

News Release

Texas Animal Health Commission

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For immediate release—

Texas Animal Health Commission Cancels March 23 Meeting

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) has canceled its March 23 meeting, which had been scheduled in Round Rock (near Austin). The commissioners had planned to consider proposed regulations that would require registration of sites where livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl and exotic fowl are held, managed or handled, and to charge a fee for premises registration. More than 8,200 of the state's estimated 200,000 premises have been registered as of March 8, and voluntary premises registration continues.

Premises registration is the foundation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), which, when fully implemented, would enable animal health officials to trace the movement of diseased or exposed livestock or poultry within 48 hours.

“We are seeking from the U.S. Department of Agriculture clear direction on National Animal Identification System timelines for implementation,” said Dr. Bob Hillman, Texas' state veterinarian and TAHC executive director. He explained that, after the passage of HB 1361, the TAHC commissioners proposed regulations for premises registration, and in February, held a Commission meeting to hear comments on the proposals. The commissioners continue to consider the comments they received.

“The next meeting of the Commission is scheduled Thursday, May 4,” said Dr. Hillman. “However, the agenda for that meeting will not be developed until late April. It is too early to know whether the proposed regulations will be considered at that meeting.”

Information regarding the Commission meeting will be announced on the TAHC web site, in the *Texas Register* and through public announcement. All TAHC commission meetings are open to the public. The TAHC's Austin headquarters may be reached at 1-800-550-8242, and the agency's web site can be accessed at <http://www.tahc.state.tx.us>.