



DECEMBER 2006

## It's Time to Renew Your Commitment to a CLEAN TEXAS

CLEAN TEXAS member organizations are the foundation in this successful program that today is nationally recognized as a leader in promoting improved environmental performance. To help maintain the program as a mark of environmental distinction, CLEAN TEXAS members must renew their commitment every three years.



It's time to renew if your facility meets one or more of the following descriptions:

- joined CLEAN TEXAS before 2004,
- wishes to upgrade its membership to a higher level, or
- obtained an independent assessment of its Environmental Management System.

### Follow these steps to renew your commitment:

1. *Determine your membership level.*  
The four membership levels offer flexibility in setting your commitments. The Bronze level requires sites to implement environmental goals that go beyond legal requirements. The Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels require the implementation of an environmental management system (EMS); Gold and Platinum members also set goals that go beyond state regulatory requirements for environmental improvement or apply to areas that are not regulated, such as conservation measures.
2. *Arrange an independent assessment of your EMS if you are applying for the Silver, Gold, or Platinum level.*
3. *Submit an application.*  
CLEAN TEXAS applications are available online, or you can request a hardcopy.
4. *Prepare for a verification visit.*  
Facilities looking to join at the Gold or Platinum levels (and some at the Silver level) must undergo a verification visit by TCEQ staff, who will work with you to schedule the visit.

Real improvements mean real rewards for CLEAN TEXAS members, such as the following:

- regulatory benefits
- recognition

- technical assistance
- discounts at TCEQ events
- networking opportunities

For assistance, please contact Kelly Coleman, CLEAN TEXAS coordinator, at 512-239-5171 or <[kcoleman@tceq.state.tx.us](mailto:kcoleman@tceq.state.tx.us)> or go to <[www.cleantexas.org](http://www.cleantexas.org)>.

## Save Money and Energy While Protecting the Environment

“ENERGY STAR,” a joint project of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy, began over 10 years ago identifying and promoting energy efficient products and practices to help households and businesses save money and protect the environment. With the help of ENERGY STAR, Americans saved \$12 billion on their energy bills in 2005, while also helping to improve air quality by reducing air pollution.



The average American family spends \$1,900 a year on energy bills; much of that goes to the cost of heating and cooling our homes. Households can save as much as 20 percent annually on total energy costs and reduce their environmental impact by following four simple recommendations from the ENERGY STAR program, abbreviated to “H.E.A.T.”:

### Home Sealing

Seal air leaks and add insulation—paying special attention to your attic, where the biggest gaps and cracks are often found. This will keep warm air inside where it belongs this winter and help your equipment perform more efficiently.

### Equipment Maintenance

Dirt and neglect are the top causes of heating or cooling system failure. Get a checkup of your system to make sure it's performing efficiently and safely. Clean or replace your system's air filter to help lower energy bills and maintain better indoor air quality.

### Ask for ENERGY STAR

Look for the ENERGY STAR label when purchasing products such as heating and cooling systems, and many types of appliances and electronics.



## Thermostat Use

Install a programmable thermostat, which can save you as much as \$150 a year in energy costs. For more information on energy efficient heating and cooling, visit <[www.energystar.gov/ia/products/heat\\_cool/GUIDE\\_2COLOR.pdf](http://www.energystar.gov/ia/products/heat_cool/GUIDE_2COLOR.pdf)>.

Businesses and other organizations can save 10 percent or more on their energy bills this winter by turning down the heat. Many businesses operate their heating systems 24 hours a day, even when no one is using the facility. If businesses cut back just one hour of operation out of every 12, they could reduce their energy use by about 8 percent. If every business in the United States reduced energy use by 10 percent or more, by 2015 Americans would save about \$10 billion and reduce greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those produced by 15 million vehicles. For more information on ideas to improve energy efficiency at your home or business, visit <[www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)>.

## Safely Manage Your Hazardous Household Waste

What is hazardous household waste (HHW)? Any product you use around the home that may contain materials considered hazardous to human health or the environment. The EPA estimates that Americans generate 1.6 million tons of HHW per year, and the average home can accumulate and store as much as 100 pounds. Some of the products that can contain toxic, corrosive, ignitable, or reactive ingredients include paints, cleaners, oils, batteries, pesticides, and fertilizers.

To help you manage your HHW, here are some tips—including ideas to avoid creating it in the first place.

**REDUCE**—Buy only the amount needed to do a job, so you won't have to get rid of any extra product. Also, use only the amount indicated on the label; using more does not mean it will work that much better!

**REUSE**—If you have a product that is still usable but you don't need or want it, give it to a neighbor or relative who will use it for its intended purpose and will properly dispose of what is left over.

**RECYCLE**—Take your nickel cadmium batteries to a drop-off center and return lead-acid batteries to the place of purchase. Recycle your used oil and oil filters. Donate unwanted latex paint to local charities. For more information



on HHW drop-off sites, recycling, and used oil and oil filters, visit <[www.1800cleanup.org](http://www.1800cleanup.org)>.

### For less-toxic alternatives, try these:

- All-purpose cleaner—mix 4 tablespoons of baking soda dissolved in 1 quart warm water.
- Disinfectant—mix ½ cup of borax into 1 gallon of hot water to disinfect and deodorize.
- Basin, tub, and tile cleaner—mix ½ cup of baking soda to 2-3 tablespoons of liquid soap (Castile and peppermint).
- Glass cleaner—combine a quart of water with ¼ to ½ cup of white vinegar and 1 to 2 tablespoons of lemon juice or rubbing alcohol; spray on surfaces and wipe clean with soft, lint-free cloth.

For more information on proper disposal of HHW and other recycling information, order a copy of the TCEQ publication **The Environmental Four Rs for the Home: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rebuy**, (GI-037). To view a copy online, visit <[www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm\\_exec/forms\\_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-037.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-037.html)>.

## Texas Trash-Off Coming Soon

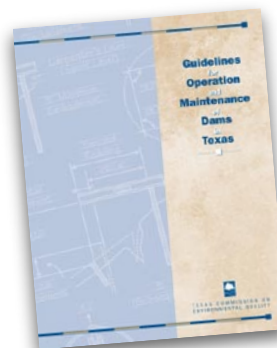
Don't forget to sign up for the Don't Mess With Texas Trash-Off on April 14, 2007.



This is the single largest one-day cleanup event in the state where nearly 200,000 volunteers offer their time to keep our state beautiful. The event is sponsored by Keep Texas Beautiful and the Texas Department of Transportation and is also the signature litter prevention event of the Great American Cleanup™. For more information, visit <[www.ktb.org/programs/trashoff/index.html](http://www.ktb.org/programs/trashoff/index.html)>.

## Highlighting a Recent TCEQ Publication

**Guidelines for Operation and Maintenance of Dams in Texas**, (GI-357). Especially for dam owners, this manual covers not only the mechanics of dam safety, but also the broader legal and societal issues involved. To view a copy before ordering, visit <[www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm\\_exec/forms\\_pubs/pubs/gi/gi\\_357/gi-357.html](http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/gi/gi_357/gi-357.html)>.



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