

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality requires quarterly monitoring of stormwater runoff. Industrial facilities, like the Twin Oaks Landfill, must follow a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWP3) to prevent pollution and improve the quality of surface water in the state.

Environmental Health and Safety Manager, Annie LaBeth, ensures compliance with all the requirements.

LaBeth monitors 5 outfalls at the Twin Oaks Landfill and one at the Compost Facility.

“We are required to test the storm water after significant rain events to see if there are any contaminants or heavy metals that have flowed from the landfill to the surrounding water outside of the landfill,” LaBeth explained.

Visual testing happens four times a year. As part of your visual examination, LaBeth must document any color, clarity, oil sheen, odor, solids, or foam that she observes.

“The quarterly testing is visual. We look for any oil sheen, an excess amount of solids, TSS (TSS can include sand, silt, clay, algae, bacteria, and other organic and inorganic matter). We gather samples that are tested annually and semi-annually for various contaminants like heavy metals. This is to ensure the Waters of the U.S. around our site are not impacted negatively by what we are doing at the landfill,” LaBeth said.

When gathering samples, LaBeth is given a variety of bottles, labeled for each specific outfall, and she collects as much water in the bottles as possible.

“If it’s raining and the water is flowing and I’m able to get a sample, I’ll put on my rain gear, climb down here and collect those samples for lab testing,” LaBeth said.

This is not an easy task. Often, LaBeth is knee-deep in flowing water and slippery mud. Nevertheless, she persists!

“We always collect our samples from water that is flowing off-site. This is to make sure we’re catching any contaminants that are leaving the property. We will divide the water into containers with different preservatives and take the bottles to Aquatech to get them tested,” LaBeth said.

More often than not, the water leaving the Twin Oaks Landfill passes regulations. If there is a problem, there is usually a simple solution.

“We can make adjustments to erosion control to prevent leaf litter. If we need to clear the creeks of litter, we can do that. We typically don’t have any issues,” LaBeth said.

You can view the TCEQ Regulatory Guidance [here](#).