Texas Railroad Commission

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Railroad Commission of Texas

by

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Environmental Protection
Programs and Regulations
Abandoned Wells
Reclamation
Remediation
Hydraulic Fracturing
EPA Study Area
Seismicity
• The RRC is the oldest regulatory agency in the State of Texas created in 1891 to Regulate Railroads
• Initially regulated rates which Railroad Companies charged Consumers to move products.
• In 1917 - authority to regulate the rates for pipeline transport of crude oil from the oil fields to refineries
• Additional authority was granted in 1919 as the commission was already “regulating pipelines”.
• The RRC evolved into a world renowned regulatory, safety, and conservation agency which has jurisdiction over the oil and gas industry in the state of Texas.
Our mission is to serve Texas by our stewardship of natural resources and the environment, our concern for personal and community safety, and our support of enhanced development and economic vitality for the benefit of Texans.
• Commission Divisions: Oil and Gas, Surface Mining, Oversight and Safety
• Each with environmental protection rules

• Focus of talk: Oil and Gas Division
Categories of Division Responsibilities

- Regulatory
- Environmental
- Safety
- Some of the Rules overlap 1 or more of these 3 categories and have multiple functions
Environmental Responsibilities

- Well Construction/Plugging Rules
- State Managed Plugging/Cleanups
- Oil Spills (Non-Coastal)
- Spills of Produced Water
- Other Spills such as Drilling Mud etc.
Environmental Responsibilities

- Blowouts
- Class II Injection Wells
- Brine Mining
- Underground Storage of Hydrocarbons
- Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials
Environmental Responsibilities

- Recycling
- FracFocus
- Seismicity
Environmental Programs

- Technical Permitting
- State Managed Plugging and Cleanup
- Operator Cleanup Program
- Voluntary Cleanup Program
- Brownfield (Grants) Program
• Rule 36 – Hydrogen Sulfide safety. Tiered levels depending upon concentration, volume of H2S and public area.
RRC Safety Division Responsibilities

- Intrastate Pipeline Safety for Crude Oil, Natural Gas and other Hazardous Material [LPG, Hydrogen, Gasoline, etc].
- LPG tanks
- Reminder Safety only, RRC Safety Div. has no environmental responsibilities
• Helps define the jurisdictional boundary between the two agencies.
• Codified as 16 TAC § 3.30
• Generally RRC has jurisdiction from Drilling, Production, and Transportation to the fence line of a Refinery except for air emission issues.
• One exception is the Oil and Gas Service industry where TCEQ has jurisdiction.
• Houston District 3
• Basically Southeast Texas 29 counties plus parts of 6 other counties
• Wells and Interstate Pipelines Land, Bay, and Offshore
• State Territorial waters extend out 3 marine leagues [approx. 9.9 miles]
RRC Capabilities

• About 40 Personnel in Oil and Gas and Safety Divisions (15 inspectors, including DOCCs and plugging staff)
• Vehicles
• Basic equipment [cell phones, laptops, hand augers, etc]
• No Boats or Booms etc
State Funded Cleanups and Well Plugging

- Oil and Gas Regulation and Cleanup Fund (OGRC)
- Plugging and Cleanup – Abandoned Sites
- Funding comes from Fees that the Oil and Gas Industry pay
State Funded Cleanups and Well Plugging

- Plugging Goals for FY18-FY19 (biennium)
  - 3,000 orphaned wells with $67 million (ESF)
- Site Remediation Goals for FY18 only
  - 259 cleanup activities with $9 million (OGRC)
• TWC §26.131 (1) – RRC solely responsible for the control and disposition of O&G waste and the abatement and prevention of pollution of surface and subsurface water.

