

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, June 26, 2025 – 10:00 A. M.

Houston-Galveston Area Council

Virtual Teams Meeting

<u>MEMBER PRESENT</u> Harris County – Winifred Hamilton Harris County – Doug Peterson American Lung Association – Charlie Gagen Environmental Defense Fund– Grace Lewis Houston Advanced Research Center – Ebrahim Eslami City of Houston–Nguyen Ly TXDOT–Qing Li METRO–Vincent Sanders	<u>ALTERNATE PRESENT</u> Port Houston – Kenneth Gathright METRO –Kenneth McGaughey Harris County Pollution Control–Stuart Mueller Air Alliance Houston–Inyang Uwak
<u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> Rachel Melton Jesus Gutierrez David Snyder Eglantine Pauverel-Moss Jorge Gonzalez Sabine Hodge Shaun Auckland Doug Peterson 13464521477	<u>STAFF PRESENT</u> Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis Houston-Galveston Area Council – Pharr Andrews Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ben Finley Houston-Galveston Area Council – Vinny Polignano Houston-Galveston Area Council – Yetunde Oyewale Houston-Galveston Area Council – Marcus Tucker Houston-Galveston Area Council – Maggie Isied Houston-Galveston Area Council – Bennie Chambers Houston-Galveston Area Council – Carlos Lugo Houston-Galveston Area Council – Vishu Lingala Houston-Galveston Area Council – Ayo Jibowu Houston-Galveston Area Council – Rania Mohamed Houston-Galveston Area Council –Ariane Martins Houston-Galveston Area Council –Rosa Harris Houston-Galveston Area Council – Jamila Owens TCEQ – Vanessa DeArman TCEQ – Alison Stokes TERP–Ron Heiser TCEQ – Emily Wagoner TCEQ – Denine Calvin

BRIEFING

Overview

- 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.
- 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 1B. Approval of Meeting Summary (05/26/2025)

Meeting summary approved.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 2A. EPA Update – (Jeff Riley)

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

litigation in the DC Circuit Court:

On Monday, June 23, EPA filed another motion to the Court requesting an additional 30-day abeyance in the PM2.5 NAAQS litigation. The Court can grant EPA's request or can issue an opinion at some point even if EPA continues to seek an abeyance.

ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update – (Vanessa DeArman)

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

Texas 2025 Five-Year Ambient Air Monitoring Network Assessment (FYA)

TCEQ is providing an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft FYA. States are required to conduct a network assessment every five years under 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 58.10. The FYA includes federal monitoring network changes from January 1, 2020, through June 1, 2025, and an evaluation through 2030.

The FYA has a 30-day comment period that opened May 30, 2025, and closes at 5:00 P.M. on June 30, 2025. Written comment information, including name, email address and physical address can be submitted to: TCEQ, P.O. Box 13087, Attention: Holly Landuyt, MC-165, Austin, Texas 78711-3087; or sent to: <mailto:tceqamnp@tceq.texas.gov>.

For additional information, and PDF copies of the draft *Texas 2025 Five-Year Ambient Air Monitoring Network Assessment*, please visit the [TCEQ Air Monitoring Network Plans](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/network_review.html) webpage (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/monops/network_review.html).

Emissions Banking and Trading of Allowances (EBTA) Program Annual Reports

Annual reports for 2024-2025 compliance with the EBTA program are due by June 30, 2025. Submit reports electronically through the [State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System \(STEERS\)](https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/) (<https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/steers/>).

Guidance on how to complete annual reports in STEERS is available on the [EBT](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/banking/>). For questions, please contact EBT at ebt@tceq.texas.gov.

TCEQ Accepting Nominations for the Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Advisory Committee

TCEQ is accepting applications for potential Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Advisory Committee members from the following affiliations: three industry representatives, two appraisal district representatives, one taxing unit representative, and one independent technical expert.

The application period opened on June 6, 2025, and will close on July 8, 2025. The terms will last four years, beginning January 1, 2026. To apply, complete the nomination form and submit it to TCEQ at txrelief@tceq.texas.gov by 5:00 p.m. on July 8, 2025.

For additional information, as well as the link to the nomination form, please visit the [TCEQ Tax Relief Advisory Committee](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/taxrelief/advisory_group.html) webpage (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/taxrelief/advisory_group.html). For questions, please contact Melissa Altman of the Tax Relief Program by phone at (512) 239-1407 or by email to txrelief@tceq.texas.gov.

