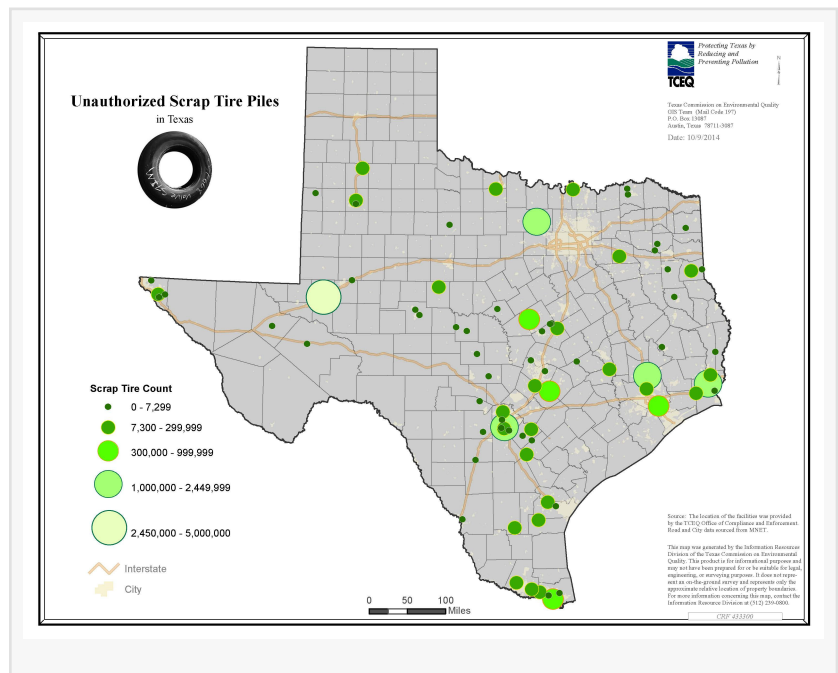


# Texas Solid Waste & Resource Management Leaders issue Warning to State Lawmakers about Zika Virus Threat

*Officials urge lawmakers to address state's large quantity of illegally dumped scrap tires that provide perfect breeding environments for mosquito borne virus*

AUSTIN, TX, UNITED STATES, April 12, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A group of Texans whose expertise is in solid waste and resource management are encouraging state lawmakers to address Texas's critical scrap tire issue. Friday, Vance Kemler, the president of the Municipal Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Advisory Council, announced that Texas's large quantity of illegally dumped scrap tires creates perfect breeding grounds for mosquitoes possibly carrying the harmful Zika virus.



“The Zika virus is moving towards the U.S. — it’s already in the U.S. territories — and we will probably see mosquitoes with that virus in the very near future,” Kemler said at the board’s April meeting. “Many of these (mosquitoes) are carrying a variety of diseases, and perhaps the Zika virus. We need to talk about how Texas might look at its illegal, or unauthorized, scrap tire piles.”

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“Quite a few of those locations are in the coastal and southern portions of the state, and certainly would be a problem to manage and control with mosquitoes”

*Vance Kemler*

Used tires are ideal breeding grounds for insects, including mosquitoes, because of their ability to hold standing water and retain heat. Given a tire’s weight, they can be difficult to move if illegally dumped as well. These factors can combine to create clouds of buzzing insects potentially carrying diseases.

At Friday’s meeting, Kemler told fellow board members that the Lone Star Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (TXSWANA), a leading professional organization,

discussed and reviewed materials related to the issue recently. Their review included a 2014 Texas Commission on Environmental Quality report that spotlighted the large illegally dumped tire pile locations across the state.

Many of these locations tout stacks made up of more than 1 million scrap tires.

“Quite a few of those locations are in the coastal and southern portions of the state, and certainly

would be a problem to manage and control with mosquitoes,” Kemler said.

Kemler urged his advisory board to discuss legislative solutions, given the “human health issue that will be upon us in the near future.”

Board members suggested looking into using existing state funding for the cleanup initiative Friday, stating further increases in fees or fines was unlikely.

Utilizing Texas’ Solid Waste Fund 5000 was mentioned specifically, which is state money dedicated to solid waste purposes garnered from landfill fees.

Texas Legislative Budget Board estimates Fund 5000 monies totaled about \$119.9 million during the 82nd legislative session. Half of the Fund 5000 revenue is dedicated to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality’s municipal solid waste permitting and enforcement programs. The other half is used for activities to enhance the state’s solid waste management program through councils of government grants to local government.

The Municipal Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Advisory Council is tasked with reviewing programming, recommending state planning and advising Texas Commission on Environmental Quality commissioners and lawmakers on matters relating to municipal solid waste management.

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