

TCEA

TARRANT COALITION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Vol. X, No. 1, July-August, 2004

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When there is nothing else to talk about but the weather, perhaps it is time to quit talking. In this case, as I struggle with getting something on the page, the weather is quite the topic. When this hits the street it will probably be hot and dry again but, for the moment, it is unusually very wet and Texans are being hurt in many ways. The question at the moment is, has everyone had enough rain?

It is said, we can't control the weather but we can sure gripe about it. So the question becomes, is all the variable meteorology producing the excessive rain and severe weather we have been experiencing? Is this variable meteorology the product of the much-discussed global warming phenomenon? Until it is proven otherwise, it appears prudent to pursue all avenues to try to reverse man's impact. If it is indeed man's impact on the environment, then ameliorating this condition will take an equally long time. The sooner we start the better.

It is appropriate to let our decision makers know that we expect their cooperation and appropriate action on addressing this problem, real or unconfirmed, before it reaches a point of no return.

Bob Scott

Calendar

-Fort Worth Audubon Society does not meet June, July or August . Next meeting will be September 9.

-Greater Fort Worth Sierra Group meets the third Wednesday of each month, year around. They meet at the UNTHSC at 7:00 pm in the Main Auditorium of Bldg 1.

-Arlington Conservation Council meets the 2nd Wed evening of each month at the First United Methodist Church at 313 N Center at Division. (Please enter through the North door)

-Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge is open daily, 9 - 5. There are many activities, scheduled and unscheduled, for your visitation and enjoyment. The Friends of the FWNC&R promote and assist the Nature Center in many ways and they are always looking for help on projects, etc.

-League of Women Voters of Tarrant County Environmental Committee meets monthly. Next meeting is 12 noon July 23 at the LWV office, 3212 Collinsworth. Call 817 348 8683 for information. Current project is examination of landscape and tree ordinances throughout Tarrant County.

-Region C Water Panning Group meeting is July 12 at 1:30 pm at the Trinity River Authority Waste Water Treatment Plant on 6500 West Singelton in East Grand Prairie.

-Water Resources Council (WRC) will be held on Thursday, July 8, 2004, 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., in the 4th Floor Committee Room, at NCTCOG. This meeting will follow the Public Hearing for the Water Quality Management Plan 2004 Update from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.

-DFW Photochemical Modeling Technical Committee will not meet in July. Next meeting tentatively is set for the 6th of August, where it is hoped that information will be available for an update.

NEXT MEETING

DATE: Monday, July 26, 2004

TIME: 7:00 PM

NOTE THE PLACE:

League of Women Voters of Tarrant County, 3212 Collinsworth Street, Fort Worth. *

PROGRAM:

This meeting will be a business meeting. No program is planned. We will talk about future plans for TCEA and look at the TCEA website. (There's a computer in the League office, so we can REALLY look at the website!) Bring your ideas and suggestions.

* From I-30 (west Freeway) west of downtown Fort Worth, take the University Drive exit and go south on University Drive past the University Park shopping center. Turn right on Collinsworth. The League office is in the second block on your right, just past a car wash.

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Bob Scott REPORTING:

Rule of Capture - The 100-year-old groundwater practice was the topic for a day-long symposium on June 15, 2004. This meeting marked the 100th anniversary of the practice of Rule of Capture. The session dwelt on its history, and the future implication in the regulation of Texas groundwater. The Rule of Capture came into being as the result of a 1904 Texas Supreme Court case, *Houston & Texas Central Railroad Co. v. East*. Mr. East had sued the railroad alleging that the water well, drilled for railroad use, had pumped his well dry. The court followed English Common Law and found that a property owner has the right to pump as much groundwater from his property as he needs. Mr. East lost his suit and the precedent for groundwater management in Texas was established.

This method of groundwater management, actually the lack thereof, is considered by many to no longer meet the needs of today. It is expected that groundwater management will be one of the top priority issues for the 2005 legislative session..

Mercury - There were 500,000 letters of comment sent to the current administration opposing the proposed Mercury limits standards revision. Reportedly this is the greatest number of opposing comments ever received on this topic. Time will tell what the result will be. Hopefully, common sense will emerge victorious and Mercury pollution will be all but eliminated, rather than allowing regulations that worsen Mercury pollution .

Earl Burnam REPORTING:

AIR QUALITY:

Ozone Season Is Upon Us.

A recent report by the American Lung Association has ranked Tarrant County among the worst counties in the nation for ground-level ozone.

Texas is high in pollution from off-road diesel-powered vehicles, such as bulldozers and tractors. These vehicles are among the largest sources of pollutants that scientists have linked to premature deaths, lung cancer, asthma and other serious respiratory illnesses. Regulations that EPA announced in May would reduce the emissions of nitrogen oxide and other pollutants from these diesel engines by more than 90 percent over the next eight years. This will include taking sulfur out of diesel. This is very good news, especially from the President's Administration which has weakened so many environmental rules.

