



Legislative UPDATE

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TxDOT Collecting Data on Voluntary Turnback Program

In 2014, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) proposed the “Turnback Program,” which was designed as a way for TxDOT to “turnback” maintenance of certain non-controlled-access state highways to certain cities on a voluntary basis. Several articles on the program frequented the pages of the *Legislative Update* during that time, as cities feared at the outset that the program would be mandatory. Ultimately, the League, the Association of Texas Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and TxDOT agreed in writing that Turnback was to proceed on a voluntary basis. More on that agreement, including the text of the agreement itself, can be accessed [here](#).

When the Texas legislature passed its budget in the 2015 legislative session, it included a provision in the budget bill that required TxDOT to include information on the Turnback program in its biennial report. The budget provision on the Turnback performance report reads as follows:

Performance Reporting for the Voluntary Turnback Program. Out of funds appropriated above, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) shall report on a biennial basis the following information to the Legislative Budget Board and the Office of the Governor no later than December 1, 2016: (1) the number of communities participating in the voluntary road turnback program; (2) a list of roads transferred to local governments; (3) the number of lane miles transferred to local governments; (4) information on the amount of maintenance funds made available associated with the transferred roads; (5) a list of maintenance projects on which the newly available funds are being spent; and (6) a list of the state's most eligible roads with potential for transfer. TxDOT should

use this data to evaluate the turnback program and include recommendations to enhance the program in its biennial report.

The League understands that TxDOT is currently in the process of contacting cities to gather the information needed to comply with the reporting requirement. Cities that voluntarily participated in the Turnback program should expect to be contacted by TxDOT on the matter.

The League will provide an update on the Turnback program when the TxDOT report is made available.

Free Webinar on Accidental Discharge Reporting

The Water Environment Association of Texas is conducting a free webinar Wednesday, Oct 26, 2016, from noon to 1 PM CDT on the recently approved volume-based exemption from the 24-hour reporting requirement for certain accidental wastewater discharges. The exemption is for any single, accidental discharge or spill of treated or untreated domestic wastewater that occurs at a wastewater treatment or collection system owned or operated by a city. These discharges or spills can now be reported to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality monthly, as a “summary,” if certain conditions are met.

Topics to be covered in the [webinar](#) include:

- how and when to use the new reporting rule,
- determining the eligibility criteria,
- learning the acceptable spill calculation methods, and
- understanding what information will be required on the new [Accidental Discharge or Spill Monthly Summary Form](#) (TCEQ-20756).

To register for the webinar, please go to the [Water Environment Association of Texas](#) website or visit [gotowebinar registration](#).

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