



Newsroom By Date

Austin Capitalizes on \$31.8 Million in Recovery Act Funds

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Contact Information: Dave Bary at 214-665-2200 or r6press@epa.gov

(Dallas, Texas – February 17, 2010) In a move that will create jobs, boost the local economy, and reduce carbon emissions, Austin Water broke ground today on green improvements at the Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant with \$31.8 million dollars from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The project will create local jobs and reduce the environmental footprint of the plant. In just two years, the total carbon reduction will be about 6,500 tons of CO2 equivalent greenhouse gases per year.

“This is what the American Recovery and Investment Act is all about. The Hornsby Bend Biosolids Plant is a new, innovative solution for an age-old problem. Besides improving the environment by reducing waste, it creates jobs, cuts energy usage, and reduces carbon emissions,” said EPA Regional Administrator Al Armendariz. “Once again Austin is leading the way for other communities in Texas as well as nationwide,”

Austin Water received 80 percent of the “green” stimulus funding for Texas through the Texas Water Development Board’s Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The Clean Water State Revolving Fund program provides low interest loans for water quality protection projects for wastewater treatment, non-point source pollution control, and watershed and estuary management.

“These funds will contribute significantly towards improving the sustainability of our wastewater operations and prepare us for Austin’s growing population,” said Greg Meszaros, Director of Austin Water.

The environmental improvements will include doubling composting capacity, decreasing off-site land application and reducing 30,000 gallons of diesel fuel consumption annually by 2012. Also, significant upgrades will improve the energy efficiency of the biosolids processing and increase biogas production. Generators will convert the biogas to electricity and send up to 1.75 megawatts of electricity to Austin Energy’s grid annually - enough to power 750 homes.

Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant, located on FM 973, receives and treats all biosolids produced by Austin’s wastewater treatment plants.

This project is one funded with part of the \$4 billion allocated under the Clean Water Act State Revolving Fund. The overall objectives for using that money are to provide capital for State and local infrastructure projects, maximize job creation and retention, and provide environmental and economic benefits. At least 20 percent of the funds provided under the Recovery Act are being used for green infrastructure, water efficiency improvements and other environmentally innovative projects. President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act on February 17, 2009, and has directed that the Recovery Act be implemented with unprecedented transparency and accountability. To that end, the American people can see how every dollar is being invested at Recovery.gov.

More about activities in EPA Region 6: <http://www.epa.gov/region6>

EPA audio file is available at <http://www.epa.gov/region6/6xa/podcast/mar2010.html>

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