

2013: Texas Leads the Way...

Rick Perry, Governor of the State of Texas

My fellow Texans, our economy is growing.

Carlos Rubinstein, TCEQ Commissioner

We've worked very hard at making Texas very attractive.

Rick Perry

We embrace a "can do" culture.

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., TCEQ Chairman

We basically aren't choosing between a strong economy or a strong environment.

Toby Baker, Commissioner, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Balance allows for new opportunities, but at the same time, it allows for people to have clean air and clean water and get out and enjoy the outdoors.

Rick Perry

We lowered Ozone levels by 23 percent between 2000 and 2011. We are a testament to the power of freedom; to the entrepreneurial spirit unleashed from government interference.

Michael Honeycutt, Ph. D., Director, TCEQ Toxicology Division

The TCEQ has the largest ambient air monitoring network in the county. We collect over seven million data points a year, and we look at that data continually, and we're always seeing improvements. The monitors that we're putting in, especially up in the Barnett Shale, take an air sample every hour. And we monitor it 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Bryan W. Shaw

We also see that on our non-vehicle emissions, of NOx for example, we've had about a 60 percent reduction in the last ten years.

Toby Baker

We are probably the leaders in the United States in infrared technology; taking cameras in and being able to pin-point emissions right at their source.

Kelly Keel, Area Director, TCEQ, Office of Compliance and Enforcement

We have 12 cameras in operation statewide right now. I don't know of any other state that is using this technology as extensively as Texas.

Carlos Rubinstein

Repeatedly, Texas comes up as a model of how to do things right. We got several requests from other states to come to their state to show them how it is that we're using that new technology and the latest one that we went to was Puerto Rico.

Toby Baker

We have some really innovative programs. One is TERP and that is where we go in and replace old diesel engines with new ones through a grant process.

Michael Honeycutt

This program retrofits older diesel buses. That improves the air quality right around the bus and inside the bus. The great example of a program that impacts the lives of people directly, especially children.

Carlos Rubinstein

No matter how you measure it, air quality has vastly improved in Texas, even while we've had all this growth.

Bryan W. Shaw

And part of what we've seen on top of that increased growth of the number of Texans coming in is we've also seen unprecedented drought.

Ramiro Garcia, Deputy Director, TCEQ, Office of Compliance and Enforcement

Working with our local, state, and federal partners, we looked at how we can improve our response; provide that rapid response to different disasters or one large-scale disaster. So what we did is we rolled out the Disaster Response Strike Team Concept. And that's comprised of multiple teams located throughout the state. That gives us the ability to mobilize equipment and people quickly to either a large-scale disaster or even multiple disasters.

Toby Baker

We also have what amounts to a small army that goes out and helps protect the environment. We have 16 regional offices. We have over 2,700 employees.

Ramiro Garcia

They go out and do literally thousands of investigations each year at facilities to ensure compliance with environmental regulations.

Carlos Rubinstein

So we're going to have a regulatory structure where we have measureable environmental benefits at the end, but it's also predictable. It's not something that we change all the time.

Bryan W. Shaw

Forbes.com and CNBC has named Texas as the number one business economy in the US.

Toby Baker

When companies like Apple are looking to expand in a place like Texas, you know that quality of life is part of that decision.

Carlos Rubinstein

Because of the model that we've established...

Bryan W. Shaw

Being innovative, allowing for flexibility, and working to find real environmental solutions...

Carlos Rubinstein

...you can't help but be bullish on the future of Texas.

Rick Perry

We stand as a national example that hard work can breed success. Thank you. God bless you, and through you, may God continue to bless the great state of Texas.