



# more zero waste victories

winning all across Texas



Over the past year we've continued to make progress toward Zero Waste in DFW. In Dallas, we helped pass an ordinance that will provide universal recycling access for nearly all apartments and condos! This giant victory was years in the making, and by January 2020, multi-family buildings will have the same basic recycling services as Dallas neighborhoods.

We are also organizing pressure on city officials in Denton to slow down a major landfill expansion and move toward universal recycling and composting programs instead. City officials are now talking seriously about zero waste ideals for the first time.

In southeast Dallas we are working with neighbors to organize a faster clean-up process for a toxic metal facility that was recently added to the Federal Superfund program. We'll have more updates on this in 2019!

We took some big steps forward in Central Texas in 2018. First, Cedar Park became one of the first suburbs in the state to move towards Zero Waste, hiring consultants to review options for expanding recycling. We expect some new policies and programs this year.

In Austin we scored a big victory when local officials finally invested in recycling for city parks. There are more than 300 city facilities—parks, pools, recreations centers, cultural facilities, and athletic fields. Now, thanks to your support, they will ALL have recycling soon.

TCE took the lead on organizing neighbors in Northeast Travis County to fight any possible expansions of a problem landfill in their community. Stay tuned in 2019 for our victory in this fight too!



We've continued to push for environmental policies that keep Houston moving forward towards sustainability while preparing for the next major storm.

Years of advocating for Zero Waste policies at the City of Houston has resulted in a process to create a long range solid waste and recycling plan—a first in 30 years! We're making sure the new plan will increase access to recycling for all residents in multi-family homes and businesses, create systems to manage construction and demolition debris as we continue to rebuild, and set goals to divert reusable material from landfills.

As always, we're empowering residents who deal with pollution and problematic waste facilities right in their neighborhood—from abandoned toxic sites to active landfills, we're connecting communities with tools to fight pollution across Greater Houston.

Empowering Texans to fight pollution...one door at a time.



## a letter from our Executive Director



Robin Schneider

When you get a call from a major media fact-checking service, it's easy to get nervous. The last thing you would want is a "Pants on Fire" rating splashed across newspapers. But when I received a call from a reporter who was checking out our claim that fewer than 3% of Austin parks had recycling, I knew we would be just fine—we don't send canvassers out into communities with anything less than the truth. Not only did Politifact rate our fact sheet as "True," but within a few months Austin officials responded by adopting a plan to bring recycling to all city parks! We know our most valued assets are our credibility and the wide base of support we have from people like you. And it's those two factors that make it possible to continue to deliver on our long-term vision of a Texas free from pollution.

We all know we have a long way to go. I was outraged when we found out that we lag behind states like Louisiana and Mississippi when it comes to exposing our residents to a higher cancer risk from polluted sites. Almost every person I've spoken with seems equally alarmed. The exception was state environmental agency officials, who made excuses. That only increases our determination to hold polluters and state officials accountable.

This year we also pulled together waste activists from around Texas. Some have been fighting landfills for more than a decade. With TCE's help, these Texans are getting attention and support from elected officials. The writing is on the wall that change is coming because our waste facility standards are not protecting people. This is our best opportunity in years to raise the bar!

There is a special sense of accomplishment when we prevail in fights that people thought were unwinnable. When we started pressing for a comprehensive recycling plan in Houston ten years ago, city officials told us "Houston just doesn't do long-term plans." But this year Houston hired a firm to work with the community to develop one. For over twenty years, the apartment owners association in Dallas blocked efforts to require multi-family buildings to offer recycling for their residents. Not only did we win this year—but it was a unanimous City Council vote!

We're excited to see what new victories 2019 will bring, and we've invested in the future by adding powerful new digital tools for our canvassers. When I started my canvassing career in 1979, I had no idea that someday we would give up our clipboards and use digital devices instead. That day came for TCE in 2018! Your data is more accurate and your contributions can be securely made with a swipe. Now that's progress!

With your continued support, we make headway every year. Thanks for being such a key part of our success!

