

# TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

## PDW PROGRAM STAFF GUIDANCE

**Guidance Title: Response To An Alleged Waterborne Disease Outbreak**

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TCEQ Field Operations Division Region staff are periodically called upon to conduct Public Water Supply (PWS) investigations concerning alleged waterborne disease outbreaks. In order to provide guidance, consistency, and streamline time and effort, the following guidance is to be implemented. **Alleged Waterborne Disease Outbreaks (AWDO) will be coordinated and investigated in accordance with Priority 1 Complaint procedures.**

- Step 1: Allegation of waterborne disease outbreak is received by the Field Operations Division Region staff and/or office. Contact person, telephone number, date, time, affected persons/area and pertinent allegations are documented.
- Step 2: Immediately inform **Region Management Team (RMT) and Central Office Management (COM)** of AWDO information.
- Step 3: The case information is immediately transferred by telephone to the TCEQ Water Supply Division, Public Drinking Water (PDW) Section telephone extension (512) 239-6061 and (512) 239-6054.
- Step 4: The PDW Section will contact the parties involved and collect further information. If necessary, the PDW Section will coordinate with the RMT on any interim precautions. The PDW Section will then forward the information to a Texas Department of Health (TDH) Epidemiologist in the TDH Division of Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Surveillance. The TCEQ Toxicology Section will be contacted by the PDW Section if needed. The COM and RMT will coordinate information and any necessary activities between the TCEQ and TDH.
- Step 5: The TDH Epidemiologist will contact local and regional health departments. The local or regional Epidemiologist will contact local physicians and hospitals. Information will be gathered to determine if any illness is potentially associated with a drinking water system. The TCEQ and TDH will coordinate and conduct any necessary water sampling activities to assist in this determination. It is expected that this determination will be made within 48 hours.
- Step 6: The TDH Epidemiologist will forward investigation results to the PDW Section. The PDW Section will make a determination and provide notification to the RMT. The PDW Section and RMT will coordinate concerning appropriate action. If action is not necessary, the PDW Section will provide notification to the appropriate RMT and COM.

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**TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

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- Step 7: The PDW Section and RMT will coordinate and provide proper notification to the TCEQ Media Relations Team at (512) 239-5000. **Note: Media Relations notification requirements will be discussed and coordinated between the Region Management Team and the DWQ Team upon initially receiving an AWDO notification.**
- Step 8: If legislative level contact has occurred with any of the parties involved, the PDW Section will notify the TCEQ legislative liaison at (512) 239-3508.
- Step 9: The RMT, Region staff, and/or the PDW Section will notify affected entities concerning public notification requirements of Title 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Chapter 319.301 - 319.303 **(Public Notice of Spills or Accidental Discharges From Wastewater Facilities Owned or Operated by Local Governments).**

**END**

April 1, 2004

Effective Date

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Expiration Date

  
Buck Henderson, Section Manager  
Public Drinking Water Section  
Water Supply Division

If no formal expiration date has been established for this staff guidance, it will remain in effect until superseded or canceled.