

By: Canales

H.B. No. 4373

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to the procedure by which a regional water planning group
3 is required to provide notice of certain public meetings or
4 hearings.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Section 16.053(h)(3), Water Code, is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (3) After the regional water plan is initially
9 prepared, the regional water planning group shall, after notice,
10 hold at least one public hearing at some central location readily
11 accessible to the public within the regional water planning area.
12 The group shall make copies of the plan available for public
13 inspection at least one month before the hearing on the group's
14 Internet website [~~by providing a copy of the plan in the county~~
15 ~~courthouse and at least one public library of each county having~~
16 ~~land in the region~~]. Notice for the hearing shall include the
17 address of the website [~~a listing of these~~] and any other location
18 where the plan is available for review. The group shall consider and
19 accommodate residents of the regional water planning area who may
20 need assistance accessing the plan because of a lack of access to
21 Internet services.

22 SECTION 2. Section 16.053(h)(8), Water Code, is amended to
23 read as follows:

24 (8) Notice required by Subdivision (1), (3), or (6) of

1 this subsection may be provided by additional electronic means,
2 including direct e-mail, and must be~~[-~~

3 (A) posted on the regional water planning group's
4 website ~~[published once in a newspaper of general circulation in~~
5 ~~each county located in whole or in part in the regional water~~
6 ~~planning area before the 30th day preceding the date of the public~~
7 ~~meeting or hearing]; [and]~~

8 (B) mailed to:

9 (i) each mayor of a municipality with a
10 population of 1,000 or more that is located in whole or in part in
11 the regional water planning area;

12 (ii) each county judge of a county located
13 in whole or in part in the regional water planning area;

14 (iii) each special or general law district
15 or river authority with responsibility to manage or supply water in
16 the regional water planning area;

17 (iv) each retail public utility that:

18 (a) serves any part of the regional
19 water planning area; or

20 (b) receives water from the regional
21 water planning area; and

22 (v) each holder of record of a permit,
23 certified filing, or certificate of adjudication for the use of
24 surface water the diversion of which occurs in the regional water
25 planning area; and~~[-]~~

26 (C) the regional water planning group shall
27 consider and accommodate residents of the regional water planning

1 area who may need assistance accessing notice published by
2 electronic means because of a lack of access to Internet services,
3 particularly when there is a heightened interest in or response to
4 public notice or comment.

5 SECTION 3. Section 16.053(h)(9), Water Code, is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (9) Notice provided [~~published~~] or mailed under
8 Subdivision (8) of this subsection must contain:

9 (A) the date, time, and location of the public
10 meeting or hearing;

11 (B) a summary of the proposed action to be taken;

12 (C) the name, telephone number, and address of
13 the person to whom questions or requests for additional information
14 may be submitted; and

15 (D) information on how the public may submit
16 comments.

17 SECTION 4. The change in law made by this Act applies only
18 to a notice required to be given on or after the effective date of
19 this Act. A notice required to be given before the effective date of
20 this Act is governed by the law in effect at the time the notice is
21 given, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

22 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.