TCEQ REGULATORY GUIDANCE
Program Support and Environmental Assistance Division
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RV Parks: Am I Regulated?

Who should use this guide?

This guide is intended to inform owners of recreational vehicle (RV) parks that some of their activities may be regulated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). This publication is not comprehensive and is not a substitute for reading the official rules. Local governments and other state and federal agencies may have additional rules that apply.

If you still have questions after reading this guidance, please call TCEQ's Small Business and Local Government Assistance hotline at 800-447-2827 or email us at TexasEnviroHelp@tceq.texas.gov.

Is my RV Park regulated by TCEQ?

You may be regulated by TCEQ if you own or manage an RV park in Texas and:

- Supply water for drinking, hand washing, dish washing, cooking, or bathing.
- Treat or dispose of wastewater.
- Dispose of waste.
- Disturb one acre or more of land during construction.

Am I a Public Water System?

If you supply water for human consumption[1] to at least 15 connections or 25 people at least 60 days out of the year, you are a public water system (PWS). Additionally, you may be a PWS if you supply drinking water from a well or other sources—such as a spring or lake—to people or connections.

Examples of human consumption include:

- drinking
- bathing
- washing hands or dishes
- cooking or preparing food

1. Human consumption is defined as any use in which water can be ingested into or absorbed by the human body.

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How is our customer service? tceq.texas.gov/customersurvey

If you meet the definition of a PWS, you must get your system approved[2] and follow PWS rules.

How do I comply with PWS rules?

TCEQ's regulations are put in place to make sure that every PWS serves a safe, adequate supply of water. Your water system must meet certain technical standards and follow operational requirements. These include, but are not limited to:

- water treatment and quality
- source approval
- disinfection
- distribution
- storage
- capacity

You can find TCEQ's PWS standards and regulations in Title 30, Texas Administrative Code (30 TAC), Chapter 290.[3] For more information about complying with the PWS rules, visit TCEQ's Public Water Supply: Compliance Resources[4] webpage.

If you use a groundwater well as your water source, you may have additional requirements with a local groundwater conservation district (GCD). We recommend you contact your GCD early in the development of your RV Park. Visit TCEQ's Groundwater Conservation Districts[5] webpage to find which GCD serves your area.

Am I required to have a Water Operator License?

If you perform process control duties in the production or distribution of drinking water, you must be licensed with TCEQ or contract with a water operations company that is registered with TCEQ unless you meet one of the exemptions in 30 TAC Section 30.402.[6]

To find more information on water operator license requirements, visit TCEQ's Occupational Licenses for Water System Operators[7] webpage.

How do I protect against backflow at my RV Park?

When RV owners flush and clean the waste from their plumbing systems, they may accidentally create a threat to the potable water supply. Many RVs are sold with a "sewer flusher" connection, which allows flushing of their black water tanks. This device directly connects the black water tank to a public water supply. These tanks

2. www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/planrev.html
3. texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=30&pt=1&ch=290
4. www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance/water/pdws/pws.html
5. www.tceq.texas.gov/groundwater/groundwater-planning-assessment/districts.html
6. www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/rules/30-tac-30.402
7. www.tceq.texas.gov/licensing/licenses/waterlic

hold the same materials as a sewer pipe, material which TCEQ prohibits from connecting to a public water supply.

To protect against the backflow of these materials, TCEQ recommends that RV park managers prohibit "Y" hose adapters. These adapters create a simultaneous connection between the potable water hose bib, the RV's potable water system, and its sewer flusher.

A nonpotable water source at the sewer-flusher connection is the safest choice for flushing a black water tank. However, if that is not possible, RV owners should only connect a potable water source to the sewer-flusher connection when draining the black water tank. RV owners should closely supervise the draining of black water tanks and immediately disconnect a potable water source after the black water tank is empty. A potable water source should *never* be left permanently connected to a sewer-flusher connection.

If you purchase water from a public water system through a master meter, the public water system may require additional backflow protection at the master meter.

For more information about backflow prevention, visit the TCEQ Cross-Connection and Backflow Prevention[8] webpage.

Am I a utility?

If you send a separate bill for water or sewer service to residents, then you are classified as a utility. However, if you do not charge a separate or additional fee for water or sewer service, then you are not classified as a utility. Utilities must have a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity. TCEQ's rules for utilities can be found in 30 TAC Chapter 291.[9]

The Public Utility Commission has jurisdiction over utilities as well and has additional rules your system may need to follow. Visit their website for information on establishing a new water or sewer utility.[10]

Is my wastewater disposal system regulated?

If you treat or dispose of wastewater from RVs, your wastewater system is regulated by TCEQ or a local authority. This includes using an on-site sewage facility (OSSF or septic tank) or dump station.

If your OSSF treats more than 5,000 gallons of wastewater per day (approximately 100 hookups), you must get a domestic wastewater permit from TCEQ. For information about wastewater permits, visit TCEQ's Domestic Wastewater Permits[11] webpage.