• TNRC §91.101 - adopt and enforce rules and orders to prevent pollution of surface water or subsurface water in the state.
TNRC §91.113 - INVESTIGATION, ASSESSMENT OR CLEANUP BY COMMISSION

• If oil and gas wastes or other substances or materials regulated under Section 91.101 are causing or likely to cause the pollution of surface or subsurface water, the commission may use OGRC funds to investigate, assess, control or cleanup if............
Authority

• The responsible person fails or refuses;
• The responsible person is unknown, not found, or has no assets with which to control or clean up;
• The oil and gas wastes or other substances or materials are causing pollution of water.
COST RECOVERY

- TNRC § 91.113 (f)
- Recovery of all costs incurred by the commission
- Seek cost recovery from any person who was required by law, rules adopted by the commission, or a valid order of the commission to control or clean up
• §3.8 – Water Protection Rule
• §3.20 – Notification Requirements
• §3.91 – Cleanup of Soil Contaminated by a Crude Oil Spill
• §3.98 – Standards for Management of Hazardous Oil & Gas Waste
• §4 D – Voluntary Cleanup Program
• §4 F – Disposal of NORM Waste

*Note: Does not include well plugging and other safety rules.

http://www.rrc.state.tx.us/general-counsel/rules/
Other RRC Rules

- §3.9 / 3.46 – Disposal Wells/Injection Wells
- §3.13 – Casing, Cementing, Well Control, Comp.
- §3.14 – Well Plugging
- §3.29 – Hydraulic Frac Chem Disclosure
- §3.32 – Venting, Flaring

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Well Plugging
DANGER

POTENTIAL HAZARD TO LIFE
HYDROGEN SULFIDE (H₂S)

LOW HAZARD
LESS THAN 100 PPM (ATMOSPHERIC)

MEDIUM HAZARD
GREATER THAN 10 PPM
LESS THAN 30 PPM (ATMOSPHERIC)

HIGH HAZARD
GREATER THAN 30 PPM (ATMOSPHERIC)

AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY
Have a Safe Day!

MANNING
SAFETY SERVICES INC
(830) 269-3652
Abandoned Well
• Waste Piles
• Pits
• Storage Tanks
• Frac Tanks
Reclamation Facility
Site Remediation Activities

Dig and Haul

Oil and Gas Regulation and Cleanup (OGRC) Fund
Site Remediation Activities

- Emergency flume dam
Site Remediation Activities

State Managed Cleanup
Site Remediation Activities

State Managed Cleanup
30,000 BBL Tank
• RRC Regulatory Actions
  – 2012 Chemical disclosure rule
  – 2013 Recycling rules
  – 2014 Well construction/testing/control rule
  – Disposal wells
    – Modification of permit requirements for disposal wells in certain areas
    – Regulations relating to seismicity
• 2012 Chemical Disclosure 16 TAC §3.29
  • Use of FracFocus (http://fracfocus.org/)
  • Service companies must supply info to operators
  • Allows for Trade Secret protection
  • Limited challenge to Trade Secret claim
  • Must disclose to emergency responders and health professionals
FracFocus 3.0

IT'S ALMOST HERE...

FracFocus is continuing to evolve and expand its performance and versatility by providing more than a dozen enhancements including:

- Expand the public's ability to search records
- Improve data accuracy
- Provide extraction of data in a "machine-readable" format
- Update educational information on chemical use, oil & gas production and potential environmental impacts

These upgrades will be designed to dramatically enhance the site's functionality for the public, state regulatory agencies and industry users.

Adding more participating companies and reported wells from across the country, FracFocus' continued success is the result of state and federal government agencies and the oil and natural gas industry to provide public transparency.

FracFocus machine-readable data now available!

FracFocus is pleased to announce the release of disclosure data to the public in machine-readable (SQL) format.

By clicking the button below you may download a .ZIP file that contains a copy

Looking for information about a well site near you?

Search for nearby well sites that have been hydraulically fractured to see what chemicals were used in the process.

TOTAL WELL SITES REGISTERED 127781

FAQs

Q. Solving the most common problems encountered in FracFocus

A. There are a number of common problems which occur with regularity when using FracFocus. The following is a list of the most
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