

The Challenges of Environmental Law Enforcement

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The Challenge

- Education is the main challenge for Environmental Enforcement.
 - The Public
 - Law Enforcement Officers
 - and Prosecutors

Recognizing an Environmental Crime

A crime is a crime!!

Environmental crime is the same as any other crime.

They're just found in different codes.

Example: Texas Water Code, Texas Health & Safety Code

The Offense!







The First Challenge

- Educating the Patrol Officer
- The day to day Patrolman is the Backbone of Law Enforcement

Uneducated, a Patrol Officer might not give much thought.

- As where
- Most Code Officers wouldn't give the next pictures a second thought.





The Environmental way!

TX. H&S code 365.012
Penalties from Class C misdemeanors to State
Jail Felony

TX. Water Code CH 7.145
Special Offenses
Penalties from \$1,000 – 1,500,000
Imprisonment from 30 days up to 30 years

The NEXT CHALLENGE

- Convincing the
PROSECUTOR!

Explaining cases to Prosecutors can be a Challenge

Almost all Prosecutors are geared to the
Texas Penal Code or Traffic Code.

Most Prosecutors frown on being told how
to do with a case.

Circuit Rider Prosecutor

- Some area C.O.G.'s are starting a Circuit Rider Prosecutor for environmental crimes.
- Houston / Galveston C.O.G. has the first.
- NCTCOG is in the process of starting the program.

Resources

- **Texas Commission on Environmental Quality**
 - <10 Criminal Investigators across the state.
- **Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.**
 - Environmental Crimes Unit: <10 Game Wardens that specialize in Environmental Enforcement across the state
- **Travis County Attorneys Office**
 - Has statewide jurisdiction for most environmental cases.

Report an Offense

- To report a possible offense,
 - TCEQ website homepage, "Express Links"
 - Click on "[Make an Environmental Complaint](#)"
- To submit a complaint:
 - [use an online form.](#)
 - [call 1-888-777-3186.](tel:1-888-777-3186)
 - [e-mail: complaint@tceq.state.tx.us](mailto:complaint@tceq.state.tx.us)

Training Opportunities

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

CELE Training conference one or two a year
(Criminal Environmental Law Enforcement)
www.tceq.state.tx.us

Texas Environmental Law Enforcement Assn.

TELEA Annual Training Conference
www.telea.org

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Advanced Environmental Crimes Training Program
www.epa.gov

Criminals Remember....



The Shadow *KNOWS!!*

**Kyle Lewis
Environmental Enforcement**



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Questions?