

NASW-TX Eco-Social Work Committee Urges the Legislature to Invest in Sustainable Access to Water Needs

Austin, Texas — The NASW-Texas Eco-Social Work Committee urges Texas lawmakers to make sustained, equitable investment in safe, reliable, and affordable water access a central priority for every community across the state.

Water is not simply an infrastructure issue. It is a public-health, economic-security, environmental-justice, and human-rights issue. When families lack reliable drinking water, experience failing wastewater systems, face contamination, or struggle with unaffordable utility costs, the effects reach far beyond a household bill. They affect health, housing stability, school attendance, caregiving, employment, disaster recovery, and overall community well-being.

Texas is growing while drought, extreme heat, flooding, aging infrastructure, and unequal access to resources place added pressure on local water systems.

The Texas Water Development Board's 2027 State Water Plan documents approximately 6,700 recommended water-management strategies statewide, including conservation, water-loss mitigation, aquifer recharge, reuse, desalination, drought management, and new supply projects.

These strategies demonstrate the magnitude of the state's present and future water needs. [2027 State Water Plan — Texas Water Development Board](#)

The Legislature and Texas voters have taken important steps to strengthen long-term water investment. Proposition 4, approved by Texas voters in November 2025, requires the Comptroller to deposit the first \$1 billion in qualifying state sales- and use-tax revenue above a specified threshold into the Texas Water Fund each fiscal year from September 1, 2027, through August 31, 2047, subject to legislative appropriation and available revenue. This opportunity must be implemented in a manner that reaches Texans and communities with the greatest unmet water needs. [TWDB Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2027–2031](#)

The NASW-TX Eco-Social Work Committee calls on the Texas Legislature and the Texas Water Development Board to prioritize:

- Safe, dependable drinking-water and wastewater systems for rural, border, low-income, and historically underserved communities.
- Repair and replacement of aging, leaking, and failing water infrastructure before families face preventable service disruptions, contamination, or emergency costs.
- Affordable water access, including assistance for households facing excessive utility burdens.

- Drought preparedness, water conservation, water reuse, flood mitigation, and climate-resilient infrastructure.
- Technical assistance and accessible grant processes so that small and resource-limited communities can compete fairly for state funding.
- Transparent, publicly available information about how funds are distributed, who benefits, and whether investments reduce inequities.
- Meaningful community engagement, including plain-language and linguistically accessible outreach to impacted residents.

Social workers witness the effects of water insecurity in the lives of individuals, children, older adults, families, and communities. Environmental conditions shape physical health, mental health, housing stability, educational opportunity, and economic security.

Sustainable water access helps people remain safely housed, protects public health, strengthens disaster resilience, supports local economies, and enables communities to thrive.

Water-conservation planning is one important part of a durable water future. The Texas Water Development Board defines water conservation as practices, techniques, and technologies that reduce consumption or waste, improve efficiency, or increase recycling and reuse so that water supplies remain available for future and alternative uses. [Texas Water Development Board — Water Conservation Plans](#)

The NASW-TX Eco-Social Work Committee urges the Legislature to invest in water systems that are not only larger or newer, but also equitable, resilient, affordable, and accountable to the Texans who rely on them every day.

Water security is community security. Sustainable access to safe and affordable water is essential to health, dignity, resilience, and justice for all Texans.

References

1. [Texas Water Development Board — 2027 State Water Plan](#)
2. [Texas Water Development Board — Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2027–2031](#)
3. [Texas Water Development Board — Water Conservation Plans](#)
4. [Texas Water Development Board — State Water Planning](#)