

# REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, March 26, 2026 – 10:00 A. M.  
Houston-Galveston Area Council  
Virtual Teams Meeting

<p><b><u>MEMBER'S PRESENT</u></b>                  Harris County – Winifred Hamilton                  Harris County – Doug Peterson                  Environmental Defense Fund– Grace Lewis                  City of Houston–Nguyen Ly                  TXDOT–Qing Li                  HARC–Carlos Gamarra                  Waller County–Brooke Bacuetes</p>	<p><b><u>ALTERNATE PRESENT</u></b>                  METRO–Kenneth McGaughey                  Air Alliance Houston–Inyang Uwak                  Harris County Pollution Control–Stuart Mueller                  City of LaPorte–Johnny Morales                  Port Houston–Kenneth Gathright                  EDF–Philip Martin                  Brazoria County–Christina Moore                  League of Women Voters–Katie Campbell -Shumway                  City of Houston–Darryl Tate</p>
<p><b><u>OTHERS PRESENT</u></b>                  Tricon Energy–Elizabeth Carlson                  Sara Delroshan</p>	<p><b><u>STAFF PRESENT</u></b>                  Houston-Galveston Area Council – Pharr Andrews                  Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall                  Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ben Finley                  Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ron Papsdorf                  Houston-Galveston Area Council – Vinny Polignano                  Houston-Galveston Area Council – Yetunde Oyewale                  Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carlos Lugo                  Houston-Galveston Area Council –Ayo Jibowu                  Houston-Galveston Area Council –Ebrahim Eslami                  Houston-Galveston Area Council –Andrew DeCandis                  Houston-Galveston Area Council –Madeline Statkewicz                  Houston-Galveston Area Council –Keehren Baah                  Houston-Galveston Area Council –Jamila Owens                  TERP– Ron Heiser                  TCEQ – Vanessa De Arman                  TCEQ – Rachel Melton                  TCEQ – Emily Wagoner                  TCEQ – Denine Calvin                  TCEQ – Alison Stokes                  TXDOT – Shixin Gao</p>

**BRIEFING**

**Overview**

- a. RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA Update, TCEQ Update, and Regional Air Quality Monitoring update), and the meeting concluded with information items and no announcements.
- b. Go to <http://www.h-gac.com/board-of-directors/advisory-committees/regional-air-quality-planning-advisory-committee/meeting-material.aspx> to view the meeting materials for this meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ITEM 1A. Introduction**

Grace Lewis called the meeting to order, and members were introduced.

**ITEM 2A. Approval of Meeting Summary (1/29/2026 and 02/26/2026)**

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Meeting summaries held for quorum.

## **AGENCY REPORTS**

### **ITEM 3A. EPA Update – (Jeff Riley, EPA)**

**A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed the committee:**

**No updates for this meeting.**

### **ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update – (Vanessa DeArman, TCEQ)**

TCEQ staff gave an update to the members on the latest information:

#### **TCEQ Emissions Inventory (EI) Completed EI to be Submitted by March 31, 2026**

Point Source EIs are due March 31, 2026.

For sites subject to 30 TAC §101.10, a completed EI is required to be submitted to TCEQ by March 31, 2026, or as directed by the commission. Emissions inventories must be submitted electronically through TCEQ's [State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System \(STEERS\)](https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/) (<https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/>). However, if the site is not subject to 30 TAC §101.10, a rule inapplicability notification letter may be mailed in lieu of a STEERS submittal.

For questions, please contact the EI program at [psinvent@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:psinvent@tceq.texas.gov) or at 512-239-1773.

#### **Mass Emissions Cap and Trade (MECT) and Highly Reactive Volatile Organic Compounds Cap and Trade (HECT) Programs**

Annual Reports for 2025 compliance with the MECT and HECT Programs are due by March 31, 2026. annual reports can be submitted through [STEERS](#).

Visit the [MECT](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/mass_ect_prog.html) webpage ([https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/mass\\_ect\\_prog.html](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/mass_ect_prog.html)) or [HECT](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/hrvoc_ect_prog.html) webpage ([https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/hrvoc\\_ect\\_prog.html](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/hrvoc_ect_prog.html)) for checklists, supplemental documents, and other tools to assist with the completion of your report.

