



Our mission is to serve Texas by our stewardship of natural resources and the environment, our concern for personal and community safety, and our support of enhanced development and economic vitality for the benefit of Texans.

RRC Wildfire Response

Preparations Helped Oil & Gas Industry Get Through Dangerous Panhandle Wildfires

During the week of March 18th the Texas Forest Service announced that the dangerous wildfires in the Texas Panhandle were 100% contained, thanks to the tireless efforts of state and local emergency crews.

Throughout the dangerous situation the RRC and operators worked to ensure community safety and to make sure there were no major disruptions to oil & gas production in the impacted area.

Many operators in the Panhandle took precautions to protect oil and gas leases from fire threats. That diligence includes mowing grass and treating weeds to keep flammable materials secure and away from production assets.

The RRC released a public statement about activating the RRC safety team to respond to the Panhandle wildfires, and sent a **notice to operators** during the wildfires threat advising them to exercise precaution and take the necessary actions to prepare their operations for potential impacts.

The dangerous wildfires were the most recent example of how the RRC, in any given emergency, will act early and work with operators to protect the public and the environment, and minimize potential disruptions to production.

RRC Adopts New Rule for Energy Conservation Programs

RRC commissioners voted to adopt a new rule, **16 TAC §7.480**, at their March open meeting, which allows natural gas distribution companies to offer energy conservation programs to their customers for rebates, discounts, or incentives. The rule was proposed after House Bill 2263 was passed during the 88th Texas Legislative Session, which allows local distribution companies to submit plans for energy conservation programs to the Commission for approval.

Local gas distribution companies will then be allowed to recover the costs prudently incurred for

putting these energy efficiency programs in place. Energy-saving light bulbs and smart thermostats are examples of some of the ways everyday household items can perform many of the same functions using less energy.

Rule TAC §7.480 provides a framework for natural gas energy conservation programs across the state to encourage Texans to participate in energy efficiency efforts. Natural gas distribution companies can begin submitting applications on April 8, 2024.

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