



# NEWS

GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY  
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## **GBRA Inflates Salt Water Barrier to Protect Area Water Supplies** *Boating Caution Issued*

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**SEGUIN-** As current drought conditions cause river flows and levels to decline, the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) is taking steps to protect local Calhoun County water supplies from salt water contamination.

The inboard and outboard fabric dam bags at the GBRA Lower Guadalupe Diversion Dam and Salt Water Barrier near Tivoli were inflated yesterday, July 17, to prevent salt water from migrating upstream past the Barrier and entering the GBRA diversion system that delivers raw water from the Guadalupe River to municipal, industrial and agricultural users in Calhoun County.

“The Guadalupe River Basin, along with most of Texas, is experiencing severe drought,” said Herb Wittliff, manager for GBRA’s Calhoun County Operations. “Canyon Reservoir is approximately 4.5 feet below its conservation pool elevation and as of July 12, the Guadalupe River at Victoria was flowing at only 30% of its monthly average.”

When the fabric dam bags are not in operation, the design of the Barrier allows normal flows of the river to pass through without restriction, because the bags are completely deflated and lie flat on the river bottom. However, when the Barrier is activated by inflating the bags, upstream water will “pool” to the desired operating level of 4.0 feet msl, with most of the water flowing over the bags and downstream to San Antonio Bay.

Because a 2 to 4 foot drop in water level is possible from the upstream to the downstream side of the Salt Water Barrier when the bags are inflated, GBRA has issued a boating caution for anyone who uses the lower Guadalupe River near Tivoli for water recreation or commercial fishing. Warning signs will be posted and lights illuminated for nighttime conditions.

Attempting to pass through the structure in a boat while the barrier is in operation could result in serious injury, or possible loss of life. Boaters on the upstream side should stay a safe distance away from the structure to avoid being carried downstream by a strong current.

The Lower Guadalupe Diversion Dam and Salt Water Barrier was built in 1965 by GBRA and is located near Tivoli, about 10 miles upstream of the mouth of the Guadalupe River.

The barrier will remain in operation until river conditions improve. While GBRA is aware of the inconvenience to the boating public, operation of this structure is essential to safeguard water supplies for agricultural, industrial and municipal drinking water use. For more information, contact the GBRA Port Lavaca Water Treatment Plant at (361) 552-9751.