For more information visit the [Emissions Banking and Trading \(EBT\) Programs](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/>) or contact [ebt@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:ebt@tceq.texas.gov).

#### **Senate Bill (SB) 2102 and SB 1729 Implementation and Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program Updates; I/M SIP Revision**

On April 1, 2026, TCEQ will propose a rulemaking and SIP revision to fully implement SB 2102 as further consolidated by SB 1729, which extends the initial registration and inspection period for rental vehicles to three years, and requires that an emissions inspection fee that is paid when a rental vehicle becomes two years old will be paid up front, at the time of the initial rental vehicle registration.

For additional information, please visit the [Vehicle I/M Program](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/mobilesource/im.html) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/mobilesource/im.html>).

#### **New File Transfer Protocol (FTP) Process**

TCEQ has begun phasing out its current secure [FTP system](https://ftps.tceq.texas.gov) (<https://ftps.tceq.texas.gov>) and will fully retire the system on April 15, 2026. The replacement secure FTP system, called TCEQ Send, will be available for use starting April 1, 2026.

For more information and assistance, please visit the [TCEQ Send User Guide](https://send.tceq.texas.gov/img/help.html) website (<https://send.tceq.texas.gov/img/help.html>).

#### **New Meteorological Datasets are Available for Use with AERMOD**

The Air Permits Division Air Dispersion Modeling Team has completed the update of pre-processed meteorological data for the state of Texas using AERMET version 24142. These meteorological datasets are replacing the pre-processed meteorological datasets processed with AERMET version 22112.

For more information and to download the meteorological data sets and technical justification, please visit the [Meteorological Data for Air Dispersion Modeling](http://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/modeling/datasets) webpage (www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/modeling/datasets).

For questions, please contact the Air Permits Division Air Dispersion Modeling Team at [ADMod@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:ADMod@tceq.texas.gov).

### **TCEQ's Annual Environmental Trade Fair and Conference (ETFC) Returns May 19-20, 2026 – Tentative Agenda is Now Available**

Registration for the early rate is through April 19 for TCEQ's 2026 ETFC, which will be held May 19-20, 2026, at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio.

TCEQ will lead more than 100 courses and discussions at this year's ETFC. Topics will focus on air and water permitting, industrial, and solid waste management, compliance and enforcement, remediation programs, and more.

For more information about ETFC, and to register, please visit the [ETFC](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/etfc/etf.html) webpage (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/etfc/etf.html).

### **Texas Environmental Excellence Awards (TEEA) Winners and Finalists**

TCEQ proudly presents the TEEA winners and finalists. These annual awards celebrate the bold efforts of citizens, communities, businesses, and organizations working to help preserve and protect the Texas environment. TCEQ applauds the creativity and resourcefulness of this year's TEEA winners and finalists. Please see the Houston area winners and finalists:

1. Environmental Educator of the Year
  1. Winner: Erica Jazmin Villarreal, Science Teacher, Channelview – Channelview High School
  2. Finalists:
    1. Dustin Perez, Science Teacher, Porter – Robert Crippen Elementary School
    2. Wendy Reistle, Environmental Education Coordinator, Houston – Environmental Institute of Houston at the University of Houston Clear Lake
2. Pollution Prevention
  1. Finalist: Vallourec, Houston – Vallourec South Waste Reduction and Recycling Initiative

TCEQ is honored to host the TEEA on June 9, 2026, at the Bullock Texas State History Museum to recognize the TEEA winners and finalists.

For more information, please visit the [TEEA Banquet](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/texas-environmental-excellence-awards-banquet) webpage (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/teea/texas-environmental-excellence-awards-banquet).

