



# Environment Texas

Texas is ranked among the richest states of America. It is also the second largest states in the United States. The state's major in industries and agriculture. It leads all other states in oil production, cattle keeping, sheep farming, poultry and egg production and cotton production. Food processing, transportation equipment, chemical, oil refining are just a list of major manufacturing industries in this state. There are several environmental preservation processes that have to be taking place in this state. The objectives of these programs are to improve and preserve the environment. Many Texans have come up to fight and educate the locals about the environment and the need to preserve it. The paper analyzes environment as the current political issue in Texas politics. Different ways to preserve the environment are also discussed and also how I can personally promote environmental conservation as a residence of this state.

There are several methods that are used by major political actors to preserve the environment in this state. Among them is the creation of a website that will educate Texan the benefits of preserving their environment. The website was created by the Environment Texas Research and Policy Center in order to educate locals on the environmental impacts of the projects in the state of water plan. The

website allows Texans to view the map of this state and study different proposed projects in their state. The water development board of Texas considers improvement of water infrastructure within this state after the voters approved this project in the year 2013.

The community in this state understands that they need to invest in water supply in the future. Nevertheless, they need smart investments that will reduce water wastage while preserving the wildlife and rivers. The idea was proposed by Luke Metzger, who is the director of Environment Research and Policy Center. With the state suffering from historic drought in the past and the high population growth rate, there is a need to invest in water to protect the community from experience drought and water shortage in the future.

There were several projects that were proposed to improve the water supply in Texas. However, most of these projects were analyzed and found to have significant damage to the forests, water, and other natural resources. It was estimated that these projects would cost billions of dollars, and they are likely not to benefit the community. Therefore, there was a need to come up with a solution that will preserve the environment and also benefit the community. Among the proposal that was made was to classify these projects as either a "thumbs down" or "thumb up". The "thumbs up" were the projects that would conserve water and benefit the Texans while the "thumb down" were the projects that had greatest threat to the environment. Among those projects that were considered environmental friendly are water

reuse project, initiative by the Rio Grande Valley to line irrigation canal in order to reduce water seepage and proposal to identify and repair the leaking pipes in the municipal water main.

Others projects proposed projects were considered to have the negative effects to the environment. They include the proposed reservoir (Marvin Nichols) in the East of Texas that would destroy the pristine wetlands and bottomland forest. The forest houses many migratory birds and support river otters. Another project that was considered to cause environmental damage is the Val Verde County project. The project proposed pumping the underground water in order to support fracking operations in western Texas. However, after it was analyzed, it was found to pose a threat the pristine Devil's River. Pumping of underground water from Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer was another project that was not approved due to its negative impact to the environment. The proposed project would reduce the flow of water in the Colorado River and also have negative impacts to the local wells and creeks.

## **POLLUTION POLITICS**

Pollution politics was another proposed solution to conserve the environment. Texas has many industries from manufacturing to production industries. It was found that most of these industries do not treat their wastes properly before dumping them into the water bodies. As a result, more than half of the lakes, streams and rivers are not safe

for fishing, drinking of water and swimming. The pollution is due to toxins that the industries dump into these water bodies. Toxins dumped in these water bodies are informed of heavy metal poisoning that are dangerous to the environment and also human being. Heavy metals such as lead can cause deadly diseases such as cancer and respiratory diseases.

Fortunately, Texas is taking action to protect waterways. The Texans are supporting the Obama Administration in the plan to restore clean water in all water bodies across the country. However, there is a great resistance from the trade associations and industries on the implementation of Clean Water Protection Acts. Therefore, to safeguard their industries these entities are involved in the political system of this state. They spend millions of dollars on lobbying decision-makers to oppose this act. They deep dig their pockets in order to influence the implementation of this policy.

## **SMOG POLLUTION PREVENTION**

The director of the Environment Texas Luke Metzger advocated clean water, air, and open space during the meeting that he chaired. He urged the EPA to protect the Texas environment by reducing the rate of ozone pollution. The meeting emphasized the need to clean up the air in Texas in order to reduce ozone pollution which has negative effects on the people and the environment.

Two biggest cities in Texas, which are Dallas and Houston, are among the worst cities to live in due to the air pollution. Most of the cities in Texas are experiencing smog pollution which poses a dangerous risk for the communities. If a person inhales smog pollution it causes damage to the lungs and thus results in breathing problems. Long exposure to the smog pollution can result in respiratory diseases such as lung diseases, asthma just to mention a few. Other diseases that are linked to smog pollution are premature death, developmental harm, and reproductive diseases.

