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AGENDA ITEM MEMO

BOARD MEETING DATE: December 16, 2025

TO: Board Members

THROUGH: Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator

FROM: Kathleen B. Ligon, Assistant Executive Administrator

SUBJECT: Implementation of legislation (SB 3) relating to outdoor warning sirens in flash flood-prone areas

ACTION REQUESTED

Briefing and discussion on the Executive Administrator's plan to implement Senate Bill (SB) 3. No action is requested.

BACKGROUND

During the second called session of the 89th Texas Legislature, the legislature passed [SB 3](#) relating to outdoor warning sirens in flash flood-prone areas. In response to the devastating flooding in July 2025 in Texas, the bill requires the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to identify areas within the counties included in the associated disaster declaration that have a history of consistent or severe flooding and warrant the installation of an outdoor warning siren. The TWDB may consider such factors as loss of human life to flooding and the existence of residences or other dwellings in making these determinations. Once these key areas are identified by the TWDB, the appropriate city or county must install, maintain, and operate one or more outdoor warning sirens in the identified area and may cooperate with another governmental entity to do so.

SB 3 requires the TWDB to adopt rules and procedures to implement the bill, including:

- Best management practices and guidance for the operation of an outdoor warning siren installed, maintained, or operated in a flash flood-prone area, including that an outdoor warning siren be equipped with a backup power source.

The bill also requires the Office of the Governor to establish and administer a grant program to assist municipalities, counties, and other governmental entities with the costs of installing outdoor warning sirens. In November 2025, the Office of the Governor delegated this responsibility to the TWDB.

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L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Chairwoman | W. Brady Franks, Board Member | Ashley Morgan, Board Member
Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator

Additionally, [SB 5](#), passed by the 89th Texas Legislature in the second called session, appropriated \$50 million from the economic stabilization fund to the Office of the Governor for the two-year period beginning September 18, 2025 (the effective date of the bill). Funding is for grants to assist counties, municipalities, or other local governments operating within certain counties (as provided by the governor's declaration of disaster on July 4, 2025) to install flood warning siren systems, including flood gages and all other components essential to the function of the system. A portion of the \$50 million will be used to support TWDB's administration of the program.

As required by SB 3, once related rules are effective, the TWDB may not approve financial assistance, other than financial assistance for an outdoor warning siren, for an identified county or municipality until the county or municipality certifies that it is in compliance.

KEY ISSUES

Staff are currently working to implement SB 3 with the expectation that grant funding will be available in early 2026. Given the expedited time frame, the implementation timeline includes both sequential and concurrent work by TWDB staff and contractors.

Major work components include:

1. Development of an interagency contract with the Office of the Governor to delegate the grant program, outline TWDB's responsibilities in administering the grant program, and transfer up to \$50 million appropriated by SB 5 from the Office of the Governor to the TWDB
2. Identification of flash flood-prone areas with a history of consistent or severe flooding that warrant an outdoor warning siren
3. Development of a best management practices and guidance document
4. Rulemaking related to tasks 2 and 3
5. Development and implementation of a grant program for outdoor warning sirens

Work completed to date includes:

- Execution of interagency contract with the Office of the Governor
- Survey targeting stakeholders with flood-related expertise within the 30-county area impacted by SB 3
- Implementation website, which includes a designated email address for questions, launched: [Senate Bill 3 | Texas Water Development Board](#)

Work in progress includes:

- Contracted work to support identification of flash flood-prone areas and development of best management practices and guidance
- Review and analysis of survey data

Tentative Timeline

- November 2025
 - Stakeholder survey closed November 21, 2025
- December 2025
 - TWDB's governing board considers authorizing the Executive Administrator to negotiate and execute contracts for SB 3 Outdoor Warning Siren Grants
- January 2026

- TWDB's governing board considers publication of rule proposal January 22, 2026.
 - If TWDB's governing board approves publication of rule proposal, 30-day public comment period tentatively scheduled to open February 6, 2026
 - EA publishes final best management practices and guidance by late January
- February/March 2026
 - If approved above, 30-day public comment period on proposed rules would close March 8, 2026
 - Board consideration of identification of flood prone areas in Board Meeting
- April 2026
 - Board consideration of rule adoption at April 2026 meeting; once rules are effective, the TWDB will not approve any financial assistance other than financial assistance for an outdoor warning siren for an identified county or municipality until the county or municipality certifies that it is in compliance with rule requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for briefing and discussion only.