

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

*(Released jointly by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Railroad Commission of Texas, July 1, 2011)*

### **Transfer of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ's) Surface Casing Program to Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)**

Article 2 of House Bill 2694, passed by the 82<sup>nd</sup> Texas Legislature and signed by the Governor, transferred from the TCEQ to the RRC duties relating to the protection of groundwater resources from oil and gas associated activities.

Specifically, the law transfers from the TCEQ to the RRC, effective September 1, 2011, duties pertaining to the responsibility of preparing groundwater protection advisory/recommendation letters. After the transfer, the RRC will be responsible for providing surface casing and/or groundwater protection recommendations for the following activities:

- Exploration, development, or production of oil & gas resources - new drilling, other drilling activities including, but not limited to, enhanced recovery injection wells, injection wells for brine mining, injection wells for underground storage of hydrocarbons, seismic exploration and cathodic protection wells, well integrity tests, plugging of abandoned wells, core holes, and micro-seismic boreholes;
- Subsurface disposal and injection of oil & gas waste - saltwater disposal wells; and
- Anthropogenic carbon dioxide injection wells and geologic storage facilities under the RRC's jurisdiction.

The TCEQ and RRC staff are working cooperatively to facilitate the transfer, including transfer of staff to the RRC, no later than September 1, 2011.

TCEQ and RRC staff will make every effort to minimize disruptions to Surface Casing program customers and groundwater protection advisory letter applicants during the transition.

By the week of August 29<sup>th</sup>, the agencies expect to move the TCEQ's surface casing staff to the RRC office, located in the William B. Travis Building, 1701 North Congress. Details on specific office location, as well as phone numbers, will be provided as those details are finalized. This notification will be updated periodically as necessary to provide updated information and guidance on changes that impact groundwater protection advisory letter applicants.

Please continue to submit applications for groundwater protection advisory letters to the TCEQ until further notice. If you have any questions pertaining to this notification, please contact the TCEQ's Surface Casing Program at (512) 239-0515 or by electronic email at SC@tceq.texas.gov.