

SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION – December 15, 2010

Mr. Chairman-Senator Hegar, Mr. Vice Chairman-Rep. Bonnen, Members of the Commission, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am Barbara Dietzel, a member of Martin Luther Lutheran Church of Coletoville. My church has been a place of worship and faith for over 135 years. It has always been mindful of the health of its congregation in all ways.

I am making a desperate plea for all small rural churches all over the state of Texas. Small Rural Churches are not Public Water Systems. Churches have no paying customers to sell water to. Churches have no water sales to recoup expenses incurred having to hire a Class D Licensee to take monthly water samples, submit to local health dept., sign with license number and submit quarterly DLQOR reports to TCEQ. An ordinary church member is very capable of taking water samples and submitting reports.

Our well was drilled in 2000. And the well has been tested with water samples thru the local Co. Health Dept., since 2004 with no health problems.

In 2008, TCEQ said install a chlorinator, and we did. We also did all the initial testing as required by TCEQ. And now after having spent \$5,000 on a well that had never caused a health problem, TCEQ says we need to spend another approximately \$8,000, to bring well into compliance like a new well system. WE WILL BE SPENDING \$1,000 TO \$1500 FOR REQUIRED TESTS EACH YEAR. These tests do not make the church well any safer than my own house well, which is one mile down the road from the church.

Having examined 3 books of TCEQ rules, it is difficult to find where a small rural church actually fits into TCEQ definitions. Small rural churches are not mentioned at all in TCEQ rule books.

We were told our church is a Non-Transient, Non-Community water system, which by TCEQ definition regularly serves at least 25 of same persons at least 6 month out of year - example: schools, day cares & office complexes. All of the examples given by TCEQ have very different water usage patterns from a small rural church.

Please help small rural churches with the following –

- 1. Bacteria and chlorine water samples to be taken without needing to hire a class D water licensee.**
- 2. The “grandfathering in” (continued use) of an existing well without all of complicated and expensive compliance requirements meant for a new well system.**
- 3. Being able to make exceptions requests direct to TCEQ without having to pay an engineer to sign the letter.**
- 3. And no other testing be required that is not required of house/domestic wells in the area.**

I respectfully asked for your help.

Your decisions will affect every member of all small rural churches in Texas.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns with you today.

Mrs. Barbara Dietzel