

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1663
By: Zaffirini
Natural Resources
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Under current law, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is required to notify private drinking water well owners that may be affected and applicable groundwater conservation districts of known groundwater contamination by first class mail. In its report to the 89th Texas Legislature, the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) recommended that the legislature provide for such notice to be given by any direct means. Additionally, the bill sponsor has informed the house committee that the TCEQ does not have the authority to directly notify residents of the surrounding community who may also be impacted but that the TCEQ instead reports contamination findings to the legislature biennially, delaying public awareness and response. S.B. 1663 seeks to implement the TGPC recommendation and provide for notification to residents of each residential address within one mile of the site of the contamination to allow affected residents to take necessary precautions to protect themselves and their families from contaminated water sources as quickly as possible.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1663 amends the Water Code to revise as follows the requirement for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), by a certain deadline after the TCEQ receives applicable state agency notice of groundwater contamination or obtains independent knowledge of groundwater contamination, to make every effort to give notice of the contamination by first class mail to each owner of a private drinking water well that may be affected by the contamination and to each applicable groundwater conservation district:

- change the deadline from not later than the 30th day after the date the TCEQ receives the notice or obtains the independent knowledge to as soon as practicable but not later than that 30th day;
- provide the options for notice to be given by e-mail, notice placed on the door of a residence, or another effective delivery method as alternatives to first class mail; and
- include among the recipients of the notice the residents of each residential address within one mile of the site of the contamination.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.