

MAY 2006

Drive Clean Across Texas Inspiring Clean-Air Changes

The Drive Clean Across Texas public education and outreach campaign is designed to raise awareness about air pollution while inspiring citizens to change their travel habits. Citizens changing their travel choices and behavior will help clean the air in Texas.



The basic message: little steps can add up to major improvements in air quality.

By changing behaviors, Texans can reduce emissions from vehicles. For example, one step is to maintain vehicles: getting regular tune-ups and oil changes, and keeping tires properly inflated. Another step is driving less by combining trips, carpooling, or using public or alternative transportation. Avoid engine idling when first starting the vehicle or while waiting in drive-thru lanes. Even the time of day drivers fuel their vehicles can make a difference—doing this late in the day helps avoid ozone formation. The best part: these steps also save drivers money on fuel costs.

A multifaceted approach spreads the message to Texans through many different channels.

There are public service ads on television and the radio, an interactive Web site, billboards and pump-toppers (ads on gasoline pumps), a full curriculum for K-12 teachers to use in their classes, games, and other outreach materials. The campaign brings together many partners already involved in clean-air issues across the state.

Local coalition partners in each area in Texas where air quality is of concern receive educational materials, outreach, and media communication support to help reduce ozone pollution. Ground-level ozone, which is a by-product of gases emitted from sources such as cars and power plants, will often form during hot and sunny months. Communities such as Austin, San Antonio, Victoria, Corpus Christi, Tyler/Longview, Houston/Galveston, Dallas/Fort Worth, Beaumont/Port Arthur, and El Paso, can be classified as “nonattainment” (not meeting air quality standards) when ozone levels consistently exceed federal limits.

Get more information about this campaign and order materials by visiting <www.drivecleanacrosstexas.org>.

Drive clean across Texas—it’s the way to go!

Clean Texas, Cleaner World is changing its name, but that’s not all

The Clean Texas, Cleaner World program is changing its name to just “Clean Texas”—but that’s not the only change in store for the program. The TCEQ is updating the Clean Texas program to encourage greater participation and to support all entities that wish to improve their environmental performance. Organizations can now join the program at its new Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum membership levels.

Because the new structure of the program is still being finalized, current members don’t need to upgrade just yet. Current members need only change their membership status at their regularly scheduled renewal date. They can still expect the same benefits and rewards for participation. Members can stay informed by visiting <www.cleantexas.org> for announcements about benefits as the program moves forward.

For the most part, the new membership levels correspond to the former Partner and Leader levels. Clean Texas has also added a new level: Silver level.

This level allows even more Texas businesses to participate. Members at the Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels are required to implement an environmental management system (EMS), which involves:

- Setting an environmental policy.
- Determining significant environmental impacts.
- Setting goals for compliance and environmental performance.
- Assigning responsibility.
- Implementing and documenting programs.
- Evaluating and measuring effectiveness.
- Demonstrating performance.

Other program changes include an increased focus on community environmental outreach projects, environmental performance goals, and the requirement for a TCEQ verification visit for the Gold and Platinum members.



If your business is interested in making a positive impact on the environment and would like to earn benefits for your efforts, contact Larissa Peter or Kelly Coleman, Clean Texas Coordinators, at 512/239-3100.

Outstanding Projects Recognized

Continuing our recognition of the 2006 Texas Environmental Excellence Award winners, here are three more.

Innovative Technology: Austin Energy *New Life for an Architectural Icon*

A stone's throw from Town Lake in Austin, the Seaholm Power Plant stands as a powerful reminder of a bygone era. The iconic 1950s electric plant was retired from service in 1996, but city leaders chose to retain the structure for redevelopment rather than demolish it. Much of the building's concrete floor, however, was saturated with PCB-contaminated oil. PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl), an industrial chemical once widely used in electrical equipment, is a persistent environmental contaminant.

Removing the contaminated concrete would have compromised the structural integrity of the building, and adding an additional layer of concrete would have exceeded the floor's load-bearing capacity. Razing the plant would have generated tons of hazardous material and cost the city millions of dollars—as well as part of its history.

