

THE EAGLE LAKE HEADLIGHT

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State To Give Tax Credit In '08

AUSTIN — About 370,000 employers in Texas will receive an estimated \$170 million in surplus state tax credits next year, Gov. Rick Perry said.

A strong Texas economy pushed the state Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund to a \$376.7 million surplus, Perry announced Oct. 9.

For the second year in a row the trust fund's ceiling has been exceeded, enabling the state to return excess taxes back to employers, Perry said.

Eligible Texas employers filing quarterly unemployment tax reports will receive a tax credit beginning with their first quarter 2008 tax return.

To receive the credit, employers must meet eligibility requirements, including having payroll during 2007 and having paid all taxes due.

Report details water pollution

Goals of the federal Clean Water Act of 1972 are to eliminate discharge of pollutants into waterways and make those waterways safe for swimming and fishing.

But in 2005, more than 53 percent of industrial and municipal facilities across the state discharged more pollution into waterways than their Clean Water Act permits allow.

That statistic comes from "Troubled Waters: An Analysis of Clean Water Compliance," a new report released Oct. 11 by Environment Texas, an Austin-based non-profit.

"As the Clean Water Act turns 35, polluters continue to foul our rivers, lakes and streams," said Brad Hicks of Environment Texas. "With so many facilities dumping so much pollution, no one should be surprised that more than half of Texas waterways are unsafe for swimming and fishing. But we should be outraged." Environment Texas used the

federal Freedom of Information Act to obtain data on facilities' compliance with the Clean Water Act between Jan. 1 and Dec. 31, 2005. Environment Texas researchers found that:

- Texas had 318 facilities, more than any other state, report exceedances of their Clean Water Act permits. These facilities reported a total of 1,340 exceedances.

- Facilities in Texas often exceeded their Clean Water Act permits by extraordinary amounts. On average, facilities exceeding their permits did so by 143 percent, nearly 2.5 times the legal limit.

- Polluters in Texas reported 64 instances in which they exceeded their Clean Water Act permit by at least 500 percent over the legal limit.

"Over the last three and a half decades, this landmark environmental law has made significant improvements in water quality, but the original goals have yet to be met," according to Environment Texas.

Investor group purchases TXU

Dallas-based TXU Corp. on Oct. 11 announced its merger

agreement with Texas Energy Future Holdings Limited Partnership, a group of private investors who reportedly paid \$32 billion.

The power company is now doing business as Energy Future Holdings Corp. Shares of TXU common stock ceased trading at the close of the market Oct. 10 and will be delisted.

Plans are in place for retail residential customers to receive rate reductions.

Donald L. Evans of Midland, who served as U.S. secretary of commerce for four years under President George W. Bush, has been named non-executive chairman of EFHC.

Complaint filed against judge

Twenty attorneys from different areas of Texas filed an official complaint with the State Commission on Judicial Conduct, requesting that it investigate Sharon Keller, the presiding judge of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

At issue is the judge's decision not to keep courthouse doors open past 5 p.m. so that attorneys could file an emergency request to stay the Sept. 25 execution of Texas death row inmate Michael

TEXAS PRESS ASSOCIATION

State Capital



HIGHLIGHTS
By Ed Sterling

Richard.

Coffer totals more than expected

On Aug. 31, the last day of fiscal year 2007, Texas had more money in its treasury than expected.

Comptroller Susan Combs reported the state had \$8.5 billion, \$1.5 billion more revenue than she had projected.

She attributed this to an increase of almost 11 percent for the year in state sales and use tax collections.

The \$1.5 billion may sound like a lot, but it represents only 1 percent of the state's \$152 billion budget for fiscal years 2008 and 2009.

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Buffet Tuesdays and Thursdays
11 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Hours:
Mon.-Thurs.: 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.
Fri. and Sat.: 8 a.m. to 9:15 p.m.
Sunday: 7:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Reader Discusses Merits Of Water District

Dear Editor,
Some of our citizens in Colorado County believe our groundwater conservation district (GCD) should have rules that prohibit the transportation of groundwater to areas outside of the county. Prohibiting transportation of groundwater would protect some people, but it would violate the rights of others.

Texas law gives landowners the right to harvest and sell their resources. Some of the resources a landowner may sell include timber, gravel, oil, and groundwater. The resources a landowner sells may be transported out of the county, and moved to other areas in Texas. The State honors the landowner's right to harvest his

resources for a profit.

Harvesting groundwater can cause problems for the landowner's neighbors. Currently the "rule of capture" says the landowner can remove as much groundwater as he can without any consequence for harm caused to his neighbor, as long as he does not do so maliciously, or wastefully.

The State recognized problems are associated with "the rule of capture", and in 1949 gave Texans the means to modify the law with groundwater conservation districts. Under Texas law, a GCD has the authority to set limits on the amount of water removed by a landowner when it is determined that water removal will cause

harm to the neighbors. The GCD is the only entity in Texas that has the authority to set limits in order to protect others.

The GCD cannot, by law, prohibit transportation of water out of the district. Remember, this is the landowners right. But the GCD can set limits to protect neighboring landowners, including placing limits on the amount of water taken out of the county.

