

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.

Spotlight on Produced Water

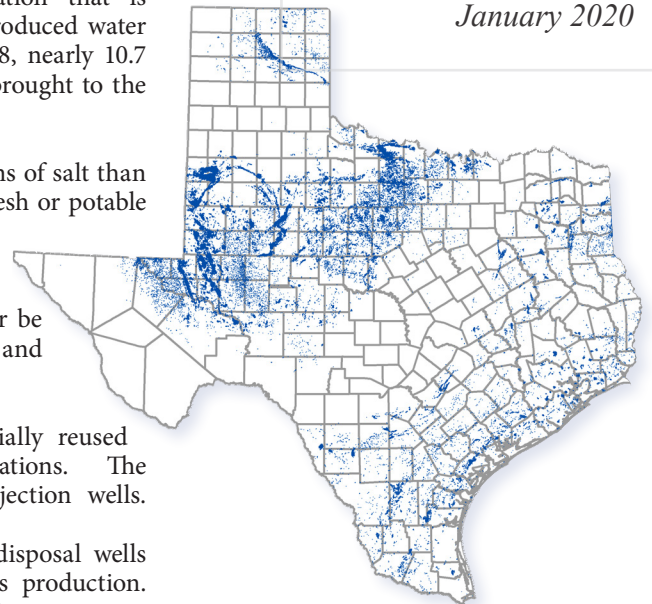
Produced water is water from an underground hydrocarbon formation that is brought to the surface during oil and gas production. The amount of produced water generated each year tracks Texas' oil and gas production trends. In 2018, nearly 10.7 billion barrels of produced water – equal to 1.3 million acre feet -- were brought to the surface according to Railroad Commission estimates.

Most produced water is highly saline, sometimes with higher concentrations of salt than seawater. Given the high salinity of produced water, it is not considered fresh or potable water. While oil and gas production does generate produced water, the mining industries including oil, gas, coal and other materials, rely on approximately 2% of the state's fresh water supply according to the 2017 State Water Plan. Railroad Commission rules require that produced water be either disposed or recycled in order to protect Texas' fresh water resources and the environment.

Currently, approximately 46% of the state's produced water is beneficially reused for enhanced recovery, well drilling, and hydraulic fracturing operations. The remaining 54% is injected underground for disposal in permitted injection wells.

As of January 2020, there are 32,991 active oil and gas injection and disposal wells in Texas. These wells are located primarily in areas with oil and gas production. All underground injection and disposal wells are permitted by the Railroad Commission to ensure the protection of fresh groundwater resources.

*Permitted Injection Wells
January 2020*



Produced Water, Natural Gas, & Oil Production Trends: 2014-2018