Austin Energy, the city's electric utility, worked with experts to develop a new method for encapsulating the PCB contaminants with a fiber-reinforced epoxy coating. The encapsulation method worked so well that the building now qualifies for unrestricted use—industrial or commercial—and is the first facility of its kind to receive the Environmental Protection Agency's Ready for Reuse designation among sites subject to the Toxic Substances Control Act.

Seaholm Power Plant will soon begin its new life as a mixed-use development including parkland, plazas, shops, restaurants, and a residential tower—lighting up the city skyline as a reincarnated landmark.

Small Business: Texas Independent Automotive Assn. *Clearing the Air*

Texas auto shops are taking service to new heights: the Texas air. Thanks to a statewide effort led by the Texas Independent Automotive Association (TIAA), automotive shops are doing their part to clear the air through voluntary emissions testing, car care clinics, and a comprehensive public education campaign.

Partnering with the Texas Department of Transportation and the TCEQ in the "Drive Clean Across Texas" campaign,

TIAA members help promote cleaner air by educating the public on proper vehicle maintenance. Additional public outreach activities include car care clinics, emissions testing events, as well as instruction at local high schools and career fairs. Individual repair technicians even donated their time to repair cars for residents of Austin's SafePlace, an emergency shelter for abused women and their families in a near-nonattainment area.

More environmentally aware than ever before, TIAA members earned nearly five times as many compliance certificates through the TCEQ's Compliance Commitment Partnership in 2005 as compared with 2003. Thanks to their efforts, members recycle hundreds of thousands of gallons of oil and antifreeze, more than 850,000 oil filters, and thousands of batteries each year.

Recycling. Education. Outreach. Now that's a whole new level of automotive service.

Government: Brazos River Authority *Working Together for Cleaner Water*

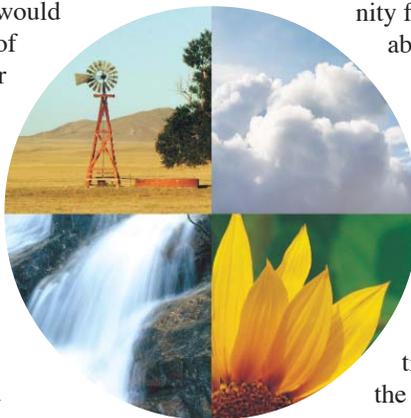
When the poultry industry began to expand in the Brazos Valley, community leaders recognized the opportunity for economic growth, but were concerned about the potential risks to water quality. The citizens brought their concerns to the Brazos River Authority (BRA), charged to develop and manage the vast water resources of the Brazos River Basin, which stretches from the Texas/New Mexico border to the Gulf Coast.

The BRA immediately stepped up to the challenge. With support from the poultry industry, the involved communities, and the area's elected representatives, the BRA secured funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for a multi-year, integrated resource planning project: Quality Water for the Brazos Community.

The focal point of the project was a Watershed Master Plan that reflected a wide range of water quality issues, including continuous water quality monitoring, aquatic habitat studies, and resource planning through a diverse Watershed Task Force.

Water quality programs and public outreach initiatives began even before the plan was completed in August 2005. Six years of baseline water quality data were collected as a benchmark for future water quality monitoring. A \$700,000 incentive program helped fund better facilities and practices at poultry operations to protect water quality. Another incentive fund was established to encourage non-poultry growers to use poultry compost as a soil amendment. Two illegal dump sites along the Brazos River were cleaned out by more than 150 volunteers.

Most importantly, the project set an important precedent: In the Brazos River Basin, water is everyone's responsibility.



Updated TCEQ Publications

Municipal Solid Waste in Texas: A Year in Review, 2004 Data Summary and Analysis (AS-187/05)

analyzes data submitted by all registered or permitted municipal solid waste facilities each fiscal year to determine trends in the amounts and types of waste disposed of in Texas.

To view a copy before ordering, visit www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/comm_exec/pubs/as/187_05.pdf >



Galveston Bay and the Galveston Bay Estuary Program (GI-342), is a brochure describing the overall importance of the estuary. Estuaries are an important part of the ecosystem connecting open sea with fresh water. The bay is a nursery for numerous fin fish, oysters, and crabs. Without these healthy, functioning systems, there would be little local seafood or recreational and commercial fishing would decline. To find out more about this program and to view the brochure, visit www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-342.html.



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