



MARCH 2025

Energy News



From the Field Photo

Weatherization Inspection in Washington County
Photo from RRC's Critical Infrastructure Division



Contents

- 3** Waste management rules webinars
- 4** Recap: RRC's Winter Weather Emergency Response
- 6** DOI audit recognizes RRC success with well plugging grants
- 8** RRC seeks public input on Oil and Gas Monitoring and Enforcement Plan
- 10** Commissioners' Corner

Upcoming Events

RRC Open Meeting April 29, 2025

[VIEW OPEN MEETING WEBCASTS ▶](#)

WASTE MANAGEMENT RULES WEBINARS

We're hard at work getting ready to implement the newly adopted **Chapter 4 Rules** on oil and gas waste management that will take effect on July 1, 2025.

In preparation, the agency will be conducting webinars throughout April to help operators know about what changes are coming with these new rules.

RRC Technical Permitting Staff will host four 90-minute sessions covering the following topics:

- Session One, entitled Chapter 4 Overview, will be held at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, April 2, 2025. This session will highlight what's to come when the newly adopted rules go into effect.
- Session Two, entitled Authorized Pits, will be held at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, April 9, 2025. This session will cover authorized pit registration, review of the proposed Authorized Pit Registration form, and the changes for produced water recycling pits.
- Session Three, entitled Permitting Session 1, will be held at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2025. This session will discuss additional requirements for permitted pits, changes to Notice, and the proposed form revisions for applications.
- Session Four, entitled Permitting Session 2, will be held at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, April 23, 2025. This final session will provide insight into waste transportation, compliance, and a look at the proposed new and revised forms and templates.

Operators are encouraged to email their Chapter 4 questions to askaboutchptr4@rrc.texas.gov before the scheduled webinars.

MORE INFO AND REGISTRATION



RECAP: RRC'S WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY RESPONSE

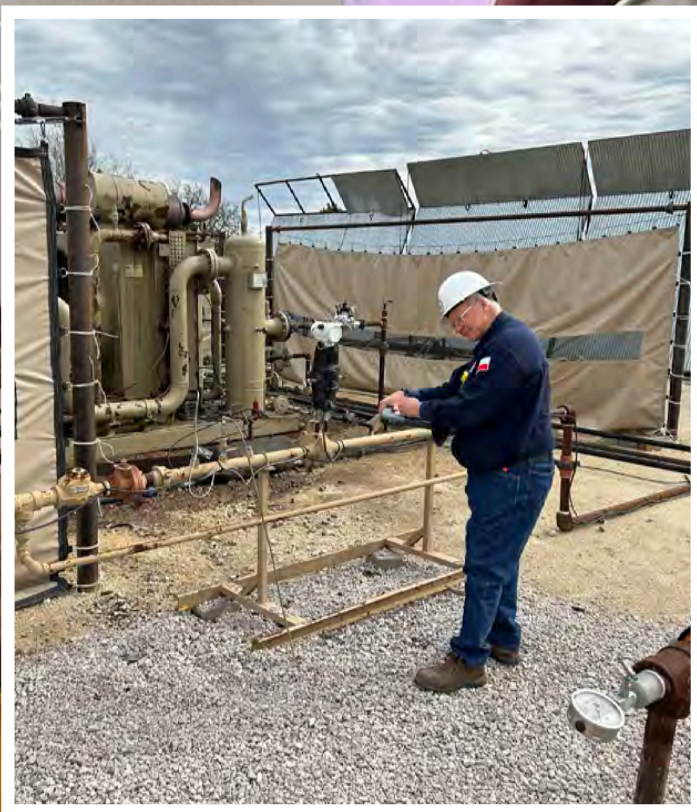


It was a busy winter season for staff from different RRC divisions that are critical for weather emergencies.

RRC safety officers manned the State Operations Center (SOC) for multiple emergencies this winter, which, in typical Texas fashion, were not limited to just cold snaps!

The RRC Safety and Emergency Management team staffed SOC for more than 270 hours since this past January for freezing temperatures, high winds and wildfire danger.

At the SOC, safety officers work closely with the Texas Department of Emergency Management, the Public Utility Commission and other partner agencies across the state supporting natural gas supply chain readiness during emergencies.



In addition to the teamwork the RRC engages in at the SOC, the Critical Infrastructure Division's (CID) weatherization inspections are crucial to help ensure the uninterrupted supply of gas from wellheads to homes and electricity generators during emergencies. This winter season, CID has conducted more than 6,270 inspections at critical natural gas facilities which ensure the facilities can operate when freezing temperatures grip the state.

Texans can be assured that the RRC undertakes all necessary steps, externally and internally, to protect Texans during emergencies, as has been the case so far in 2025.





DOI AUDIT RECOGNIZES RRC SUCCESS WITH WELL PLUGGING GRANTS

The U.S. Department of the Interior Office of the Inspector General has released an audit report showing the Railroad Commission of Texas successfully used federal grant funding for orphaned well plugging and complied with all related laws and regulations.

