



House Bill 29 Frequently Asked Questions

December 22, 2025

1. Who is impacted by House Bill 29?

A municipally owned utility that provides potable water through more than 150,000 service connections, as reflected on their most recent water loss audit, is subject to the requirements of House Bill 29. Based on the 2024 submitted water loss audits, six utilities are impacted:

- City of Austin
- City of El Paso
- City of Fort Worth
- City of Houston
- Dallas Water Utilities
- San Antonio Water System

2. What does House Bill 29 require of impacted utilities?

Impacted utilities must validate their annual water loss audits within 180 days of filing and develop water loss mitigation plans and submit them to the TWDB within one year of filing their audits. Also, by December 31, 2030, and every 10 years thereafter, impacted utilities must complete a more detailed validation of their most recent water loss audit.

3. Is the TWDB responsible for implementing and enforcing House Bill 29?

No, the TWDB is not tasked with the implementation and enforcement of the validation provisions of House Bill 29 and is not in the position to provide legal advice to utilities. Each utility is encouraged to consult its own legal counsel regarding implementation.

Water loss audit validation

1. When is the water loss audit validation due?

The water loss audit must be validated no later than 180 days after the audit is submitted to the TWDB.

2. Are the House Bill 29 requirements, including the required validation, applicable to the water loss audit submitted on May 1, 2025, or only those submitted after the effective date of May 29, 2025?

The TWDB interprets the language in House Bill 29 to apply only to audits filed after the effective date, beginning with the audits due by May 1, 2026. The TWDB is not tasked with enforcing these provisions or dictating when these validations must be completed. Each utility should consult its own legal counsel to determine how to comply with these provisions.

3. What level of validation should we perform?

The level of validation is not specified in House Bill 29, but the TWDB assumes Level 1 validation at a minimum as defined by the American Water Works Association.

4. Does the TWDB have a list of certified water loss audit validators?

The TWDB currently does not have a list of third-party validators.

5. Is there a list of certified water loss audit validators that can be found elsewhere?

The California-Nevada Section of the American Water Works Association (AWWA) has a list of individuals and companies with a water loss validator certification on its [website](#)—and the website has a tool to look up certified individuals and a list of consulting firms with one or more water loss validators.

6. Can TWDB staff conduct water loss audit validations required under House Bill 29?

No, TWDB staff cannot complete the required validation. House Bill 29 states that the validation “must follow Board validation guidelines and may not be conducted by a board staff member or the person who submitted the water audit.”

7. Can we use the validation completed by TWDB staff that was required to be considered for TWDB financial assistance?

House Bill 29 states that the validation “may not be conducted by a board staff member or the person who submitted the water audit.”

8. What rule requires a retail water utility to validate its water loss audit for the TWDB?

Texas Administrative Code § 358.6(b)5:

Effective January 1, 2025, a utility required to submit a water loss audit annually as described in paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection or that is applying for financial assistance will be required to have its most current water loss audit validated within three months of submittal or prior to consideration of a request for financial assistance from the board. The executive administrator will validate the submitted water loss audit in conference with the retail public utility.

Alternatively, the utility may elect to have the water loss audit validated by a person other than the executive administrator. Should a water loss audit be validated by a person other than the executive administrator's staff, validation must follow TWDB's validation guidelines and be performed by a person other than the person submitting the water loss audit, who has completed water loss audit validation training and is certified to conduct such validation.

9. What rules require a retail water utility to submit a water loss audit?

Texas Administrative Code § 358.6(b)1:

(1) Audit required annually. The utility must file the water loss audit with the executive administrator annually by May 1st if the utility: (A) has more than 3,300 connections; or (B) is receiving financial assistance from the board, regardless of the number of connections. A retail public utility is receiving financial assistance from the board if it has an outstanding loan, loan forgiveness agreement, or grant agreement from the board.

10. Can we request an extension to the 180-day deadline for completing a water loss audit validation as required by House Bill 29?

The TWDB does not have the authority to waive a due date set in statute.

11. Can a utility staff member that is using an industry standard certification conduct the water loss validation?

Yes, a utility staff member may conduct the validation if they complete the water loss audit validation training, obtain certification, and follow TWDB validation guidelines. However, the individual may not be the same person who prepared and submitted the water loss audit.