Diesel-powered school buses are high polluters. The average child spends 90 minutes each weekday in, or waiting for, a school bus. During that time, the child can be exposed to high concentrations of diesel exhaust, especially while standing outside on the bus ramp. Fort Worth Mayor Moncrief and Richard Green, EPA regional administrator, are supporting a state program designed to replace the oldest, dirtiest school buses, or retrofit them with pollution controls that reduce emissions.

ASBESTOS - COWTOWN INN DEMOLITION:

Construction material with asbestos was used over the years in many building projects until it was learned that asbestos is highly carcinogenic. Such is the case with the old Cowtown Inn on East Lancaster in the Handley area. Now the Cowtown Inn is dilapidated and is an eyesore. It is due for a demolition by the City of Fort Worth. Locals are crying for its demolition.

Fort Worth had planned to use an experimental method referred to as "wet demolition" rather than the previously approved method, which is more expensive. However, national environmental groups are concerned that this could set a precedent for buildings all over the nation. Labor unions are also opposed to using the "wet demolition" method, claiming this could expose workers to a carcinogen more than necessary. It could also eliminate some jobs.

Several public meetings and/or hearings on this matter have been held. Although the EPA has approved this method at some sites around the nation, it is rethinking the opinion and the City is awaiting an EPA ruling on the demolition before moving forward.

Events

There are no events happening during these summer months that we are aware of. Of course, the various member organizations have their on-going activities. Check the respective web sites for that information:

Fort Worth Audubon Society: www.fwas.org
<<http://www.fwas.org/>

Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club:
www.sierraclub.org/chapters/tx/fortworth/index.html
<http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/tx/fortworth/index.html>

League of Women Voters of Tarrant County:
www.home.earthlink.com/lwvtarco
<http://www.home.earthlink.com/lwvtarco>

Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge: www.naturecenterfriends.org
<http://www.naturecenterfriends.org/>

Arlington Conservation Council
www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org
<http://www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org/>

Dues are due for 2004-2005 For a gentle reminder, the new fiscal year for TCEA begins July 1. That is the time that annual dues are due. If we all sent our dues to **Louanne Rice**, our new **Treasurer**, at 115 Hilltop, Burleson, TX 76028, as soon as we can, then her job would be greatly helped. Thank you!

TCEA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____
Work Phone _____
Email _____

I/We would like to join TCEA as (check only one)
 Individual (\$15.00)
 Family (\$25.00)
 Student (\$10.00)
 Business (up to 5 employees)(\$25.00)
 Business (more than 5 employees)(\$50.00)
 Non-profit Organization (\$25.00)

I/We would like to make a donation to TCEA, Inc. in the amount of \$_____.

I/We would like more information about serving on a TCEA committee:

Finance Issues
 Membership Programs
 Public Relations Other

Please make checks payable to TCEA and mail to:
Louanne Rice, TCEA Membership Chair, 115 Hilltop, Burleson, TX 76028.

Total Enclosed \$_____

Drilling - Who would have ever thought that the City of Fort Worth and surrounding Tarrant County areas would become a focal point for gas well drilling? The drilling technology advances enable drilling in the dense Barnett shale. This geological formation underlying this region has a potential for natural gas extraction and perhaps petroleum. This potential is unfortunate with regard to the environment. Of course, the driver is its economic value, and how it might benefit the area, in that regard.

Extraction of natural gas of itself is presumably acceptable with some reservations. However, the concentrated impact at each site of the drilling platform, waste water pits, tanks, pipelines, roads—not to mention vehicular traffic, glaring lighting and drilling activity noise—can really have an adverse impact on the environment and the residents. Assurances that this will not happen are not readily guaranteed, and the consequences can vary greatly. Water quality can suffer. Permanent vegetative loss through soil compaction, disturbance and contamination is most likely.

It is our hope that there will be much attention given to these concerns and that our treasured natural areas, parks and so on, will not be disturbed. Of course the same concern is directed at protection of private property where the activity may take place as well as the immediate surrounding properties.

Bob Scott

**Join us at the next TCEA meeting on Monday,
July 26 at the League of Women Voters office
3212 Collinsworth, Fort Worth**
(see page 1 for more information)

The **TCEA** logo serves as a reminder that **TCEA** is concerned about **AIR** (upper left), **LAND** (upper right), and **WATER** (lower center) quality in Texas, and especially Tarrant County.

**TCEA OFFICERS FOR
2004/2005 YEAR**

(July 1 through June 30)

President - Bob Scott
roscott@flash.net

Membership - Louanne Rice

Treasurer - Louanne Rice

Secretary - Martha Kissinger

Programs - Earl Burnam

Newsletter - Martha Kissinger
kiss23@juno.com

The primary purpose of **TCEA** is to educate the public about the environment and environmental problems. **TCEA** provides an open forum for discussion and exchange of information among individuals, environmental and other groups, governmental agencies, and commercial entities. **TCEA** encourages and facilitates joint environmental efforts.

TCEA

1101 Circle Lane
Bedford, Texas 76022
President: Bob Scott

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE OPEN AT ONCE

Visit our web site:
<http://www.geocities.com/tcea2001>