

Water Auxiliary Laws

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We frequently receive research questions about legislation on water districts in Texas. This information can be a bit difficult to find since many of the statutes that created water districts were never incorporated into, nor repealed by, the current Texas Water Code. Without a section to look at in the current statutes, where does one look to find a legislative history?

To find the legislative history of water districts, we usually turn to the Water Auxiliary Laws pamphlet, published by West as part of the Vernon's Texas Code Annotated. The pamphlet contains general and special laws pertaining to water, deemed to be general and permanent in nature, that were neither repealed by, nor incorporated into, the Water Code. If you know the name of a district, you can use the tables provided in the pamphlet to find the year and session law chapter of the enacting and amending legislation, as well as the Vernon's Civil Statutes article number where the enacting legislation was originally codified.

Here's an example from the Water Laws Auxiliary pamphlet, Table III: Districts Created and/or Validated Pursuant to Const. Art. 16 § 59:

Name of District	Vernon's Civ. St. Art.	Laws Citations
Bevil Oaks Municipal Utility District		1973, ch. 621
		2007, ch. 920
Bexar County Metropolitan Water District	8280-126	1945, ch. 306
		1953, ch. 66
		1957, ch. 40
		1997, ch. 91
		2003, ch. 375
		2007, ch. 1024
Bexar County Water Control and Improvement District		
Lackland	8280-224	1959, ch. 199
Northwest	8280-225	1959, ch. 200
Oak Hills	8280-223	1959, ch. 198
Bilma Public Utility District	8280-512	1971, ch. 559

In the left column of the table are the names of the districts. The middle column contains the Vernon's Civil Statute Article number of the original, codified form of the enacting legislation. Next to the article number, in the right-hand column, is the year and chapter number of the enacting legislation, with all legislation that subsequently amended the enacting legislation in the rows underneath it.

Suppose we would like to find the bill that created the Bexar County Metropolitan Water District. We would simply find the bill number that corresponds to 1945, ch. 306, the first law listed for this district. This can be done using the [Direct Search](#) function in the library's [Legislative Archive System](#). Under "Search by Session Law Chapter," select the correct session (based on year), then enter the chapter number in the field next to it. Press search, and you will be taken to a page containing the bill number, caption and other details. The bill that created the Bexar County Metropolitan Water District was [HB 834](#), 49th R. S. (1945).

The Water Auxiliary Laws pamphlet is available at the Legislative Reference Library, as well as any other library that makes a full set of the Vernon's Annotated Statutes available for public use. The pamphlet is not online for free, however if you have a subscription to Westlaw, you can view it as part of the statutes.