Studies have shown that young children who play strenuous and play in smoggy cities are three times likely to develop respiratory diseases than those who are playing in cleaner air. Therefore, there was a need for reducing the ozone pollution for Texans to live a healthy life.

Chemical and refinery plants also contribute to the depletion of the ozone layer (Brown et al., 10). Therefore, industries that were found polluting the air were sued. They include Chevron-Phillips Chemical Plant and Shell Refinery. There are others plants that are in the middle of being sued due to violation of Clean Air Act. Studies have shown that chemical and refinery pollution can be reduced if industries are forced to do so. Due to the failure of the Texas state to impose tough measures on industries that are found polluting the air, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is now forcing plants to implement the Clean Air Act.

Air pollution can also be reduced by preventing pollution from the mobile sources. The program requires Texans to drive clean machines that pass emission standards. Since, the introduction of this program, more than 57,000 old cars were repaired or replaced. The program gets funding from the money that is collected when people register new cars. The money is collected by Texas Emissions Reduction Plan that later provide grants to this program. Since, the start of the program it is estimated that the air pollution as a result of mobile emission has been reduced by 85%.

## **THE GROWING ROLE OF SOLAR ENERGY IN TEXAS**

Due to the high rate of environmental pollution in Texas, there was a need of coming up with pollution-free energy to replace the existing power. Solar is one form of energy that is more attractive and widely used by people since it is environmental friendly. Over the last two years, the use of solar photovoltaic (PV) in Texas has almost tripled. The trend is also similar to the whole country, and it is estimated that electricity that is produced by solar energy can power more than three million homes. Texas is among the leading state in adopting the use of solar energy.

The state is also campaigning for the growth of solar energy by obtaining 20% of the electricity from solar power by 2025. Achieving this goal will lead to a cleaner environment that does not depend on

fossil fuels and hence a stronger economy. Fortunately, the program is boosted by the potential of solar energy production in Texas, which is high. According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Texas was found to have a potential of producing more than 150 times solar PV. There are also more than 3 million commercial and residential rooftops that can support solar energy production in Texas.

Continued increase in solar energy generation in Texas will help the state achieve this goal of 20% of solar electricity use in the next ten years to come. Over the last five years, solar PV capacity in Texas has increased by more than 80%. The rate is expected to increase in the next five years since the government is trying hard to stabilize the climate by ensuring that there is clean air and also sustainable economy.

Expanding solar energy will have the following benefits to the environment:

- (1)** Obtaining solar energy would reduce the rate of water consumption from power plant.
- (2)** Expanding solar energy harvesting will reduce the rate of pollution especially the ones that cause the formation of soot and smog that threaten the health of people.
- (3)** Global warming pollution will also reduce if the production of clean energy by 20% is achieved by 45million metric tons by 2025. The pollution reduction is equivalent to taking out more than 15 million



cars off the road.

**(4)** Use of solar energy would also help this state to comply with Clean Power Production Act. The EPA requires that all states in America to focus on producing cleaner power in order to preserve the natural resources.

**Question 3:** How I would address and present the solution to the issue in the context?

From different research that I have done in this field of environmental management, I would address and present solution the issues to achieve Texas's full solar potential. One, the state government of Texas should commit to achieving 20% of the electricity produced come from solar. In addition, the state government should also have policies that will help this state achieves this goal. The government should also promote community solar, strong interconnection standards and make smart investment in solar energy production.

The state government should also ensure that cheaper solar systems are available for low-income earners. Texas has a group of people who are low-income earners and the best way to ensure that they are using cleaner energy is by ensuring that solar panels are available at a cheaper prices. Competitive price means that they would be encouraged to install solar panels in their homes.

The state government should spearhead this vision by ensuring that all



their buildings utilize solar energy. The states government owns much building across this state and using clean energy in these building would be a sign of commitment by the government to achieve this goal. The state government should also adopt the strategy to ensure that the state comply with the Clean Power Plan Act. By doing this, the state plan to meet or even exceed the emission reduction goal would be achievable.

The Federal government, on the other hand, should have a goal of obtaining at least 20% of the state's electricity from solar by 2025. They should also utilize solar power in all public buildings and also ensure that the solar policies are successful implemented. The federal government should also have federal incentives; provide public land where solar panels would be installed. They should also do research on the best ways solar systems can be installed without spending much money. Moreover, the federal government should strengthen Clean Power Plan by providing tools for compliance such as the rooftop solar panels.

