

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Program Report for the February 28, 2020 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). An application for minor amendment is under review to authorize the use of two new modular concrete canister (MCC) designs in waste disposal operations, modify procedures for environmental monitoring, and adjust concentration limits for low activity waste that is disposed of in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) facility.

By-product Material Disposal

The by-product material disposal facility operated by WCS is limited to receiving only the Fernald by-product waste, which has been placed for disposal. A license renewal application is currently under review.

TCEQ also licenses three legacy conventional uranium milling sites. These three sites will ultimately be transferred to the Department of Energy 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 Panna Maria facility was submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in August 2019. Comments by the NRC were received in December 2019. As soon as the TCEQ addresses the NRC's comments, and after the NRC acknowledges that the draft CRR is complete, a final CRR will be submitted for NRC's concurrence to terminate the license and transfer the site to the DOE. The NRC plans to conduct a site visit of all three legacy conventional uranium milling sites in early March.

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.

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Included in the license amendment described above, WCS is requesting to add two new financial assurance waste categories for their storage and processing facility.

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 Uranium Resources Inc. (URI), Energy Fuel Resources' (EFR) Alta Mesa project, and South Texas Mining Venture's (STMV) Hobson and La Palangana projects are under technical review. A soil decommissioning plan was received for URI's Vasquez Project site and it is currently under technical review.

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. The TCEQ is using an existing contractor through a Remediation Division umbrella contract to remediate the site. Current funding appropriated for the Lamprecht site (\$770,000) has been expended; however, further cleanup work is required and will commence once additional funding is available. Cleanup work is proceeding at the Zamzow site with the receipt of a legislative appropriation of \$2.23M during this biennium.

Legislative Implementation

HB 2203 was signed into law on May 31, 2019. This requires any state agency that receives a required report of a release of a radioactive substance into the environment to immediately provide notification to each political subdivision into which the substance was released. TCEQ is finalizing a procedure to implement the requirements of this bill.

Rulemaking

A request was made by WCS to adjust the curie inventory charge and is scheduled to be proposed at agenda on April 8, 2020.