



June 12, 2023

Ms. Gwen Ricco
Office of Legal Services, MC-205
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

Re: Non-Rule Project No. **2022-033-OTH-NR**

Dear Ms. Ricco:

The Texas Concrete Pipe Association (TCPA) respectfully submits the following comments to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for the proposed amendments to the Air Quality Standard Permit for Concrete Batch Plants in Non-Rule Project No. 2022-033-OTH-NR.

TCPA is a statewide trade organization serving as the voice for the concrete pipe, box culvert, and precast concrete industries in Texas. TCPA plays a vital role in promoting a resilient, modern, and sustainable infrastructure system for all Texans. Our member companies manufacture a variety of precast products including reinforced concrete pipe, box culverts, manholes, inlets, and other precast drainage structures. Their operations often include concrete batch plants and must routinely obtain permits from TCEQ across all environmental media. Accordingly, TCPA members will be affected by the proposed amendments.

Our members who operate concrete batch plants typically receive authorization under the Standard Permit for Specialty Concrete Batch Plants. However, our facilities are much different than typical concrete batch plants. The majority of typical concrete batch plants are considered “truck readymix plants,” which are also called transit-mix or dry batch, where the ingredients (sand, aggregate, and cement) are dry-batched directly into mixer trucks where water is then added, and the concrete is mixed in the truck on the way to projects offsite where the concrete will be poured. Alternatively, other concrete batch plants are considered “central mix plants,” which are also called pre-mix or wet batch, where the concrete is mixed onsite at the plant in a central mixer before it is wet-batched into transport trucks for delivery to projects.

However, our facilities are not typical truck readymix plants nor typical central mix plants. Our state-of-the-art facilities manufacture precast products in a factory setting which features all mixing, batching, and production indoors utilizing stationary mixers to produce wet concrete which doesn’t leave the site. The wet concrete is poured into molds and forms onsite of different shapes and sizes where it cures and hardens to make a variety of solid products. Precast concrete products are produced in a controlled environment, providing high quality and uniformity, by eliminating variables such as temperature and humidity. Our facilities are permanent in nature which include stationary equipment that is not designed to be moved or repositioned. Our sites are often very large (tens to hundreds of acres) to accommodate the manufacturing building which is climate-controlled and usually centrally located in the middle of the site, as well as the yard space for storage of finished precast products which can be very large in size for bulky boxes, blocks, long pipes, bridge beams, etc. For these reasons, any impacts to surrounding neighbors at our sites are minimal.

Regarding the proposed amendments, TCPA supports the TCEQ conducting an updated Air Quality Analysis (AQA) to address public concern about potential health impacts from concrete batch plants registered under the Standard Permit. Based on this AQA, TCEQ has proposed new limitations for Specialty plants in Section (9), but the site-wide limits of 30 yd³/hour and 131,400 yd³/year can often be problematic for TCPA members. Our facilities can consist of multiple indoor mixers which are automated for different production lines depending on the desired product.

We respectfully request to add another option for increased site-wide production at 60 yd³/hour and 262,800 yd³/year with a doubled distance of 200 feet from any property line as long as the plant is located indoors. These production rates would allow our members to operate with additional capacity in their facilities which conduct their operations differently than typical plants as previously stated above. For the associated protectiveness review, we support the TCEQ's use of EPA's emission factors for central mix along with 90% control for full enclosure of the plant. These increased production rates would come with increased control and increased distances which TCPA fully supports.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide comments. If you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact me by email (ptarlton@concretepipe.org) or by phone (512-217-0456).

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Tarlton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Patrick" on the top line and "Tarlton" on the bottom line.

Texas Concrete Pipe Association
Executive Director