Local government should also spearhead this project by ensuring that they are utilizing the solar energy in their properties and buildings. They should also ensure that businesses and homeowners can install solar panels easily without red tape. They should also come up with financing programs in order to encourage people to shift to consumption of solar energy. Local government should adopt purchasing large scale programs for solar energy installation. The state

should also have building codes and zoning in order to encourage the use of solar power. Municipal authority should have their utilities promote solar power by providing rate structures in order to compensate people fairly.

About the clean water for all water bodies within this state, I would propose that plants to be discouraged from disposing of untreated wastes from the plants into the water bodies. Plants that are found violating this rule they should be imposed with harsh penalties to serve it a lesson to others. Detoxification of polluted water body should also be encouraged. Industries that dump their waste products should be forced to clean these water bodies. The government should also set aside money to fund water bodies cleaning programs.

Despite strong resistance from the polluters, the Texas government has ensured that there are enough funds to enforce the pollution laws that existing. The lawmakers should not oppose the decision to restore clean water to all water bodies in the state. The federal officials should also act to curb pollution from storm water and agribusiness. Tough penalties should be imposed on those industries that are found polluting the water bodies across the state. These measures would ensure that the water bodies are protected from pollution. Therefore, there would be safe water for every Texan.

**Question 4:** How I would promote my solution in order to ensure the environment is protected in the Texas?

First I would be recycling everything that I used and also try to purchase biodegradable and reusable products. Materials that I can be reusing include plastic, metal, paper just to mention a few. Some materials such as glass can take million years before they decompose. Therefore, reusing them mean that I would not be dumping them in the environment. Old newspapers, and other renewable materials would be recycled. Trees are known to preserve underground water, therefore if trees are not cut down; it means that underground water would be preserved. In addition, since plastics take many years before they decompose, I would also be using biodegradable materials.

The second thing is to reduce my water conservation in order to promote water conservation. Water is life, and it is predicted that if people do not conserve it, it will be more scarce than gold for some years to come. Therefore, I would ensure that I have turned off my taps in my house after using them. Reduce the number of times I take baths and instead take showers. In addition, I would not be using running water for cleaning because this is wastage of water. I would also not discard used paint and oil into the drains because they may end up in the water bodies thus polluting them.

I would also shift to the clean source of power such as solar power. Purchasing solar panels in my house will me to campaign for environmental preservation. I would also reduce the use of power in my house by ensuring that I have switched off all electrical appliances after using them. I would also replace regular bulbs in my house with

energy saving bulbs. In addition, once I leave my house, I would turn off my personal computer and monitors since if they are left on they would consume energy.

Another way that I can promote environment conservation is by planting a tree every month. If every person in Texas plants a tree every month, the life will improve significantly. Air would be cleaner, deforested area would get back to normal, and they would have shade for the hot days. In addition, the rate of pollution would be reduced, along with greenhouse effects and global warming. Trees also conserve underground water and increase the level of water in the water bodies.

Another way that I can promote the environment is by the use of rechargeable batteries. From my research, I have understood that batteries are dangerous for the environment if they are disposed. Unfortunately, most people do not buy rechargeable batteries. Therefore, they end up disposing of them after using them thus becoming hazardous element to the environment. Buying rechargeable batteries would be the best solution.

Ensuring my car is in a good condition. Cars are also a source of air pollution and as population increases, the number of people buying them is increasing significantly. Therefore, it is important to keep your car in good condition. A vehicle that is not often serviced dispels harmful chemicals to the environment. Regular maintenance of my car

will help reduce the rate of pollution.

I would also discuss with my friend about the benefits of preserving our environment. Then, I would motivate them to take necessary measures to ensure that they are working toward this goal. In addition, I will educate my local community about the benefits of conserving our environment and participate in different community activities that aim to improve the environment.

## CONCLUSION

Environmental pollution has resulted in global warming. The state of Texas has done a commendable job in order to reduce the rate of pollution. The government has encouraged people to service their cars often in order to reduce the rate of air pollution. Texans are also encouraged to replace electricity with solar power since it will conserve the environment. Projects that were proposed and they had a negative effect on the environment were not implemented. There are different ways that I can promote environmental conservation as a resident of Texas. One, I would recycle materials such as plastic after using them and also I would ensure that my car is in good condition to reduce the rate of air pollution. I would also use rechargeable batteries since the ordinary batteries are harmful to the environment.