12. Will the TWDB publish water loss validation guidelines?

Yes, the TWDB will publish guidelines by the end of 2025.

Detailed water loss audit validation

1. When is the more detailed water loss audit validation due?

The detailed validation is due no later than December 31, 2030, and every 10 years thereafter.

2. Will the TWDB provide guidelines for the more detailed water loss audit validation?

House Bill 29 does not define requirements of a more detailed validation. The TWDB assumes this would be a level 2 or 3 water loss validation as defined by the American Water Works Association.

3. What is the purpose of the more detailed water loss audit validation?

The purpose is to determine whether the implementation of water leakage reduction strategies is appropriate and to investigate the accuracy of the utility's billing data.

4. Do utilities need to update their water loss mitigation plan after completing the detailed validation?

Yes, House Bill 29 requires updating the water loss mitigation plan accordingly and revising the utility's one-year, three-year, five-year, and ten-year goals.

5. Who should perform the detailed water loss audit validation?

A person who is experienced in performing level 2 and 3 water loss audit validations should complete the more detailed validation. A TWDB staff member or the person who completed and submitted the water loss audit cannot perform the detailed validation.

6. How should the detailed water loss audit validation be completed?

House Bill 29 requires that the detailed validation:

- includes recommendations from the utility's level 1 validation,
- includes consultation with the person who completed the level 1 validation, and
- be conducted in accordance with industry standards.

Water loss mitigation plans

1. When is the water loss mitigation plan due?

House Bill 29 requires the water loss mitigation plan to be submitted to the TWDB no later than the first anniversary of the date the water loss audit was filed.

2. Which agency enforces the water loss mitigation plan?

The TCEQ is charged with enforcing provisions related to water loss mitigation plans. Therefore, we recommend directing questions on mitigation plans to the TCEQ. The TWDB is not tasked with enforcing these provisions or determining when plans must be completed.

3. What information should be included in the water loss mitigation plan?

House Bill 29 requires the mitigation plan to include

- (1) one-year, three-year, five-year, and ten-year goals for water loss mitigation;
- (2) descriptions of water loss mitigation projects or programs designed to meet those goals;
- (3) estimated financial savings from the implementation of the identified projects or programs;
- (4) estimated water savings from the implementation of the identified projects or programs; and
- (5) cost estimates for implementing each identified project or program.

4. Do you have an example of a water loss mitigation plan to use for reference?

The TWDB does not have examples of mitigation plans since this is a new requirement.

5. Are updates to the water loss mitigation plan required annually?

The new [Texas Water Code § 16.0122\(c\)](#) requires submittal of a water loss mitigation plan by the first anniversary of each annual water loss audit submittal. This requirement does not necessitate an update to the mitigation plan each year if nothing has changed.

6. How are water conservation plans and annual reports affected?

The water loss mitigation plan must be incorporated into the utility's most recent water conservation plan no later than the first anniversary of the date the mitigation plan is completed. The utility also needs to report on the utility's progress in implementing the mitigation plan in the water conservation annual report.

7. What happens if a utility does not develop and submit a water loss mitigation plan to the TWDB?

The TCEQ will assess an administrative penalty of \$25,000. For questions regarding the penalty or its application, please contact the TCEQ.

Contact Information

1. Who do I contact at the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for questions on House Bill 29?

Please contact Erika Mancha, Director of Conservation and Innovative Water Technologies, at 512-463-7932 or Erika.mancha@twdb.texas.gov.

2. Who do I contact at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for questions on House Bill 29?

Please contact Jade Rutledge, Special Assistant of the Water Availability Division, at 513-239-4559 or jade.rutledge@tceq.texas.gov.

About the TWDB

The mission of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is to lead the state's efforts in ensuring a secure water future for Texas. The TWDB's main responsibilities are collecting and disseminating water-related data; assisting with regional water supply and flood planning that contributes to preparing the state water plan and state flood plan; and administering cost-effective financial assistance programs for constructing water supply, wastewater treatment, flood control, and agricultural water conservation projects.

Since 1957, the TWDB has been charged with addressing the state's water needs. The TWDB works to ensure Texans have access to sufficient, clean, and affordable water supplies that foster a healthy economy and environment.