
PRESS RELEASE

*Lone Star Groundwater
Conservation District*



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LSGCD ADOPTS PLAN TO REDUCE GROUNDWATER PUMPING FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY

CONROE, TEXAS. NOVEMBER 13, 2009- - The Lone Star Groundwater Conservation District passed another major milestone in its continuing efforts to ensure the availability of groundwater to Montgomery County for future generations with the adoption of its District Regulatory Plan (DRP) rules on Tuesday, November 10, 2009. A major component of this adoption process was the solicitation of public comment, and following changes to the rules in response to those comments, including three separate public hearings and comment periods. Since these rules will have a significant impact on the groundwater users in the county, District officials felt it was appropriate to have successive hearings to allow the greatest amount of public input possible, and that input resulted in significant changes to the rules from what was initially proposed several months ago. In fact, the length of the public comment process led the District to move away from its original schedule and allow additional time for water systems and other members of the regulated community to submit their declarations and plans for coming into compliance with the new rules, and to actually achieve compliance with the groundwater reduction requirements. Board President Richard Tramm noted that the board did not depart from the original schedule without considerable debate, but it was determined that the need to ensure that the final product was equitable overrode the scheduling concerns at this time.

The mission of the LSGCD and its Board of Directors is to preserve and protect the groundwater resources of Montgomery County so that future generations of citizens will continue to have access to good quality groundwater supplies in those areas where other supplies are not available. The Board has previously published rules that required all entities pumping more than 10 million gallons per year, known as Large Volume Groundwater Users (LVGUs), to provide information on their future demands and a conceptual plan for how each of these entities intended to meet a proposed reduction in groundwater usage to a level of 70 percent or less of their total water demand. The rules adopted Tuesday are in line with those earlier reduction targets, and established 2009 as the benchmark year for determining the amount of groundwater available to each LVGU. The benchmark year was selected in response to comments from the regulated community asking for a more definitive groundwater production target for each entity to work toward. Under the rules adopted Tuesday, each LVGU is required to submit to the District by June 1, 2010, a declaration stating whether it will pursue its own individual Groundwater Reduction Plan (GRP), or identify other joint participants that it intends to work with in

achieving compliance with the new rules collectively. Each large user must submit its individual or joint GRP, detailing the activities necessary for each entity to meet the groundwater reduction requirements of the District, by January 1, 2011, and must be in actual compliance with the groundwater reduction requirements by 2016. Under the new rules, entities would be prohibited beginning in 2016 from pumping groundwater in an amount greater than 70 percent of their 2009 permitted production. The balance of their needs would have to be met either by conservation or alternative supplies other than local groundwater.

The rules also allowed entities who reduce groundwater production before the 2016 mandatory requirement by using reclaimed water or metered conservation activities to amass credits, which can then be used to help LVGUs meet the conversion requirements.

The District notes that the rules that were put in place on Tuesday will not achieve the entire reduction of groundwater that is needed. Further reductions will be required in the future to reach the desired level of 64,000 acre-feet annually and to accommodate any future adjustments from updated technical data and better science for aquifer recharge estimates. However, implementation of these initial reduction requirements is a significant step in the right direction. The District Regulatory Plan (DRP) rules as adopted on Tuesday, November 10, 2009, are available on the website at www.lonestargcd.org.

For more information, contact:

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