



Don't Mess with Texas® Water

A program of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Texas Department of Transportation.



"Don't Mess with Texas®" is a registered trademark of the Texas Department of Transportation.

Don't Mess with Texas® Water

Program Information

The Don't Mess with Texas Water program seeks to help prevent illegal dumping that affects surface water in Texas. The program requires the TCEQ and TxDOT to cooperatively place road signs at major highway water crossings that let drivers know about a toll-free number to call and report illegal dumping.

The TCEQ forwards calls from the toll-free number to the appropriate law enforcement agency that handles complaints of illegal dumping for a participating area.

History

House Bill 451 (Lucio III), passed during the 82nd Legislative Session, created the Don't Mess with Texas Water program. In October of 2012, the first two Don't Mess with Texas Water signs were unveiled in Harlingen, TX on the U.S. Business 77 frontage road overlooking the Arroyo Colorado.



The program, which began in fall of 2012, is another tool to alert stakeholders of illegal dumping and to raise awareness of the issue in the Harlingen community.

Who Should Participate?

Don't Mess with Texas Water is an opportunity for local governments that need another tool to tackle illegal dumping in their area but may not have resources to create their own toll-free number, branding, and other public awareness mechanisms. The Don't Mess with Texas Water program serves as a public awareness campaign and offers a toll-free illegal dumping reporting number manned by TCEQ staff and signs on major highway water crossings across the state provided by TxDOT.

Program Participation Requirements

- Ability to respond to reports of illegal dumping.
- Willingness to provide a list of proposed sign locations.
- Willingness to sign a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the TCEQ for participation.
- Willingness to obtain a license from TxDOT in order to use the "Don't Mess with Texas" licensed mark.

Purpose and Scope

The Don't Mess with Texas Water program will:

- Seek to help prevent illegal dumping that affects surface waters of the state.
- Place signs on major highway water crossings with cooperation between TCEQ, TxDOT, and participating local governments.
 - Initial sign placement is limited to 20 signs (10 locations).
- Provide a toll-free number for citizens in participating areas to call and report illegal dumping.
 - TCEQ staff will forward call information to participating local governments.
- Allow local governments to opt-in to the program.
 - Participating local governments must provide TCEQ with contact information for their local illegal dumping enforcement.
- Seek to work with existing illegal dumping enforcement programs.
 - Phone calls will be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency who handles complaints of illegal dumping for a participating area.

The Don't Mess with Texas Water program will not:

- Address all illegal dumping complaints in Texas.
- Require all local governments to participate, or necessarily cover all areas of the state.
- Provide local governments with the ability or assistance to address complaints of illegal dumping.

- Require TCEQ regional offices to respond to all reports of illegal dumping received by the program.
- Provide funding for the management or promotion of the program.

Placement of Road Signs

- Interested local governments should provide TCEQ with a list of proposed sign locations. Questions to consider include:
 - Where are illegal dump sites that affect surface water?
 - On what roads are the most citizens likely to see a program sign?
 - Is the road under TxDOT's jurisdiction?

Program Costs

The Don't Mess with Texas Water program is operated by TCEQ and TxDOT. The Don't Mess with Texas Water program will place signs in 10 locations across the state and manage the toll-free number. However, participating local governments will be responsible for the costs of responding to the illegal dumping complaints.

Requests outside the scope of the program will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

More Information

Visit the [Don't Mess with Texas Water Web site](#).

Review Authority

- [HB 451, 82nd Legislative Session](#)
- [Texas Water Code §26.053](#)
- [Texas Administrative Code §7.127](#)

Interested in Participating?

Next Steps:

- Contact the Don't Mess with Texas Water Program Coordinator
 - Devon Ryan
DMWTW Program Coordinator
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
512-239-6596
devon.ryan@tceq.texas.gov
- Review the attached example MOA

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
AND
[NAME OF PARTICIPATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT]**

1. PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and [name of participating local government] is designed to provide citizens with a mechanism to report illegal dumping that affects surface waters of Texas in [name of participating local government], through participation in the Don't Mess with Texas Water (DMWTW) program. The MOA delineates responsibilities and conditions to participation in the program.

2. BACKGROUND

House Bill 451 (2011, 82nd Legislative Session), requires the TCEQ to adopt by rule a program to help prevent illegal dumping that affects surface waters of Texas. The TCEQ must work with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to place signs on major highway water crossings that notify drivers of a toll-free number to call to report illegal dumping. The toll-free number hotline will forward calls to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Local governments may work with the TCEQ to participate in the program.

3. INTENT

The TCEQ's goal is to provide a mechanism for citizens to report illegal dumping that affects surface waters of this state.

4. FINANCIAL

The operational cost of the toll-free number hotline is paid by the TCEQ. A local government that participates in the program may contribute to the cost of operating the toll-free number hotline.

5. TCEQ'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The TCEQ shall:

1. Coordinate with participating local governments and TxDOT on the placement of program signs, giving priority to those locations that will have the greatest impact on preventing illegal dumping that affects surface waters of the state. The final placement of program signs will be determined by TxDOT.

2. Coordinate with participating local governments and TxDOT on the timeline for posting program signs. The final timeline for posting program signs will be determined by TxDOT.
3. Forward calls made to the program hotline to the appropriate law enforcement agency contact, as provided by participating local governments.
4. Maintain information on law enforcement agencies handling complaints of illegal dumping, as provided by participating local governments.
5. Maintain a list of participating local governments on the program Web page.

