How HB 4618 Affects People in the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District

Q: What is HB 4618?

A: HB 4618 is a bill created to improve the Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District's ability to measure water use, protect water quality, clarify the definition of a Connection Fee, and give the District the authorization and ability to shift the District's funding from a growth or development-based connection fee system to a production rate system. It also updates how Director terms shall be staggered following census.

Q: Why is HB 4618 necessary?

A: The Legislature created the District to protect water wells and groundwater in Western Hays County. Only the Legislature has the authority to change District statute.

Q: I own a private well that supplies my household needs. Does HB 4618 restrict my usage or cost me money?

A: No. HB 4618 would have no effect on domestic water wells. It would allow the District to maintain operations when development slows.

Q: Will HB 4618 require a meter or reporting on my residential well?

A: No. HB 4618 does not affect residential wells in any way.

Q: Will HB 4618 raise my property taxes?

A: No. The District has no authority to assess or charge property taxes.

Q: How will HB 4618 affect well drillers?

A: HB 4618 does not change existing drilling rules or restrict drilling activity. It does allow the District to strengthen its well construction standards to meet modern guidelines that protect water quality.

Q: My business has a permit. How will HB 4618 affect permittees?

A: Once the District adopts updated rules regarding fees, the permit could be assigned a maximum fee of $0.25/1000 gallons. The median permit size in the District is 652,000 gallons/year which would result in a $163 per year assessment for the entire permitted volume.

Q: My water is supplied by a utility that uses groundwater. How will HB 4618 affect my water bill?

A: Your utility would be assessed a maximum fee of $0.25/1000 gallons. The average household uses 10 thousand gallons a month and would expect to see a $2.50 per month increase in their bill if the fee were passed through directly by the utility based on the number of gallons used per household.

Q: I own an agricultural business that relies on groundwater. How will HB 4618 affect my irrigation requirements?

A: HB 4618 will not restrict usage or require a fee. It would require that all agriculture irrigation wells register, install a meter, and report usage for data gathering purposes. The District wants to accurately account groundwater based agricultural irrigation in the calculation of total groundwater used within the District to protect the agricultural irrigation use as additional withdrawal of groundwater stresses the limited groundwater resources in the District.

Q: How does HB 4618 change the formula for assessing new construction Connection Fees?

A: HB 4618 requires fee assessment by meter size rather than by the number of units of new buildings that will use groundwater. This change brings the District into alignment with utility fee standards.

Q: How does HB 4618 protect my long-term water supply?

A: The Hays Trinity Groundwater Conservation District is the only entity with the mandate to protect your families' personal, business, and agricultural water wells.

Q: How does the District work towards these goals?

A: The District tracks, evaluates and manages multiple programs to protect the aquifer and its uses including programs to:

Sound Policy depends on Good Data:

- Register all groundwater wells
- Register all groundwater-based utility connections
- Develop and maintain over 40 monitor wells tracking aquifer levels
- Measure streamflow and well depth fluctuations to inform drought response
- Sample water quality
- Assessment of wastewater permits that could threaten or pollute the aquifer

Develop Accurate and Relevant Science for Current Conditions:

- Create and interpret groundwater mass balance models
- Create maps of springs and recharge features
- Create maps of aquifer faulting and flow paths
- Create aquifer stratigraphic maps and charts
- Test and sample distressed wells
- Identify critical depletion zones

Protect Groundwater Resources through Management:

- Regulate commercial pumping by permit
- Protect the Desired Future Condition of the aquifer to minimize drawdown levels across the District to 19 feet or less, currently
- Measure aquifer production and recharge
- Prevent waste of groundwater
- Declare drought stages to protect aquifer against overdraft

