculture Waste Pesticide Collections Offer Safe Disposal Option

The TCEQ Agriculture Waste Pesticide Collection program offers rural Texans the opportunity to dispose of banned and/or unwanted pesticides as well as related agricultural items at no cost to participants. Items collected at the events include: pesticides; herbicides and other agricultural chemicals; paint; power-steering fluid; oil; gasoline; oil filters; fluorescent bulbs; grease; lead-acid batteries; transmission fluid; brake fluid; diesel fuel; and properly rinsed, plastic-pesticide containers. Many of these items are recycled.

In fall 2007, the collection program held 12 events that drew 925 participants from 123 counties. The following were collected:

- 132.82 tons of discarded materials (49 tons recycled)
- 3,941 triple-rinsed, plastic containers (all recycled)
- 1,417 lead-acid batteries (all recycled)
- 14,410 gallons of oil (all recycled)
- 25,000 oil filters (all recycled)

For information about future collections, call the Agriculture Waste program coordinator at 512-239-3143 or visit <www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/AgWaste/agwaste.html>.

Get Updated Federal Regulations

Looking for federal regulatory information that relates to you, your business, and the environmental concerns currently facing your world? The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has added new features to one of its most popular Web sites for environmental regulatory information. See the new site at <www.epa.gov/lawsregs/>.

More Waterway Cleanups Scheduled

To help clean our waterways, join Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) and the TCEQ for a scheduled Waterway Cleanup event. Check the sites on the next page for the one nearest you. Or if you would like to plan an event, contact KTB at <www.ktb.org> or by e-mail at <hester@ktb.org>.



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An environmental message brought to you by the Small Business and Environmental Assistance Division.

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Waterway Cleanups Upcoming Events Scheduled:

Community	Date	Contact
Coppell	4/5	972-462-5191
Corinth	4/5	214-728-7680
Dallas	4/5	214-802-6811
Fort Worth	3/29	817-392-8596
Houston	3/29	713-529-6443
Houston	3/29	713-499-6660
Lake Jackson	4/5	979-415-2419
Lufkin	4/5	936-632-5326
Nacogdoches	4/5	936-560-5624
Navasota	4/4	936-825-2241
North Richland Hills	4/5	817-427-6651
Plano	4/5	972-769-4216
Tyler	4/5	903-839-3708
Victoria	4/5	361-485-3200
Waco	4/5	254-750-5278

San Antonio Reduces Smog Ahead of Schedule

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) plans to designate the San Antonio area as attainment for the 1997 eight-hour ozone standard by April of this year. The area was previously designated as “deferred nonattainment” for eight-hour ozone, but, largely because of its participation in the Early Action Compact program, the area was able to demonstrate attainment of the standard by Dec. 31, 2007.



The program, which ended Dec. 31, 2007, gave certain local areas the flexibility to develop their own approach to meeting the eight-hour ozone standard, provided the communities controlled emissions from local sources earlier than the Clean Air Act required.

The EPA worked with the San Antonio area to reduce ground-level ozone, or smog, as quickly as possible. The Early Action Compact program provided a strong incentive for state and local governments, civic leaders, and businesses to develop innovative, cost-effective strategies for improving ozone-air quality that are tailored to individual communities.

By reducing pollution ahead of schedule, the San Antonio area is bringing sustainable health and environmental improvements to its residents sooner than would have been achieved without this agreement.

For more information on the Early Action Compact Program, visit <www.epa.gov/air/eac/>.

Eco-Speak: A User’s Guide to the Language of Recycling

When it comes to recycling, can you heed what you read? The Federal Trade Commission says claims on products and packaging about recyclability and recycled content may be misunderstood. Here are some points from the Federal Trade Commission:



Product labels that say “Please Recycle” are relevant only if your community collects the products for recycling—and meaningless if it doesn’t.

- Sometimes, businesses recycle products for you. For example, many grocery stores take back their plastic grocery bags and some manufacturers of toner cartridges have programs that allow consumers to return their empty cartridges.
- If a label says “recycled” it must tell the percentage of recycled content—unless it’s 100 percent.
- The universal recycling symbol means that the product is both recyclable and made of recycled materials. If only one of these claims is true, the manufacturer should say which one.

Just because a product or package carries the universal recycling symbol or says it’s recyclable doesn’t mean it will be collected for recycling in your neighborhood. To help your community save the time and money it spends separating the items it recycles from the ones it doesn’t, find out which are appropriate for the recycling bins. If you have questions about a particular item, check with your local recycling office.

For more information, visit <www.ftc.gov/bcp/menus/consumer/energy/environment.shtm>.

Take Care of Texas Tip

Fix Leaks

Check your faucets and fix any leaks you find. A faucet leaking at a rate of one drop per second can waste up to 1,661 gallons of water per year. If every household fixed just one leaky faucet, we could reduce water use in Texas by over 13 billion gallons a year.



www.takecareoftexas.org

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This could be your
LAST ISSUE.

We need to
hear from you!

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

By state law we cannot mail you this newsletter unless we hear from you once a year. If you have not contacted us in the last year, then you must respond now. There are three ways you may request to remain on the mailing list:

1. Call us at 512-239-3150.
2. Fax us at 512-239-3175.
3. E-mail us at <educate@tceq.state.tx.us>.

If you have already notified us this year of your desire to continue receiving this newsletter, you need not do anything at this time.

If you have questions, please call the Environmental News You Can Use staff at 512-239-3150.