### **ITEM 2C. TERP Update (*Ron Heiser, TERP*)**

TERP staff gave an update to the members on the latest information:

Since October of last year, TCEQ has successfully opened and closed 2 grant programs: the Alternative Fueling Facilities Program (AFFP) and the Light-Duty Program (LDPLIP). o The Texas Clean School Bus Program (TCSB) will continue to accept applications until May 22, 2026, or until the total requested funding reaches \$32M, which is double the initial funding. TCSB is always oversubscribed, and it is one of the few grant programs that we are allowed to move additional funds into. o TCEQ has sent out webinar announcements (via GovDelivery) last week for the Rebate Grants Program and the ERIG Program (Emissions Reduction Incentive Grant). The Rebate Webinar is scheduled for Thursday, April 16, at 1:30 p.m. and the ERIG Webinar is scheduled for the very next day, Friday, April 17, at 10:00 a.m. All TERP webinars are launched in the Microsoft Teams platform, and always free to the public. You can register to attend these webinars by going to the TERP Calendar of Events page via the main TERP website at [www.terpgrants.org](http://www.terpgrants.org). These webinars typically last about 2 hours. • Coming Soon: o The Rebate Grants Program is still on track to open in late-April or early-May 2026. The Rebate Program provides grants in the Texas nonattainment areas and affected counties to upgrade or replace on-road heavy-duty diesel vehicles and select heavy-duty diesel non-road equipment. o The Emissions Reduction Incentive Grants Program (ERIG) is still on track to open in late-April or earlyMay, 2026. ERIG will provide grants in Texas nonattainment areas and affected counties for locomotives, marine vessels, stationary equipment, or non-road equipment. o The New Technology Implementation Grant Program (NTIG) is expected to open in late-May or

early June, 2026. NTIG provides funding to assist in implementing new technologies that reduce emissions of regulated pollutants from facilities and other stationary sources.

- o The Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grants Program (TNGVGP) is expected to open in late-July or early August, 2026. TNGVGP provides funding to cover up to 90% of the cost to replace or repower heavy duty vehicles with vehicles and engines powered by CNG, LNG, or LPG.
- o The Seaport and Rail Yard Areas Emissions Reduction Program (SPRY) is expected to open early to mid-August 2026. The SPRY program provides grants for upgrading or replacing older drayage and container handling equipment operating in seaports and rail yards in eligible Texas counties.
- o The Texas Hydrogen Infrastructure, Vehicle, and Equipment Grant Program (THIVE) is expected to open early to mid-August 2026. THIVE will provide grants in Texas nonattainment areas and affected counties for hydrogen vehicles, equipment, and refueling infrastructure.
- o More projected grant openings will be announced in the coming RAQPAC meetings as the rollouts become clearer.

- Visit the TERP main website to view Project Summary Reports (by grant program) dating back to 2001. Also view the most recent Annual and Biennial Reports to the Texas Legislature. All reports can be found under the Reports & Publications dropdown menu at the top of the page;
- Visit the TERP main website to see all TERP Grant Programs and their respective requirements by selecting the 'Explore Grants' dropdown at the top of the page and choosing 'By Program Name';
- Sign up for the TERP Hot Topics email list to get the latest information on new program openings and other announcements by visiting the TERP main website and scrolling to the bottom of the page and selecting Subscribe. Contact TERP staff by phone at (800) 919-TERP (8377) or by email at [terp@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:terp@tceq.texas.gov).

Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Plan (TxVEMP) Program (No updates since last meeting) The TxVEMP All-Electric Grant Program application period has been extended to August 31, 2026: The TxVEMP All-Electric Grant Program still has approximately \$30 million in available funding to upgrade or replace qualifying vehicles and equipment operating in eligible areas with new electric models. Grants can reimburse up to:

- o Air Grants Division/TCEQ
- o 100% of the cost for government entities
- o 75% of the incremental cost for non-government entities

- Eligible project categories include the replacement or repower of:
  - o Class 8 Local Freight Trucks and Port Drayage Trucks
  - o Class 4-8 School Bus, Shuttle Bus, or Transit Bus
  - o Class 4-7 Local Freight Trucks
  - o Airport Ground Support Equipment
  - o Forklifts and Port Cargo Handling Equipment

Applicants purchasing on-road vehicles or non-road equipment may request additional funding for electric charging or hydrogen refueling infrastructure. Sign up for TxVEMP updates to learn more about this program. Please contact us at 1-800-919-8377 or [VWsettle@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:VWsettle@tceq.texas.gov) with any questions. Visit [www.txvwfund.org](http://www.txvwfund.org) for the latest information and other announcements, as well as program requirements, application forms, and project summary reports.

