

How Are Class II Oil and Gas Disposal Wells Regulated to Protect Water Quality ?

The Railroad Commission of Texas' (RRC's) Underground Injection Control (UIC) program has the objective of ensuring that our surface and subsurface water is free of pollution or contamination by ensuring proper completion, operation, and monitoring of oil and gas injection and disposal wells. RRC rules prohibit injection into useable-quality water and restrict injection into underground sources of drinking water (USDWs).

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and its predecessor agencies have in the past advised the RRC and industry on the occurrence of protected groundwater (Underground Sources of Drinking Water, or USDWs). However, in accordance with Article 2 of House Bill 2694, passed by the 82nd Texas Legislature in 2011, duties pertaining to the responsibility of preparing groundwater protection advisory/recommendation letters have been transferred from the TCEQ to the RRC, effective September 1, 2011.

References:

- For RRC Injection and Disposal Wells Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), go to <http://www.rrc.texas.gov/about-us/resource-center/faqs/oil-gas-faqs/faq-injection-and-disposal-wells/>.
- The RRC's Injection/Disposal Well Permitting, Testing, and Monitoring Manual can be found at <http://www.rrc.texas.gov/oil-gas/publications-and-notices/manuals/injectiondisposal-well-manual/>.
- Information regarding the TCEQ Underground Injection Control Permits and Registrations can be found at https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/waste_permits/uic_permits/uic.html.
- TCEQ's Oil & Gas Facilities: Compliance Resources webpage (<http://www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance/industry/oilgas.html>) covers regulations on air, water, and waste related to the oil and gas industry in Texas. This webpage also includes links to other resources such as TCEQ publication RG-482, *Common Environmental Requirements for Regulated Oil and Gas Operations*, which discusses TCEQ regulations for upstream oil and gas sites, as well as the appropriate regulatory contacts for various oil and gas activities in Texas.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Protecting Underground Sources of Drinking Water from Underground Injection (UIC) website is <https://www.epa.gov/uic>.
- Drawings of the different UIC well types can be found on each of their individual webpages (Class I – VI) at https://www.epa.gov/uic/general-information-about-injection-wells#how_protect.
- The U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Act website is <http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/laws/sdwa.html>.
- The Ground Water Protection Council website providing information and links relating to wells, underground injection practices, and groundwater protection is <http://www.gwpc.org>.

- The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Oil, Gas, and Mining webpage (<http://tgpc.state.tx.us/oil-gas-mining/>) has additional information and links on this subject.

For additional Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to groundwater quantity, groundwater quality, septic systems, water wells, administrative entities, and publications, visit the TGPC's FAQ webpage at <http://tgpc.state.tx.us/frequently-asked-questions-faqs/>.