

Our Mission

Commission Shift is reforming oil and gas oversight by building public support to hold the **Railroad Commission of Texas** accountable to its mission in a shifting energy landscape.

About Us

Commission Shift **develops solutions** to protect consumer rights, prevent orphaned oil and gas wells, and ensure Texans have full access to information and participation opportunities at the Railroad Commission of Texas.



ORPHANED WELLS

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SHIFT**

Orphaned and Inactive Wells in Texas



What are they?

An Orphaned Well is an oil gas or injection well that has been abandoned by its operator, or the operator has declared bankruptcy, transferring liability to the public. There are over **12,000** orphaned wells in Texas.

An inactive well is one that still has an operator on record, but has been inactive for at least a year. There are over **120,000** inactive wells in Texas. As these wells age, they risk abandonment by operators.



Impacts

Inactive and orphaned wells pose serious health and environmental risks. They serve as pathways for:

- **Toxic Contamination:** Water polluted with salts, metals, chemicals, and hydrocarbons (like cancer-causing benzene) create a hazardous mix.
- **Widespread Leaks:** Seepage into aquifers or to the surface endangers humans, wildlife, agriculture, and livestock.
- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Heat-trapping methane contributes to global warming.



Solutions

The **Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC)** has the most important role to play in ensuring oil and gas well operators follow through with their obligations to clean up sites and plug inactive wells.

- Require operators to prove they can afford to plug their wells before they dig or acquire new wells.
- Toughen requirements for well plugging extensions.



Join Us!

Subscribe to Commission Shift's newsletter to learn about opportunities to voice your concern and talk to your legislator!



Contact us.

Have orphaned wells impacted you? We want to hear your story.



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