

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Program Report for the September 24, 2021 TRAB Meeting

The TCEQ's Radioactive Materials Division licenses low-level radioactive waste disposal (including legacy buried waste sites), by-product material disposal, alternative methods of disposal of radioactive material, radioactive waste storage and processing, and in-situ uranium recovery operations. Overall, the TCEQ maintains 15 licenses that authorize these activities.

Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal

The low-level radioactive waste disposal facility is located in Andrews County and is operated by Waste Control Specialists (WCS). The technical review of a minor amendment application, dated May 7, 2021, was completed and will be noticed in the Texas Register sometime in September.

By-product Material Disposal

Operation of the by-product material disposal facility continues under WCS' current by-product license. By license condition, the byproduct disposal operation is limited to receiving only the Fernald by-product waste. TCEQ continues to review WCS' environmental monitoring reports and related data.

TCEQ also licenses three legacy conventional uranium milling sites whose tailings impoundment waste is classified as by-product material. These three sites will ultimately be transferred to the Department of Energy (DOE) for long-term care and maintenance. A major amendment for Conoco Phillips' Conquista project is under review. A draft Completion Review Report (CRR) for the ExxonMobil Ray Point uranium mill site is underway. A draft CRR for the Panna Maria facility is still under review by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The TCEQ and the licensee are working to address the NRC's concerns.

Radioactive Waste Storage and Processing

TCEQ licenses Nuclear Sources & Services, Inc. (NSSI) and WCS for radioactive waste storage and processing. A renewal application for NSSI is under technical review. An administrative amendment (number 36) of radioactive material license R04100 was issued June 24, 2021 by initiative of the Executive Director to extend the storage deadline of the transuranic waste from Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) to December 23, 2021. The technical review of a minor amendment application, dated

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May 7, 2021, was completed and will be noticed in the Texas Register sometime in September.

In-Situ Uranium Recovery

TCEQ authorizes the following uranium recovery operations: five licensed sites with in-situ mining operations, two licensed sites with processing operations, and two licensed sites with both in-situ mining and processing operations. License renewal applications for South Texas Mining Venture's Hobson and La Palangana projects are under technical review. The TCEQ continues to provide technical review of URI's Vasquez and Rosita's Projects site and soil decommissioning plans.

The TCEQ and its contractors continue to work towards obtaining unrestricted release for the former licensed area of the abandoned Intercontinental Energy Corporation Lamprecht/Zamzow site. A draft Remedial Action Report for cleanup activities completed is currently under review. In 2019 and 2020, a significant amount of remedial work was performed by the contractor until the appropriated funding was exhausted. This work consisted of characterization, homogenization, sampling, and disposal of contaminated soil and concrete. Additional remedial work will begin in the fall of 2021 using newly appropriated funding (\$3.0M).

87th Legislative Special Session

House Bill (HB) 7 was passed by the Texas Legislature and signed by the Governor on September 9, 2021. With the exception for currently or formerly operating nuclear power reactors and currently or formerly operating nuclear research and test reactors operated by a university, HB 7 will prohibit 1) the commission from issuing a general construction permit or approve a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for the construction or operation of a facility that is licensed for the storage of high-level radioactive waste and 2) the disposal or storage of high-level radioactive waste in Texas.