

SUBJECT: Amending groundwater contamination notification procedures

COMMITTEE: Natural Resources — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — Harris, Ashby, Barry, C. Bell, Buckley, Gámez, J. Garcia, M. González, Zwiener

0 nays

4 absent — Martinez, Fairly, Romero, Villalobos

SENATE VOTE: On final passage (April 16) — 30 - 1

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Alexa Aragonéz, City of Houston; Christine Yanas, Methodist Healthcare Ministries; Cyrus Reed, Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter; Jennifer Allmon, Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops; Susan Stewart)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Water Code sec. 26.408 requires the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), no more than 30 days after it receives notice of groundwater contamination from a state agency or obtains independent knowledge of groundwater contamination, to make every effort to give notice of the contamination by first-class mail to each owner of a private drinking water well that may be affected by the contamination and to each applicable groundwater conservation district.

Some have suggested that TCEQ also should have the authority to provide notice of contamination by more direct means and to notify residents who may be impacted by known groundwater contamination.

DIGEST: SB 1663 would add to the entities to whom the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) was required to give notice of groundwater contamination under Water Code sec. 24.408, the residents of each residential address within one mile of the contamination site.

The bill also would specify that such notice would have to be given as soon as practicable and could be emailed, placed on the door of a residence, or provided through another effective delivery method.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2025.