The current Tax Relief for Pollution Control Property Advisory Committee will meet on June 27, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting link, call-in instructions, and agenda are also available on the [Advisory Committee](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/taxrelief/advisory_group.html) webpage (https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/taxrelief/advisory_group.html).

TCEQ Issued New Non-Rule Air Quality Standard Permit for Temporary Public Works Projects

Effective June 18, 2025, TCEQ issued a new non-rule air quality standard permit authorizing temporary concrete batch plants that support public works projects. The new standard permit implements a requirement of Senate Bill 1397, 88th Session, that TCEQ issue a standard permit for these types of facilities.

The standard permit includes emission control requirements, best management practices, and recordkeeping requirements to ensure the standard permit is protective of human health and the environment and is enforceable.

For additional information, as well as application forms, please visit the commission's [Air Quality Standard Permit for Temporary Public Works Projects](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/newsourcereview/mechanical/tpw-sp) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/air/newsourcereview/mechanical/tpw-sp>).

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

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

Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP)

- In the current Fiscal Biennium (FY 2024-2025), TCEQ has fully implemented all of the TERP Programs, including the [Light-Duty Motor Vehicle Purchase or Lease Incentive Program \(LDPLIP\)](#), the [Alternative Fueling Facilities Program \(AFFP\)](#), the [Texas Hydrogen Infrastructure, Vehicle, and Equipment Program \(THIVE\)](#), the [Rebate Grants Program](#), the [Emissions Reduction Incentive Grants \(ERIG\)](#), the [Texas Clean School Bus Program \(TCSB\)](#), the [Seaport and Rail Yard Areas Emissions Reduction Program \(SPRY\)](#), the [New Technology Implementation Grant Program \(NTIG\)](#), the [Governmental Alternative Fuel Fleet Grant Program \(GAFF\)](#), the [Texas Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program \(TNGVGP\)](#), and the [Texas Clean Fleet Program \(TCFP\)](#).
- Staff are currently working to close out the FY 2024-2025 Biennium, which officially ends August 31, 2025.
- Planning has already begun for the FY 2026-2027 Biennium, which officially begins September 1, 2025.
- The Texas Legislature wrapped up the 89th Regular Session in early June 2025 with no impact to TERP.

Visit www.terpgrants.org for the latest information on new program openings and other announcements, as well as program requirements, application forms, and project summary reports. Contact TERP staff by phone at (800) 919-TERP (8377) or by email at terp@tceq.texas.gov.

Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Plan (TxVEMP) Program

Currently Accepting Applications:

- [TxVEMP All-Electric Grant Program](#) (through August 31, 2025) has approximately \$18 million remaining in available funding to upgrade or replace qualifying vehicles and equipment operating in eligible areas with new electric models. Grants can reimburse up to:
 - 100% of the cost for government entities
 - 75% of the incremental cost for non-government entities
- Eligible project categories include the replacement or repower of:
 - Class 8 Local Freight Trucks and Port Drayage Trucks
 - Class 4-8 School Bus, Shuttle Bus, or Transit Bus
 - Class 4-7 Local Freight Trucks
 - Airport Ground Support Equipment
 - 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 with any questions. Visit www.txvwfund.org for the latest information on new program openings and other announcements, as well as program requirements, application forms, and project summary reports.

Texas Voluntary Marginal Conventional Well Plugging Program (TxMCW)

Background

- 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

- 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.
- 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.
- TxMCW program development is still underway.

Visit <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/txmcw> 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

ITEM 2D. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update– (Vinny Polignano)

The discussion began with an overview of ozone conditions. In June there were five ozone exceedance days, up from two in May. Year-to-date, there have been 15 exceedance days. The Conroe monitor reported the highest mean ozone concentration for the month and recorded two exceedance days. Ozone design values show a downward trend from 2000 through the mid-2010s, with an upward shift beginning around 2021. Design values for 2025, is expected to increase, but have not been finalized based on 2023–2025 data.

The PM2.5 Clinton monitor currently shows the highest year-to-date PM2.5 mean. It was pointed out that in June two to three weeks of data was missing due to lack of reporting. As a result, the Houston North Loop monitor, had the second-highest mean. It was further discussed that a new long-term chart showing PM2.5 trends from 2007 onward is being refined, with some adjustments still in progress due to readings from the late 2010s.

Lastly, the Air Quality Index trends for the region were discussed. AQI values, which are calculated using the highest of either ozone or PM2.5 each day, showed a similar pattern to May. Discussion continued with one AQI day in 2025 so far, with most days falling into the moderate range. It was pointed out that ozone has become the primary AQI driver during the summer months. The presentation concluded with next steps, including continued monitoring as ozone season continues and a future update once missing data from the Clinton monitor is resolved.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM 4A.

