



SAWDF Update – June 20, 2026

House Natural Resources Committee [HNRC] to meet June 23, 2026

The committee will at 10 am on Tuesday, June 23, E2.036. [View hearing notice here.](#)

The hearing begins with **invited testimony only** for updates on HJR 7 and SB 7, passed last session. The committee is responsible for oversight of financing and certain water infrastructure matters under the jurisdiction of the Texas Water Development Board [TWDB].

Later, the HNRC will hear **invited and public testimony** on the following interim charge:

Data Center Water Use and Conservation –

- Examine the total water usage of data center operations in Texas, including direct and indirect uses.
- Evaluate regulatory, permitting, and infrastructure considerations for water-efficient data center development, particularly in water-stressed regions.
- **Consider policy options to optimize water resources and enhance water stewardship in the data center sector.**

Use this link to [submit public comments online](#) for any topic above until the hearing adjourns. [limited to 300 characters] *If you are verbose, you can make multiple submissions at 300 characters each.*

There are widely varying reports attempting to estimate total water usage by data centers in Texas, including direct and indirect uses. Overall usage depends on the type of cooling systems used in generating the electricity and in cooling computer hardware installed in a data center.

Direct Use – A good overview of data center water use is the white paper by the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC) titled, "[Thirsty Data and the Lone Star State: Impact of Data Center Growth on Texas' Water Supply.](#)"

Indirect Use – The 2027 draft State Water Plan estimates total water usage statewide to be approximately 15 million acre-feet. Electrical generation ['steam electric'] accounts for 4 percent or 657,000 acre-feet. Much of this water is used in coal or natural gas fired power plants. Currently, natural gas accounts for approximately 37 percent of electrical generation. However, with the rapid growth of data centers, ERCOT has seen the request for natural gas fired generation increase by a factor of 1.5. Depending on the cooling system used in these new natural gas plants, the statewide demand for water could increase by 1 million acre-feet per year. The type of cooling system used within data centers and for new electric generation ultimately determines future water usage.

It is difficult to plan for future water use and management without disclosure of water usage. SAWDF will be submitting written testimony to the HNRC and recommend the following policy options:

- Require disclosure of projected direct and indirect water use before construction.
- Require identification of the water source (municipal, groundwater, surface water, reclaimed water).
- Encourage reclaimed-water cooling and dry/hybrid cooling technologies.
- Limit State and local incentives to water efficient cooling technology and power generation.
- Task TWDB with defining and designating “water stressed regions” and create water markets by establishing a cap on high-use operations and electrical generation within the region.
- Require annual reporting of actual water consumption.
- Require disclosure of associated power-generation resources and their water demands.
- Include data-center water demand explicitly in future regional and state water planning.

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Thank you for all your support.