



NEWS

GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY
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GBRA continues water quality testing through Clean Rivers Program

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SEGUIN- The Guadalupe Blanco River Authority's revised Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for water quality monitoring through the Clean Rivers Program has been reviewed and approved by the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) according to Debbie Magin, GBRA regional laboratory director. The 1998 revision replaces the earlier plan dated March 31, 1997.

"Our participation in the Clean Rivers Program reflects GBRA's interest and leadership in water quality testing," said Magin. "Many people aren't aware that in the late 1960's, GBRA began to develop a comprehensive plan for water quality control and pollution abatement in the Guadalupe River basin. The initial study was funded by GBRA, the Texas Water Quality Board and the Environmental Protection Agency and, when completed in 1973, had the distinction of being the first basin-wide study in the United States."

In 1991, the Texas Legislature passed the Clean Rivers Act to expand water quality monitoring and testing efforts throughout Texas. TNRCC responded by developing the Clean Rivers Program to study historic and current water quality conditions in river and coastal basins and selected GBRA as the monitoring agency for the Guadalupe River Basin and the Lavaca-Guadalupe Coastal Basin.

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River basin planning agencies must update their QAPP annually and submit it to TNRCC for review. These revisions provide an opportunity to modify a variety of plan elements such as baseline and targeted monitoring activities, sampling and monitoring protocols, data management practices, or program partners.

Magin explained that the quality assurance process is used in all areas of environmental monitoring and assessment. "It ensures that data collected is scientifically valid by requiring that the methods used to collect data are documented and follow proven scientific practices. This also ensures that data from different Clean River Program sources and locations can be reliably compared to each other."

GBRA's plan can also serve as an 'umbrella' for other entities in the river basin. For example, if a city must provide quality-assured water quality data to TNRCC, they can use and submit GBRA's plan with the addition of a special appendix to explain their material. This enables municipal governments to save significant amounts of time and money by not having to produce a document of their own.

Magin said the Clean Rivers Program is providing valuable data about current water quality conditions in the Guadalupe and Lavaca-Guadalupe Coastal basins and will also be used in developing water resource and management plans to protect Texas' future water resources.