*Robin Schneider*

## meet the staff

*It's become TCE tradition to visit the State Capitol for the first day of the Texas Legislative Session. Here's our staff lookin' dapper this time around. While our outfits may be a bit more...casual when we come to your door, our canvassers' dedication is anything but. Special thanks to our Field Managers, who lead the charge each and every day.*



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# contact us

[www.texasenvironment.org](http://www.texasenvironment.org)

*austin*

105 West Riverside  
Suite 120  
Austin, TX 78704  
512.326.5655

*d/fw*

3303 Lee Parkway  
Suite 402  
Dallas, TX 75219  
214.599.7840

*Houston*

3100 Richmond  
Suite 290  
Houston, TX 77098  
713.337.4192



# state legislature

## our priorities at the Capitol

Source: TA Brown



polluted sites



landfill reform



tree protection



single-use bags

The Texas Legislature only meets every other year, and in 2019 TCE is pushing for important new protections for our land, water, air, and health. Our priorities this year include:

### POLLUTED SITES CLEANUP AND CANCER RISK REDUCTION

Hurricane Harvey and historic floods across the state have raised the specter of toxic pollution from old industrial facilities and waste sites washing into waterways and even people's homes. We need to fix the state's pollution cleanup programs to deal with these sites now, before the next storms come. TCE is currently working with lawmakers on bills that will reduce the cancer risks we're willing to tolerate—Texas allows *ten times* more cancer risk than neighboring states like Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

### RAISING THE BAR FOR LANDFILLS AND OTHER WASTE FACILITIES

The state environmental agency, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), has become a rubber stamp for the trash industry, approving proposed landfills and waste transfer stations even when they are built in floodplains, over aquifers, or when they don't meet all the requirements under the law. The agency also helps trash companies fill out their permit applications—wasting taxpayer dollars—and issues weak penalties that fail to discourage lawbreaking. We need higher expectations for waste permitting and better enforcement of laws already on the books. Legislators from both parties and in both chambers have filed a slew of bills to address the myriad issues associated with trash facilities in Texas.

### PROTECTING AND RESTORING LOCAL LEADERSHIP ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Texas Supreme Court canceled our ability to stop single-use bags from harming businesses, natural resources, wildlife, and our quality of life. Bills that TCE is closely involved with in each chamber will restore that right under the law and also extend it to other plastic products. In previous legislative sessions, special interests tried to strip Texas communities of their tree protections—we need to defend Texas trees from this attack.

For a complete list and brief description of TCE's priority legislation this session, visit [www.texasenvironment.org/campaign/legislation](http://www.texasenvironment.org/campaign/legislation)

Take action today by visiting [www.texasenvironment.org/take-action](http://www.texasenvironment.org/take-action) to send a message to state lawmakers that you stand for important environmental protections for all Texans. Your voice counts, so make it heard!

you are  
invited!



### TCE Annual Meeting + Grassroots Advocacy Day

**MARCH 31 • 1:00 - 4:00 pm**

Texas Disposal Systems  
11508 Carl Rd. • Buda, TX 78610

**APRIL 1 • 9:00 am - 4:00 pm**

Texas State Capitol  
1100 Congress Ave. • Austin, TX 78701

To RSVP for one or both of these events, call 512.326.5655 or email [nicole@texasenvironment.org](mailto:nicole@texasenvironment.org)

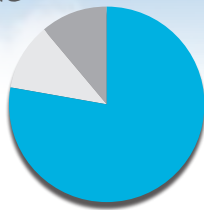
# financials

Our brand of grassroots activism is pretty unique in Texas. TCE is the only environmental group sending community organizers year-round into neighborhoods in D/FW, Central Texas and Greater Houston—and beyond, to the furthest reaches of our state. The overwhelming majority of our funding comes from tens of thousands of individual contributions, raised in person during face-to-face conversations. That means we're accountable to you, so we can hold powerful politicians and companies accountable to you as well. That's how we win. Please consider using the enclosed envelope to renew your support for our work today, for a more sustainable tomorrow!

*where we got our funding in 2018*

**revenue total: \$1,301,532**

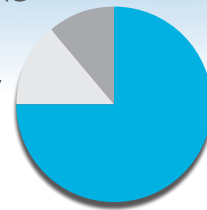
- 78% grassroots contributions from over 30,000 individual Texans
- 11% special projects funding
- 11% reimbursed expenses, miscellaneous



*how we used our funding in 2018*

**expense total: \$1,320,983**

- 75% environmental advocacy, community organizing & public education
- 11% managing TCE
- 14% fundraising to sustain TCE



source: TCE financial statement, 2018



**TEXAS CAMPAIGN  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

105 West Riverside, Suite 120  
Austin, TX 78704

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## ♻️ TEXAS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT'S TRASH MAKEOVER CHALLENGE

*Reels to Runway*  
live from the AFS Cinema in Austin, TX

Our 8th Annual Trash Makeover Challenge was fabulous, as designers used famous films as the inspiration for their recycled materials glam. When the house lights came up and the credits rolled, last year's event was our most successful yet! This year, you'll definitely want to save the date for September 14, 2019 when we'll take our 9th iteration of this unique event to the grandiose ballroom of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs. Visit [trashmakeover.com](http://trashmakeover.com) to keep up with the latest. Cheers!



2018 1st place winner