Facilities requiring a domestic wastewater permit must be operated at least five days a week by a licensed wastewater operator. To find more information on wastewater

8. www.tceq.texas.gov/drinkingwater/cross-connection
9. texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=30&pt=1&ch=291
10. www.puc.texas.gov/industry/water/watersystems/newwaterutil.aspx
11. www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/wastewater/municipal

operator license requirements, visit TCEQ's Occupational Licenses for Wastewater Treatment Plant and Collection System Operators[12] webpage.

Do I need a permit for my OSSF?

You must get a permit before you construct, alter, repair, extend, or install an OSSF or septic system. Any person that constructs, alters, repairs, or extends an OSSF must be licensed by the TCEQ. For more information about when a permit is required, see TCEQ's Permitting an On-Site Sewage Facility[13] webpage.

Depending on your location, the permitting authority for your OSSF or septic system may not be TCEQ. Use our local permitting authority search[14] to find who to contact when applying for a permit.

Domestic septage (septic tank waste) must be pumped and hauled by a TCEQ-registered transporter.

Can I pump and haul my wastewater?

You do not have to get approval from TCEQ if you collect and temporarily store wastewater in a containment structure not subject to OSSF rules. The containment structure must be in good working condition and free from leaks. Wastewater, including chemical toilet waste such as from a port-a-potty, must be pumped and hauled by a TCEQ-registered transporter.

Pump-and-haul is not a preferred method for the disposal of wastewater and should only be used temporarily. Any unauthorized discharge resulting from the temporary storage, pumping, and hauling of domestic wastewater is subject to administrative fines and other penalties under TCEQ rules and the Texas Water Code.

Visit our webpage for more information on OSSF rules and regulations.[15]

What can I do with my garbage?

All trash and garbage must be properly collected in a closed container and transported to a TCEQ-authorized facility. These facilities can include transfer stations, landfills, and Citizen Collection Stations. Additionally, lead acid batteries, scrap tires, used oil, and oil filters should be transported, recycled, or disposed of properly by companies that are registered or permitted with TCEQ.

Improperly managed municipal solid waste can threaten human health by attracting rodents, flies, and mosquitoes that carry disease. TCEQ rule states that "no person may cause, allow, or permit any activity of storage, processing, removal, or disposal of any solid waste unless such activity is authorized by a permit or other authorization from the [TCEQ]."[16]

12. www.tceq.texas.gov/licensing/licenses/wwlic
13. www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/ossf/ossfpermits.html
14. www6.tceq.texas.gov/oars/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.county
15. www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/ossf/ossfgeneral.html
16. www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/rules/30-tac-330.7

Can I burn trash?

TCEQ, as well as many local and county governments, has strict rules about outdoor burning. Although TCEQ rules allow residents of private homes to burn their domestic waste under certain circumstances, they prohibit burning trash from RV parks because RV parks are considered commercial properties.

For more information about outdoor burning, see our Outdoor Burning in Texas[17] (RG-049) guidance or the outdoor burning rules in 30 TAC Chapter 111 Subchapter B.[18]

Do I need a permit for construction activities?

If you are building an RV park and the construction will disturb one acre or more of land, then you must obtain authorization under TCEQ's Construction Stormwater General Permit, TXR150000.[19] Your requirements under the permit depend on the amount of land you will disturb according to your development plan. To determine whether your construction site is regulated by TCEQ, visit TCEQ's Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activities[20] webpage.

Are there additional requirements for construction sites located over the Edwards Aquifer?

If your construction activity occurs over the recharge, transition, or contributing zones of the Edwards Aquifer, you may need to develop and submit an Edwards Aquifer Protection Plan. This affects construction sites in Medina, Bexar, Comal, Kinney, Uvalde, Hays, Travis, and Williamson counties. You can determine whether your site is located over the Edwards Aquifer by consulting TCEQ's Edwards Aquifer Map Viewer.[21]

Read TCEQ's Rules Protecting the Edwards Aquifer Recharge, Contributing, and Transition Zone[22] (RG-011) guidance for more information. If you have additional questions, please contact the Edwards Aquifer Protection Program.[23]

17. www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/publications/rg/outdoor-burning-in-texas-rg-49.pdf
18. texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=30&pt=1&ch=111&sch=B&rl=Y
19. www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/stormwater/construction
20. www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/stormwater/construction/TXR15_AIR.html
21. www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/eapp/viewer.html
22. www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/publications/rg/rules-protecting-edwards-aquifer-rg-11.pdf
23. www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/eapp

How do I make an environmental complaint?

You can make an environmental complaint by:

- contacting your local law enforcement office
- contacting your local TCEQ regional office[24]
- calling the TCEQ Environmental Complaint Reporting line at 888-777-3186
- submitting an electronic complaint[25]

24. www.tceq.texas.gov/agency/directory/region/reglist.html
25. www.tceq.texas.gov/compliance/complaints/index.html