

How Do the Underground Injection Control Regulations Protect Groundwater?

The Underground Injection Control (UIC) program protects Underground Sources of Drinking Water (USDWs) from endangerment by setting minimum geologic and engineering requirements for injection wells. These requirements vary according to the well class (Class I – VI). All injection wells must be authorized and permitted under either general rules or with additional specific permit conditions. Well owners and operators may not site, construct, operate, maintain, convert, plug, abandon, or conduct any other injection activity that endangers Underground Sources of Drinking Water (USDWs). The purpose of the UIC requirements is to:

- Ensure that injected fluids stay within the well and the intended/permitted injection zone.
- Mandate that fluids that are directly or indirectly injected into a USDW do not endanger USDWs or otherwise adversely affect public health and safety.

Resources and Useful Links

- For RRC Injection and Disposal Wells Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), go to <https://www.rrc.texas.gov/about-us/faqs/oil-gas-faq/injection-and-disposal-wells-faqs/>.
- The RRC's Injection/Disposal Well Permitting, Testing, and Monitoring Manual can be found at <https://www.rrc.texas.gov/oil-and-gas/publications-and-notices/manuals/injection-storage-manual/>
- The RRC Groundwater Advisory Unit's services and requirements information can be found at <https://www.rrc.texas.gov/oil-and-gas/applications-and-permits/groundwater-advisory-unit/>
- Information regarding the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Underground Injection Control Permits and Registrations can be found at https://www.tceq.texas.gov/permitting/waste_permits/uic_permits/uic.html.
- TCEQ's Oil & Gas Facilities: Compliance Resources webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/assistance/industry/oil-and-gas>) covers regulations on air, water, and waste related to the oil and gas industry in Texas.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Protecting Underground Sources of Drinking Water from Underground Injection (UIC) website is <https://www.epa.gov/uic>.
- Drawings of the different UIC well types can be found on each of their individual webpages (Class I – VI) at https://www.epa.gov/uic/general-information-about-injection-wells#how_protect

- The U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Act website is <https://www.epa.gov/sdwa>
- The Ground Water Protection Council website (<http://www.gwpc.org>) provides information and links relating to wells, underground injection practices, and groundwater protection.
- The Texas Groundwater Protection Committee (TGPC) Oil, Gas, and Mining webpage (<https://tgpc.texas.gov/oil-gas-mining/>) has additional information and links on this subject.

Other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

To find additional FAQs visit the Texas Groundwater Protection Committee's FAQ webpage at <https://tgpc.texas.gov/frequently-asked-questions-faqs>.