Texas Voluntary Marginal Conventional Well Plugging Program (TxMCW) (No updates since last meeting)

- Background
  - o May 8, 2024: TCEQ received \$134 million in grant funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) – Methane Emissions Reduction Program (MERP) for Mitigating Emissions from Marginal Conventional Wells (MCWs), overseen by the Department of Energy (DOE) / National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL).
- Program Description
  - o TCEQ is implementing the MERP grant through TxMCW, a program that will cover the costs of measuring methane emissions at participating well sites and plugging those wells.
  - o at an estimated \$60,000 and \$120,000 per well, TCEQ may award between 1,000 and 2,000 grants for qualifying wells in Texas over a four-year program period.
  - o TxMCW program development is still underway.
- Upcoming Events
  - o TxMCW Presentation at the TCEQ Environmental Trade Fair and Conference, May 19, 2026, held at the Henry B. Gozalez Convention Center, 900 E. Market Street, San Antonio, TX 78205.
  - o The TxMCW is hoping to release their Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) as well as their Request for Proposal (RFP) to select a vendor to do the methane measurements for potential eligible projects. Visit the TxMCW webpage for the latest program information and sign up for updates to learn more about this program, or contact us directly via email, at [TxMCW@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:TxMCW@tceq.texas.gov).

#### **ITEM 2D. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update– (Vinny Polignano, H-GAC)**

Staff presented the regional air quality monitoring which shows no exceedance days so far in 2026, compared with two exceedance days in 2025. Notable site highlights include a northwest Harris County monitor recording the highest March ozone average and Baytown showing the highest March particulate matter average. Visual trends suggest tentative declines in design values through 2026.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **ITEM 4A. Houston World Cup 26 Sustainability Committee Update- (Elizabeth Carlson, Tricon Energy)**

Elizabeth Carlson outlined a wide-ranging set of World Cup sustainability initiatives centered on improving air quality, including a hospitality toolkit, school-based badge and micro-grant programs, a sustainable event playbook, and EPA-

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supported guidance for sustainable soccer fields, alongside a major Green Corridor project featuring transit options, nature-based solutions, and environmental monitoring demonstrations. She highlighted robust fan engagement plans such as QR -code badges, mobile monitoring activities, air quality vans near Fan Festival sites, volunteer cleanups, and pop-up educational events. City partners, including Metro and TXDOT, are coordinating targeted cleanups and increased staffing while promoting public transit and biking, with expectations of higher ridership during the event. Carlson emphasized the importance of clear, effective visitors facing air quality messaging and invited stakeholder feedback to refine communications as planning progresses.

**ITEM 4B. Data to Action EPA Grant Update- (Katie Moore, Achieving Community Tasks Successfully, ACTS)**

Katie Moore presented ACTS' EPA Enhanced Community Air Monitoring grant, describing its partners and goals to establish baseline concentrations of ethylene oxide, acrolein, and 1, 3-butadiene, and highlighting that this EPA-funded effort is among the first to measure ethylene oxide in these communities. She summarized results from the initial 20-day mobile monitoring campaign, which generated over 600 samples-including approximately 200 daytime mobile and 450 overnight stationary measurements and noted that additional campaigns are underway, with plans to reanalyze findings as new data becomes available.

**H-GAC INFORMATION ITEMS**

**ITEM 5A. H-GAC Update (Andrew DeCandis, H-GAC)**

Staff announced The Community and Environmental Department upcoming Regional Resilience Roundtable on April 2, focused on air quality and related topics. The event will convene partners involved in hazard mitigation and resilience planning, providing an opportunity for attendees to network with peers, strengthen partnerships, and learn from successful mitigation projects. A registration link has been shared for those interested in attending or seeking additional information.

**MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ITEM 6A. Updates from Members**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**ITEM 7A.**

Next meeting: April 30, 2026

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 11:31 A.M.