



# ARCIT

ASSOCIATION OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN TEXAS

*Enhancing the  
Quality of  
Life for  
Rural Texans*



*Would you like to help sponsor a regional conference in your community? You can contact ARCIT Executive Director, Kara Mayer Mayfield at [kara@arcit.org](mailto:kara@arcit.org) for more information. Together we are making a difference for rural and small communities in Texas!*

## Welcome 2016 Board Members!

ARCIT is pleased to announce the 2016 Board Members. These individuals are committed to making sure rural and small communities have a strong voice in Texas. Please join us in welcoming the following individuals.

**The Honorable Mike Sutherland**  
*County Judge, Burleson County*

**The Honorable Byron Ryder**  
*County Judge, Leon County*

**The Honorable Jimmy Sylvia**  
*County Judge, Chambers County*

**The Honorable Lee Norman**  
*County Judge, Garza County*

**The Honorable Erin Ford**  
*County Judge, Houston County*

**Vicky Rudy**  
*City Manager, the City of Oak Ridge North*

**Lynda Pack**  
*Executive Director, Jacksboro Economic Development Corporation*

**Carolyn Gibson**  
*Executive Director, City Development Corporation of El Campo*

**Chris Whittaker**  
*City Manager, City of Rockdale*

**Adena Lewis**  
*Director of Tourism and Economic Development for Bastrop County*

**Marty Mangum**  
*City Manger, City of Somerville*

**Kara Mayfield**  
*Executive Director, ARCIT*



***Be on the lookout for your 2016 membership renewal notice!***

## A Call to Action...SB 182



During the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session ARCIT opposed Senate Bill 182 by Senator Paul Bettencourt, Vice-Chairman of the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Relations. This bill would have rolled back the revenue cap from 8 percent to 4 percent thereby requiring an automatic rollback election if a county exceeded the rollback rate. This legislation would have created an unfunded mandate for counties throughout Texas and restricted local control, thereby harming rural and small counties in Texas by creating a new expense to our communities.

Recently during an Intergovernmental Affairs Committee hearing, Senator Bettencourt requested information on the expenditures that would be necessary for Texas counties to facilitate the additional elections if the county exceeded their 4 percent revenue cap. As an association dedicated to furthering the interests of rural and small communities, the ARCIT team reached out to our member counties to collect data on the financial burden placed on their counties should this legislation be implemented. It is our intention to gather this information and present it to Senator Bettencourt, the Senate Intergovernmental Relations Committee, Lieutenant Governor Patrick, Speaker Straus and Governor Abbott explaining why this legislation is harmful to our members.

After some deliberation, we have concluded the possible ramifications of SB 182 are too important to Texas counties as a whole to not include all rural counties who will be affected. Therefore ARCIT reached out to all rural communities, regardless of membership, to encourage them to be part of our letter writing campaign.

It is paramount to the success of our plea that we go to the Senator and the Senate IGR committee armed with as much information as possible from our rural counties. We hope you all were able to participate in answering this call to action. This call to action is one example of the work ARCIT does for rural and small communities in Texas by unifying and collaborating with one another for the benefit of all rural communities.



Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative is one of the largest electric cooperatives in the Texas and has been serving members since 1939. Bluebonnet serves more than 88,000 meters and owns and maintains 11,000 miles of power lines, located across more than 3,800 square miles within 14 Central Texas counties. Bluebonnet's service area stretches from Travis County to Washington County and from Milam County to Gonzales County. According

to the state's demographer, Bluebonnet's service area has three of the top 10 fastest-growing counties in Texas, with Hays County number one.

Bluebonnet's service location puts it in the economic heart of Texas. Bluebonnet's business development team members are experts in helping new and expanding businesses. Its experience and relationships with local and regional governments are solid and long-standing. Serving mainly rural and suburban areas, Bluebonnet remains committed to providing safe, reliable and affordable power to 14 Central Texas counties.

Today, Bluebonnet is among the most progressive, technologically advanced utility companies in the country. Bluebonnet's re-designed website features the Energy Tracking Tool, a powerful online tool that shows members their energy use and costs down to the hour, and the ability for co-op members to pay their electric bills online.

ARCIT is proud to have the support of Bluebonnet as a sponsor!