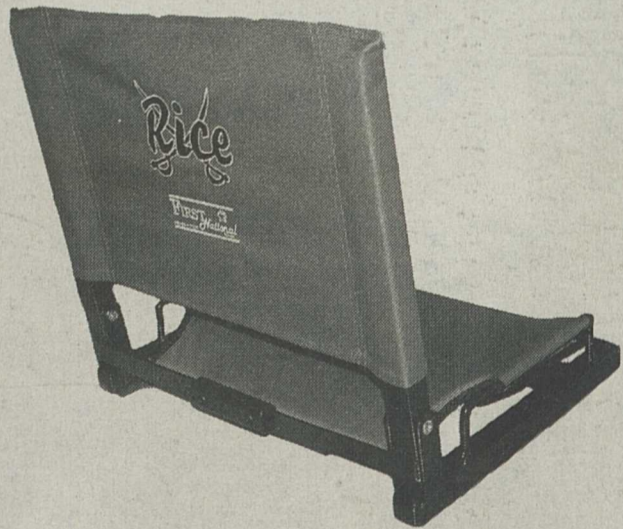
A GCD will provide a means to limit the amount of water transported out of our county, and a means to protect the groundwater resources of our landowners.

Marian Schonenberg,
Secretary
Colorado County GCD

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Enter First National Bank's Friday Give Away!

The winner will receive a Rice Raider stadium seat.



One winner every Friday
Entries Now Being Accepted
Drawings will be held weekly during the Rice Raider football season.

Drawing will be held at 3:00 p.m.
Ask your friendly teller for an entry ballot.
(need not be present to win; no transaction necessary to enter)
FNB employees and immediate family are not eligible to enter.

Colorado County Sheriff's Report

The Colorado County Sheriff's office reported the following activities from September 14 through September 27.

Friday, September 14

At 12:45 pm, Deputy Pflughaupt responded to CR 273 in reference to a Theft of electronic surveying equipment. A report was filed and the case is pending further information.

At 11:00 pm, Sgt. Girndt responded to CR 250 near Weimar in reference to mailbox damage. A report was filed and the case is pending further information on possible suspect(s).

Saturday, September 15

At 9:18 am, Deputy Craneck responded to a residence on Hattermann Lane in reference to a Burglary. During the investigation, evidence was collected and several suspect(s) are being evaluated. Case is pending analysis of evidence at the DPS crime laboratory.

At 4:50 pm, Deputy Savino spoke with a complainant in reference to a suspicious phone call. After further investigation, the incident was unfounded. Case closed.

At 7:16 pm, Deputy Slubar responded to a residence in Garwood in reference to a possible burglary. It was later determined that someone entered the residence, but nothing was taken. A report was filed and the case is pending further information.

Sunday, September 16

At 12:08 am, Deputy Slubar responded to Hwy 71 and CR 101 south of Columbus in reference to a subject passed out in a truck. On arrival, the subject was located and determined to be intoxicated. After further investigation, Anthony Ray Shelton, 45 of El Campo, was arrested for Public Intoxication. Case closed.

At 3:10 am, Deputy Thumann responded to the Weimar PD in reference to a disturbance that

occurred in front of Brasher Motor Company. After further investigation, the case was referred to the Weimar PD for further action. Case closed.

At 3:27 am, Deputy Slubar responded to Denny's in Columbus in reference to a subject pulling a gun on a female. After further investigation, a warrant was obtained and Lear Benjamin Hewitt Jr., 48 of Columbus, was arrested for Aggravated Assault. Case closed.

At 10:30 am, Deputy Mieth responded to CR 215 near Weimar in reference to a seismic crew trespassing on private property. After further investigation, the matter was resolved at the scene and no charges were filed. Case closed.

At 1:25 pm, Deputy Craneck spoke with a complainant from Rock Island over the phone in reference to a child custody matter. A report was filed and the case is closed. Case closed.

At 12:28 pm, Deputy Savino and Deputy Mieth responded to a train pedestrian accident on Hwy 90 between Connor's Crossing and FM 806 in Columbus. The body of an unknown male subject was located on the tracks and later sent to the Travis County Medical Examiner's Office for an Autopsy. The body was identified by fingerprints as Matias Perez Flores, of Mexico, and next of kin was eventually located with the assistance of the Mexican Consulate. Case is still pending results of the Autopsy regarding the cause and manner of death.

Monday, September 17

At 9:15 am, Deputy Craneck responded to FM 1693 in reference to a stolen trailer. The missing trailer was entered into the state and national database as stolen. Case is pending development of suspects and recovery.

At 10:40 am, Deputy Mieth conducted a traffic stop on IH-10 near

the 686 mile marker. After further investigation, David Leonicio Perez, 44 of Homestead Florida, was arrested for Driving While License Invalid. Case closed.

At 11:30 pm, Deputy Thumann conducted a traffic stop on Alleyton Road near Hwy 90 east of Columbus. After further investigation, Katina Montrice Evans, 27 of Alleyton, was arrested for Disregarding a Stop Sign, No Driver's License, Expired Registration, and an outstanding warrant for Child Non-Support. Case closed.

Wednesday, September 19

At 7:00 am, Deputy Pflughaupt responded to Schobel Road in reference to a property dispute. After further investigation, the matter was resolved at the scene. Case closed.

At 8:30 am, Deputy Pflughaupt responded to the Cedar Crest Subdivision in New Ulm in reference to Criminal Mischief. The incident was later determined to be a civil matter. Case is closed.

At 8:00 pm, Sgt. Girndt responded to a residence in Sheridan in reference to a disturbance. After further investigation, the disturbance was determined to be a verbal argument. Case closed.

Thursday, September 20

At 7:58 am, Deputy Argo responded to Rice High School in reference to a disruptive student. After further investigation, one Juvenile was detained and issued a citation for Disruption of Classes. Case closed.

At 1:21 pm, Deputy Pflughaupt responded to a residence on FM 2144 in reference to a burglary. On arrival, the information was taken and evidence was collected. The case is pending evaluation of possible suspect(s) and the analysis of evidence at the DPS crime laboratory.

Friday, September 21

At 3:33 pm, Deputy Hudson responded to IH-10 near the 694

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