A. Energy Efficiency Connection to Air Quality- (Shaun Auckland, SPEER)

Shaun Auckland gave an overview on SPEER, which is a nonprofit 501(c)(3), member-based organization made up of over forty members which includes utilities, manufacturers, service companies, universities, cities, and nonprofits. It was further discussed that the mission is to promote energy efficiency and best practices across Texas and Oklahoma.

Ms. Auckland pointed out that the schools, local governments, and public institutions which is to scale energy-saving strategies, support policy implementation, and provide tools for cost-effective energy management. The discussion continued with her role she leads outreach to Texas cities, and manage programs tied to energy codes, utility data access, and partnerships like PACE.

The discussion detailed how a network of six regional energy efficiency organizations across the country are primarily funded through the U.S. Department of Energy, the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO), and some private foundations. It was expressed that the goal is to provide resources, not sell services.

She noted the two key programs which are the City Efficiency Leadership Coalition (CLC). It's a collaborative of cities, counties, school districts, and MUDs across Texas, focused on resource-sharing and energy best practices.

It was further discussed that they host regular networking events and coffee hours where members can connect, troubleshoot common issues, and brainstorm sustainable solutions. This program is supported by SECO. Ms. Aukland also notified the Stakeholders there will be a SPEER Summit in September 18–19 in Austin at the AT&T Hotel & Conference Center. Local governments receive a discounted registration rate. They will also host in-person site tours of UT's chiller and power plant systems and feature presentations from SECO, legislators, and technical experts.

B. RAQPAC Bylaw Review- (Andrew DeCandis, H-GAC)

Andrew DeCandis gave an overview of the RAQPAC Bylaws, which was formed in 1990 in response to the Clean Air Act Amendments. It advises Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), Transportation Policy Council (TPC), and Transportation Advisory Council (TAC). These committees have historically addressed both on-road and non-road air quality issues. The bylaws were addressed which help to cover committee purpose, responsibilities, membership, officer roles, quorum, vacancies, subcommittees, conflict of interest, and meeting procedures.

In further discussion it was pointed out that some of the highlights of the 2018 revisions were to help strengthen transportation focus. As well as expand membership from 27 to 30. Additionally, it was mentioned how the Bylaws amendment process works, which requires the Members collaborate with staff to develop revisions. Revisions must be sent to all members 10 days before a regular meeting. Approval requires two-thirds of members present with quorum, and Final approval by H-GAC Board of Directors.

C. Air Quality Index Review- (Vinny Polignano, H-GAC)

Mr. Polignano presented on the Air Quality Index how it is calculated, what it measures, and how it can guide personal and public health decisions regarding outdoor air quality. In further discussion he talked about how Air Quality Index is a standardized tool used to communicate how polluted or clean the outdoor air is, along with the potential health risks associated with current air pollution levels. The AQI integrates detailed data from pollutant measurements into a simple, color-coded scale that helps individuals take appropriate actions based on air quality conditions.

Lastly, Mr. Polignano reminded the stakeholders that the AQI is an important public health tool that simplifies complex air monitoring data into actionable insights. By integrating AQI awareness into daily planning and community outreach, everyone can help to protect ourselves and those around us especially vulnerable populations from the harmful effects of air pollution.

INFORMATION ITEMS

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

1. **Executive Committee Nominations:** The Executive Committee **is** currently accepting nominations for a new Vice Chair. Pharr Andrews sent out an email earlier this week with more details. If you're interested in serving on the Executive Committee or stepping into the Vice Chair role for next year, please reach out to us. We anticipate holding the Vice Chair election at our July meeting.
2. **Regional Air Quality Summit:** It was announced that an email was sent out this week about registration for the Regional Air Quality Summit. Registration is now open.
3. **Transportation Conformity Analysis:** H-GAC staff is currently working on the region's transportation conformity analysis, something we conduct periodically. That work is now underway, and their planning to host a public meeting and open a public comment period in August. RAQPAC will be informed around that time.
4. **Leadership Update:** **It was announced that** H-GAC has a new Chief Transportation Officer and MPO Director starting next Monday. Ron Papsdorf is joining us from the Denver Regional Council of Governments. We hope to introduce him to RAQPAC members at a future meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A.

None

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 7A.

Next meeting: July 31, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:32 A.M.