

## **TCEQ to launch online forum for public comment**

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The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has launched a new initiative that will allow citizens to submit electronic comments on the agency's undertakings via an Internet-based system.

The new online program will begin June 28.

The TCEQ has environmental regulatory authority over companies in Houston and elsewhere throughout the state. Anyone wishing to provide rulemaking comments, through the TCEQ online resource, is subject to the same requirements used for all public comment submissions, including providing a name and address.

"Public comment is a vital part of rulemaking," said Commissioner Larry Soward. "By providing an easily accessible online means to receive public comment, we hope to encourage additional participation in the process."

Rules slated for public comment will be added beginning on the first date of the comment period, and are removed upon the close of the comment period.

Up to 10,000 characters may be submitted through the online form. Each submittal will receive an automatic e-mail from the TCEQ verifying receipt. All comments received via the form will then be converted to a Word file, submitted to the technical staff for review and response, and electronically archived with the rule project file.

Written public comment will continue to be accepted by mail, courier, or fax.