

Rainwater Harvesting Evaluation Committee

The 79th Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 2430, which was signed by Governor Rick Perry on June 17, 2005, and became effective immediately. This bill required the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to establish a four member Rainwater Harvesting Evaluation Committee (Rainwater Committee) to study the feasibility of using rainwater as a source of water supply in the State.

The Rainwater Committee consists of a representative from each of the following agencies and association: Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and the Texas Section of the American Water Works Association's Conservation and Reuse Division (TX-AWWA). The representative from TWDB is designated to serve as Presiding Officer of the Rainwater Committee.

The Rainwater Committee is required to

- evaluate the potential for rainwater harvesting in the State, and recommend:
- minimum water quality guidelines and standards for potable and non-potable indoor uses of rainwater;
- treatment methods for potable and non-potable indoor uses of rainwater;
- ways in which rainwater harvesting systems can be used in conjunction with existing municipal water systems; and
- ways in which the state can further promote rainwater harvesting.

HB 2430 also requires amendment of Subchapter C, Chapter 341, Health and Safety Code by adding Section 341.042, requiring TCEQ to establish recommended standards for domestic use of rainwater. The bill also requires TCEQ to coordinate with the Rainwater Committee in developing and adopting the standards no later than December 1, 2006.

The Committee is required to provide a report to the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House of Representatives no later than December 1, 2006. The Rainwater Committee will be abolished January 1, 2007.

The Texas Water Development Board nominated Dr. Hari J. Krishna, P.E., a Senior Engineer in the TWDB Innovative Water Technologies Team, to be the TWDB representative (and Presiding Officer) on the Rainwater Committee. Dr. Krishna has many years of experience with rainwater harvesting systems, and is the founder of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association, a national organization

The following serve as members of the Rainwater Harvesting Evaluation Committee:

Dr. Hari J. Krishna (TWDB) - Chair
Tony Bennett (TCEQ)
Ken Ofunrein (DSHS), and
Nora Mullarkey (TX-AWWA)

The committee meets as a working group, on a monthly basis and will be developing a report to be submitted to the Texas Legislature later this year (2006).

The next meeting of the Rainwater Committee is scheduled to be held at TWDB (Room 513F) on March 10th, 2006 at 9:30 am. If you wish to attend the meeting or have any questions, about the committee's work, please contact Dr. Krishna at (512) 463-7932.