<https://www.bluebonnetelectric.coop/>

**Bluebonnet Electric Co-Op**  
155 Electric Ave.  
Bastrop, Texas 78602  
(888) 622-2583

## Comment Period for SB 912 Legislation

The comment period for the SB 912 legislation related to accidental discharges or spills from wastewater treatment facilities or collection systems started February 5<sup>th</sup>.

The proposed rulemaking will allow any single, accidental discharge or spill of treated or untreated domestic wastewater that occurs at a wastewater treatment or collection system owned or operated by a local government to be reported to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) monthly, as a summary of spills, provided the following conditions are met:

- the spill volume is 1,000 gallons or less;
- it is not associated with another accidental discharge or spill;
- it is controlled or removed before entering water in the state;
- it does not adversely affect a public or private source of drinking water;
- it will not endanger human health or safety or the environment; and
- it is not otherwise subject to local regulatory control and reporting requirements.

Additionally, the proposed rules require the owner or operator of the facility or collection system to use one of three standard methods in the proposed rule when calculating the volume of a discharge or spill. The proposed rules will also implement SB 912 by requiring the TCEQ to consider the compliance history of the individual and to establish procedures for formatting and submission of the monthly summary (including location, volume, and content of each accidental discharge or spill that occurred during the preceding month).

Comments are due by March 7, 2016. The TCEQ will hold a public hearing on March 1, 2016, in Austin at the TCEQ headquarters located at 12100 Park 25 Circle, Building E, Room 201S, at 2:00 p.m. The anticipated adoption date is May 11, 2016, and the effective date of the rules will be June 2, 2016. To obtain a copy of the proposed rule, visit the TCEQ website at: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/rules/prop.html>



## Presidential Disaster Declaration Granted for Texas Counties

On January 26th, Governor Greg Abbott requested a Presidential Disaster Declaration for 25 Texas counties due to damage sustained from the severe weather at the end of December. On February 9,, the President granted the request for Public Assistance for the following 25 counties: Bailey, Castro, Childress, Cochran, Dallas, Deaf Smith, Dickens, Ellis, Hall, Hardeman, Harrison, Henderson, Hopkins, Kaufman, Kent, King, Lamb, Lubbock, Navarro, Parmer, Rains, Red River, Rockwall, Titus, and Van Zandt.

Governor Abbott's request for Individual Assistance for the following six Texas counties remains under review: Collin, Dallas, Ellis, Franklin, Rockwall and Van Zandt

## Dates of Interest....

Feb 16 - 26, 2016 — Early Voting for Primary  
 March 1, 2016 — Primary  
 May , 2016 — Early Voting for Run Off  
 May , 2016 — Primary Run Off  
 Oct. 24 – Nov. 4, 2016 — Early Voting for General Election  
 November 8, 2016 — General Election

# Member Resources



**GrantWorks, Inc.**  
2201 Northland Drive  
Austin, Texas 78756  
(512) 420-0303  
<http://www.grantworks.net>



**Bluebonnet Electric Co-Op**  
155 Electric Ave.  
Bastrop, Texas 78602  
(888) 622-2583  
<https://www.bluebonnetelectric.coop>



**Tech Cumulus**  
7104 Stone Ledge Circle  
Austin, Texas 78736  
512.796.7942  
<http://www.techcumulus.com>



**Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLC**  
(various locations throughout Texas)  
(800) 262-7229  
<http://www.lgbs.com>



**Texas Star Alliance**  
1122 Colorado St. Ste. 102  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(512) 381-1300  
<http://www.texasstaralliance.com>



**CenturyLink**  
(see website for location & contact details)  
<http://www.centurylink.com>



**Petros Pacesetter**  
300 W 6th St. Ste. 1540  
Austin, Texas 78701  
(512) 599-9022  
<http://www.petrospartners.com>



**Flashback Data**  
4029 S Capital of Texas Hwy, Ste 224  
Austin, TX 78704  
(866) 786-5700  
<http://www.flashbackdata.com>



**Traylor & Associates, Inc.**  
201 Cambridge Rd.  
Tyler, TX 75703  
(903) 581-0500  
<http://grtraylor.com>



**Terra Pave International**  
Austin Technology Incubator  
3925 W. Braker Ln  
Austin, Texas 78759  
(512) 655-3550  
<http://terrapaveinternational.com>

*Don't forget that as an ARCIT member you have access to a range of programs and services available to your community. Please contact ARCIT at (512) 788-1819 for more details or visit the ARCIT website at [www.arcit.org](http://www.arcit.org)*