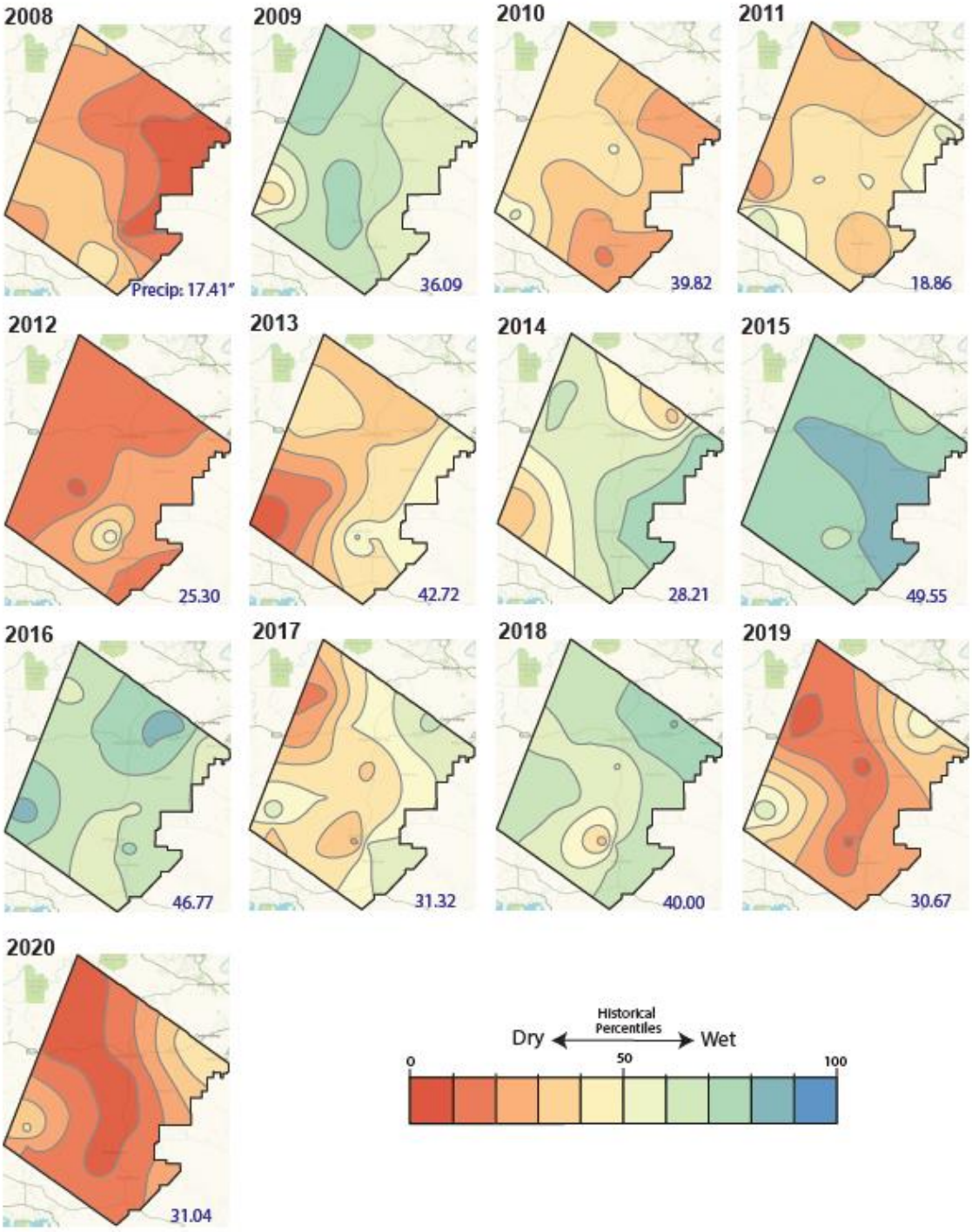
Education:

- Assemble best management practices for water use and conservation
- Alert community to potential and real contamination sources
- Identify and encourage the use of alternate water sources
- Promote artificial recharge
- Provide well information to public and well drillers
- Provide hydrogeologic information to well drillers
- Stakeholder Interaction

Visit our website at Haysgroundwater.com and @HaysTrinity on Facebook

Contact: erin.zwiener@house.texas.gov; donna.campbell@senate.state.tx.us

Middle Trinity Historical Percentiles
2008 - 2020



Middle Trinity Historical Percentiles
April, 2020 - March 2021