The RRC utilized its 40 years of well plugging expertise to expend a \$25 million Initial Grant from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) passed by Congress. The agency plugged more than 760 orphaned wells through the Initial Grant.

The Inspector General concluded that “We found that the State of Texas properly expended IIJA orphaned well initial grant funds and fulfilled program goals in accordance with applicable laws,

Federal regulations, and grant terms...We make no recommendations as there are not reportable findings.” The audit also noted that the RRC “performs enhanced monitoring on all the contractual work performed on the well-plugging using IIJA funds” submitting daily reports on all completed work and costs as well as performing three levels of review to ensure invoice accuracy.

The majority of oil and gas wells that are no longer producing are plugged by the responsible operators. If an operator is non-compliant or goes out of business the well is considered orphaned, and the Railroad Commission administers a program to plug the wells. The IIJA grants supplement state funds that are used annually to plug orphaned wells across the state.



The RRC is now utilizing the first phase of IJA Formula Grants to plug wells. However, the formula grants include administrative hurdles that are not specified in the IJA, such as reviews of Endangered Species Act compliance and compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, that significantly delay plugging projects. In fact, in the first 12 months of the IJA Formula Grant, the RRC plugged 45 percent fewer wells using federal funds than were plugged during the first 12 months of the IJA Initial Grant due to the reviews.

“We are proud to remain a leader in well plugging efforts nationwide and look forward to working with the new Secretary of the Interior to expeditiously plug wells in Texas,” said RRC Executive Director Wei Wang. “

According to a recent Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission study, thanks to RRC’s robust state managed plugging program, Texas has seen one of the lowest increases in orphaned well population. We would urge our federal partners to examine and remove the red tape implemented by the previous program staff. Texas stands ready and we are more than capable of accomplishing this important work efficiently.”

A copy of the Department of the Interior Inspector General Report can be found on the DOI website.

[READ THE DOI INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT](#)

An oil and gas wellhead is visible in the background, set against a dramatic sunset sky with orange and red hues. The wellhead consists of a tall metal structure with a platform and various pipes and valves. The foreground shows a gravel area with some pipes and equipment.

RRC SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON OIL & GAS MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT PLAN

In 2017, the Texas Legislature directed the Railroad Commission of Texas to develop an annual plan to assess the most effective use of its limited resources to ensure public safety and minimize damage to the environment.

Each year the RRC publishes a monitoring plan to define the agency's strategic priorities for monitoring oil and gas activities and enforcing regulations across the state. The purpose of this plan is to define and communicate the Oil and Gas Division's strategic priorities for its monitoring and enforcement efforts to protect communities and the environment.

The plan includes the agency's extensive field operations activities such as well inspections, orphaned well pluggings and site remediations. Also, information related to technical permit monitoring and administrative compliance enforcement is detailed in the plan

For the FY 2026 Plan, the Commission seeks feedback from stakeholders in the development of action items that will address the totality of oil and gas monitoring and enforcement activities.

Members of the public are invited to submit their feedback online to assist in developing this important plan. The deadline for feedback is 5 p.m. on Wednesday April 16, 2025.

[READ MORE INFORMATION](#)



Commissioner Christian

COMMISSIONERS' CORNER



This month Commissioner Christian traveled to Floresville and Longview to speak to Texans about the importance of Texas oil and gas and the vital mission of the Railroad Commission. In Longview, the Commissioner spoke at the 14th annual Northeast Texas Energy Summit.

“Former President Biden’s Green New Deal subsidies are still law and will spend trillions on so-called ‘green’ energy projects. It’s a new day for American oil and gas under President Trump, but we still must keep the pressure on fighting the radical environmentalist fantasy that is Net Zero.”

-Commissioner Christian

[You can read more here.](#)

The Commissioner also put out two press releases, with one championing [EPA Administrator Zeldin’s Red Tape Rollback and Reconsideration of Obama-era Greenhouse Gas Ruling](#) and the other celebrating [President Trump and Congressman Pfluger’s Repeal of Biden Natural Gas Tax](#).







Commissioner Wright

COMMISSIONERS' CORNER

In March, Commissioner Wright spent significant time at the Texas Capitol discussing legislation and policy proposals under consideration by the House and Senate. During one such visit, Commissioner Wright was pleased to meet with Texas Farm Bureau State Directors alongside House Energy Resources Chairman Drew Darby to discuss the work of the Railroad Commission and the Texas Legislature to address issues important to Texas landowners, including efforts to reduce the orphan well population.





Oil & Gas Production Statistics

View monthly production totals of crude oil, condensate and total oil; and of gas well gas, casinghead gas, and total natural gas.

[VIEW CURRENT PRODUCTION STATISTICS ▶](#)

Enforcement Actions

The Commission has primary oversight and enforcement of the state's oil and gas industry and intrastate pipeline safety. View RRC's Latest Enforcement Actions here.

[VIEW LATEST ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS ▶](#)

Public GIS Viewer

The Public GIS Viewer allows users to view oil, gas and pipeline data in a map view.

[LAUNCH THE PUBLIC GIS VIEWER ▶](#)