

RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS

Oil and Gas Division

NOTICE TO OIL AND GAS OPERATORS

NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS AREA GROUNDWATER PROTECTION DETERMINATION

Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) rules require operators to obtain a Groundwater Protection Determination from the RRC's Groundwater Advisory Unit (GAU) before drilling a well. The determination identifies the depth to which surface casing must be set and cemented to protect usable quality water.

Normally, a Groundwater Protection Determination is issued on a well-specific basis for a point location. However, in certain parts of the state, a Groundwater Protection Determination may be issued for a designated area when available information indicates the water depth is uniform in that area. As part of the RRC's Texas Oilfield Relief Initiative, the GAU has identified areas with consistent groundwater protection depths in the following fourteen (14) North Central Texas counties: Archer, Baylor, Callahan, Foard, Haskell, Jones, Knox, Shackelford, Stephens, Taylor, Throckmorton, Wichita, Wilbarger, and Young.

North Central Texas Area Groundwater Protection Determination List

The RRC is providing a list of survey abstracts for the above listed counties (link provided below) with consistent groundwater protection depths. Operators with wells inside these survey abstracts will not be required to obtain a GAU well-specific Groundwater Protection Determination; however, they will be required to identify the abstract and know the groundwater protection depths when communicating with the RRC District Office.

In the North Central Texas area, the groundwater protection depths for the listed survey abstracts are as follows:

“The interval from the land surface to 20 feet beneath the base of Quaternary deposits, or 20 feet into the top of the Permian red beds, or to a depth of 100 feet, *whichever is deepest*, must be protected.”

If an operator encounters conditions during drilling that are inconsistent with the North Central Texas Area Groundwater Protection Determination, the operator must install and cement surface casing to protect all usable quality water.

Accessing the North Central Texas Area Groundwater Protection Determination List

Information about the Groundwater Protection Determination List and the survey abstracts in the 14-county area may be downloaded from the RRC website at <http://www.rrc.state.tx.us/media/41096/north-central-texas-agpd-abstract-list.xlsx>. If the abstract for a specific proposed well location is not on the list, the operator must apply for an individual Groundwater Protection Determination (online Form GW-1 Application).

PLEASE FORWARD TO THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF YOUR COMPANY