6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

A participating local government shall:

1. Provide the TCEQ with current information on the appropriate law enforcement agency handling complaints of illegal dumping. Updated information should be submitted to the TCEQ within 30 days of a change in contact.
2. Ensure that calls forwarded by the program hotline are responded to within 24 hours. Calls that are received after business hours should be responded to the following business day. If the participating local government receives a program call that falls outside its jurisdiction, the participating local government will make a good faith effort to forward the report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
3. Maintain for a duration of at least one year information on calls received as part of this program including the following: date report received; location of illegal dumping activity; type of illegal dumping reported; and the outcome or final resolution of the call. A participating local government shall provide this information to the TCEQ upon request.
4. Coordinate with the TCEQ and TxDOT before placing any signage on roads, streets, or rights of way under the jurisdiction of the local government. A local government is obligated to pay for, install, and maintain any program sign on a highway under its jurisdiction.
5. Use only the design and size of signage as shown on Attachment A for any program signage on roads, streets, or rights of way under the jurisdiction of the local government.

6. Obtain a license from TxDOT in order to use the “Don’t Mess with Texas” licensed mark. Contact information for TxDOT is as follows: Brenda Flores-Dollar, Program Manager; 125 E. 11th Street; Austin; 78701; (512) 486-5904.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE

This MOA shall be effective from the date the MOA has been signed by both parties.

8. TERMS

The MOA shall commence upon the date signed and shall be automatically renewed annually up to three years unless otherwise terminated.

9. TERMINATION

Either party may terminate this MOA at any time within thirty days notice in writing to the other party. Such notice shall be given by personal delivery or by certified mail, return receipt requested. This MOA may also be terminated by mutual written consent of the parties specifying the termination date herein.

ATTEST

All terms of the Memorandum of Agreement are hereby acknowledged and agreed to, as evidenced by the signatures of the individuals identified below, who have authority to sign:

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Name
Title

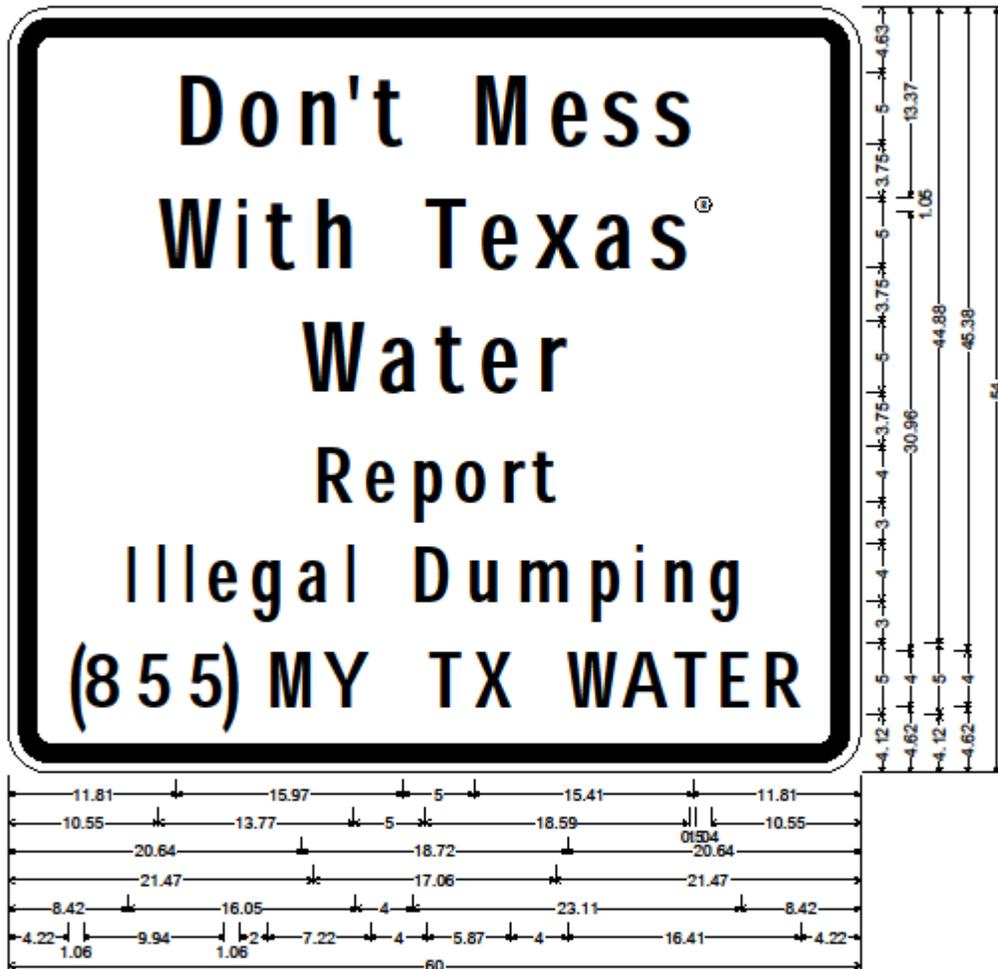
Date

[NAME OF PARTICIPATING LOCAL GOVERNMENT]

Name
Title

Date

Attachment A



3.00" Radius, 1.25" Border, 0.75" Indent, Black on White;
 "Don't Mess" D; "With Texas" D; "Water" D; "Report" D; "Illegal Dumping" D; "(855) MY TX WATER" D;