

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS
Oil and Gas Division

NOTICE TO OPERATORS

**BENEFICIAL RECYCLING OF TREATED DOMESTIC WASTEWATER AND
MOBILE DRINKING WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM WASTEWATER AT
DRILL SITES**

The Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) has received requests from industry to recycle treated domestic wastewater generated from mobile on-site sewage treatment units located at oil and gas drill sites. The RRC also has received requests to recycle mobile drinking water treatment system wastewater, including reverse osmosis reject water, generated from oil and gas drill sites. The term “domestic wastewater” means wastewater that originates primarily from kitchen, bathroom, and laundry sources, including waste from food preparation, dishwashing, garbage grinding, toilets, baths, showers, and sinks of a residential dwelling. The term “mobile drinking water treatment system wastewater” means wastewater generated from the treatment of surface or subsurface groundwater for drinking water purposes.

The RRC has reviewed these requests and conferred with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) on jurisdictional issues regarding activities on oil and gas drill sites as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two agencies codified at 16 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §3.30 (Statewide Rule 30).

The RRC has jurisdiction over the on-site treatment and management of domestic wastewater generated at oil and gas drill sites. The RRC also has jurisdiction over waste stream(s) generated from mobile drinking water treatment systems located at and resulting from use exclusively at well sites. The TCEQ has jurisdiction over the treatment of water that will be used for drinking water, other potable uses, and potable water delivery, and therefore, the TCEQ also has jurisdiction over mobile potable water treatment units operated at drill sites (mobile drinking water treatment systems) and over the transportation of domestic waste and wastewater.

The RRC uses the minor permit process under 16 TAC §3.8(d)(6)(G) to consider permit applications to authorize the operator of a lease to beneficially recycle treated domestic wastewater and the waste streams generated from mobile drinking water treatment systems. Application requirements and conditions for a permit to recycle treated domestic wastewater or mobile drinking water treatment system wastewater are contained in the document titled

“Application Requirements and Permit Conditions for Beneficial Recycling of Treated Domestic Wastewater and Mobile Drinking Water Treatment System Wastewater at Drill Sites,”

which can be found here: <https://www.rrc.texas.gov/media/vt4og3fz/appl-req-cond-wastewater.pdf>.

In no case may the waste stream(s) be discharged or allowed to enter any watercourses or drainage ways, including any drainage ditch, dry creek, flowing creek, river, or any other body of surface water.

Solids accumulated during the treatment of domestic sewage must be removed to an authorized disposal facility by a TCEQ registered sludge transporter prior to treatment system relocation.

PLEASE FORWARD TO THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF YOUR COMPANY