



# NEWS

GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY  
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## ***Magin, Arnst assume new responsibilities at GBRA***

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SEGUIN- After more than 34 years of hard work and dedication to a career, most people would probably choose a relaxing retirement. Fortunately for GBRA, Jim Arnst is not 'most people.' Although Arnst officially stepped down from his current position as director of water quality services at the end of February, he has agreed to continue working part time as a technical consultant on wastewater renewal permits and other special projects.

Arnst received a B.S. degree in Animal Husbandry from the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas (now Texas A&M) in 1950. He joined GBRA in 1965 as Assistant Operations Manager in the Calhoun Canal Division located in Port Lavaca. Eventually, as community growth created a need for new drinking water treatment facilities, Arnst was put in charge of the construction and operational startup of the GBRA Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant from 1969-70.

Later that year, he was asked to direct GBRA's Public Law 84-660 3(C) study. This project, known as the Guadalupe River Basin Water Quality Management Study, was completed in 1972 and holds the distinction of the first basin-wide analysis completed in the nation!

Arnst assisted with the water quality aspects of the Lake McQueeney federal lake restoration grant of 1980, and directed numerous other GBRA water quality studies including the Public Law 92-500, Section 208 (Phase II - Lake Dunlap) in 1981; the PL 92-500, Section 208 (Phase III - Plum Creek) in 1985; and the PL 92-500, Section 208 (Phase I) in 1997.

Arnst also helped create the GBRA Regional Water Quality Laboratory in 1972. Convinced that a regional laboratory could perform vital water quality testing services for cities, industries and individuals, Arnst obtained funding and space for the project. With the assistance of several GBRA employees, he helped build and assemble the laboratory benches and installed the plumbing and electrical wiring. Since then, Arnst has been a guiding force behind the constant expansion and improvement of GBRA's laboratory operations.

In 1991, the Texas Legislature enacted the Texas Clean Rivers Program to study historic and current water quality conditions in river and coastal basins throughout Texas. River authorities and other agencies contract with the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) to conduct on-going water quality assessments and to develop programs that will meet future water quality needs. Arnst and members of GBRA's regional laboratory staff have completed every bi-annual Water Quality Assessment report required by TNRCC and worked closely with basin-wide Steering Committees to encourage public participation in this program.

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Arnst helped to bring state-of-the-art wastewater treatment processes to GBRA's wastewater treatment plants. In 1969, he was a student of Leon Holbert, an instructor with the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service. During a field trip to the City of Robinson's wastewater treatment facility, Arnst says he was struck with the simplicity of their extended aeration activated sludge process using a "race-track" aeration basin (which originated in the Netherlands). He brought the idea back to GBRA's chief engineer and the process was eventually incorporated into GBRA's Springs Hill (1974), Dunlap (1974), Canyon Park Estates (1975), and Northcliffe (1977) plants.

During the 1980's, after researching the studies of Gordon Culp concerning advanced wastewater treatment at Lake Tahoe, Arnst helped design the tertiary wastewater treatment processes used today at the GBRA's Canyon Park Estates Wastewater Reclamation Plant. He also drew on lessons learned at the Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant to help design GBRA's Luling Water Treatment Plant that was placed in service in 1978.

Arnst's community service includes leading an ecology-oriented Scout Explorer Post sponsored by GBRA from 1974-1975. He was president of the Guadalupe Valley Water and Wastewater Association during its existence in the 1970's and currently serves on the board of the Green Valley Special Utility District. He was also selected as acting general manager of GBRA from 1993-1994 during the period between the retirement of John H. Specht and the selection of W. E. "Bill" West, Jr., as GBRA's current general manager.

Replacing Arnst as director of water quality services is Debbie Magin. She began her career with GBRA in 1976 as a laboratory analyst and was named regional laboratory director in 1982. Magin has been responsible for managing laboratory procedures and personnel, providing technical support for GBRA's satellite labs at water and wastewater plants, analyzing potable water and wastewater, and investigating environmental concerns.

In her new position, Magin will serve as GBRA's Quality Assurance Officer, project manager for the Guadalupe River Instream Flow Project and plan and data manager for the TNRCC Clean Rivers Program. She will also help develop programs and policies at local and state levels to address the control and treatment of nuisance aquatic plants.

Magin has helped establish the Texas Watch Program in the Guadalupe River Basin and also serves on its Advisory Council. As part of the TNRCC-sponsored Clean Rivers Program, Texas Watch encourages individuals and groups to participate in water quality monitoring by volunteering to collect and test water from sample sites in their communities. Magin and her staff conduct annual training sessions for volunteers. Their data is returned to GBRA's Regional laboratory and shared with TNRCC to help protect the health and quality of basin water resources.

Magin holds a B.S. in Biology and an M.S. in Aquatic Biology from Southwest Texas State University. She has held numerous offices in the Texas Water Utilities Association, including president of the Laboratory Analyst Section and president of the TWUA state organization in 1997. She holds a TWUA Voluntary Laboratory Analyst Certification Level "A" Certificate and has earned numerous Leadership and Distinguished Service Awards from the organization.

She serves on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Task Force on Aquatic Herbicide Policy, the Texas Department of Agriculture's River Authorities and State Agencies Committee on Aquatic Herbicide Regulation, the TNRCC Statewide Bacterial Study Advisory Committee, the General Land Office's Coastal Bacterial Study Advisory Committee, and the American Water Works Association (Texas Section) Management Committee.