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Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER) Water Quality Monitoring Program

If you're a member of TIAER's water quality monitoring team, you're used to receiving phone calls from flow meters.

The call means it's raining hard somewhere and it's time (at 2 a.m., or Saturday evening when you're enjoying a brew with friends) for you to pack your stuff and get in your truck to go collect storm water samples. The team currently operates and maintains 30+ computerized monitoring sites, primarily in the Bosque River watershed. When they receive a call, they drive to the site to retrieve water samples and water level and flow rate data collected by the equipment. To maintain water samples at the right temperature, the team puts the bottles in an ice chest. Water level and flow rate data are important because water quality is influenced by how much water there is and how fast it is moving.

Water quality monitoring isn't just a rainy day job.

At each site each week, teams fix clogged pipes, check batteries, change out bottles, and mow around the 4'x3'x4' metal equipment shelter. Every other week, they also do a "routine grab," collecting, filtering and storing water in up to six shape- or color-coded bottles for different lab tests. They also check that the flow meters and other equipment are properly set to accurately record information, and, if site conditions have changed, they reprogram the computer.

**FLOW METER SITE #2345 ALARM
ACTIVATED. PLEASE
ACKNOWLEDGE!**

Tim Jones has a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in wildlife and fishery management. He joined TIAER in 1992. As part of his monitoring work, he does biological surveys of fish and insects affected by water quality. A surface water field hydrologist, **Jeff Stroebel** graduated from Tarleton in 1992, returned to Dallas to work in a consulting firm for a year and then joined TIAER.

Tim and Jeff are always amazed at how many Tarleton graduates and graduates' families they meet as they travel around Texas.

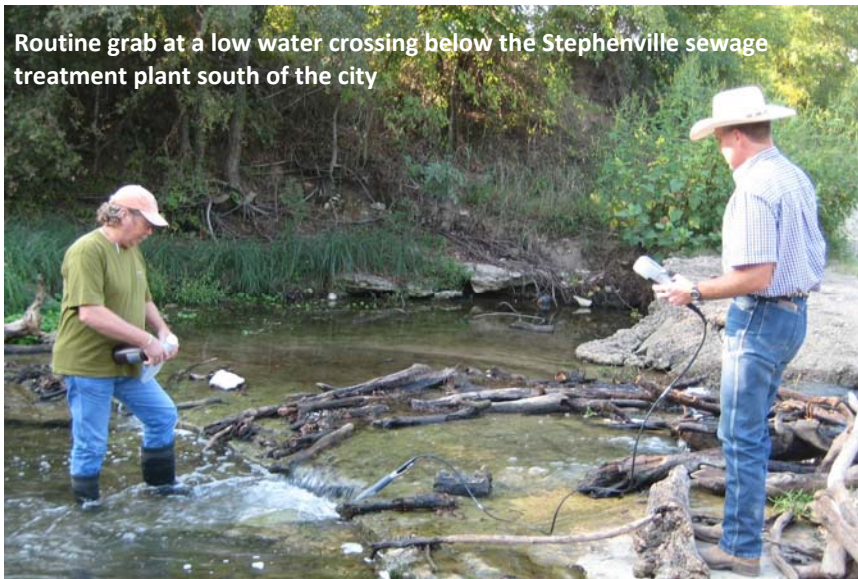


Tim Jones



Jeff Stroebel

Routine grab at a low water crossing below the Stephenville sewage treatment plant south of the city



What Tim and Jeff like best about their jobs is that they must use all their knowledge, skills and ingenuity to identify the best monitoring location, install and program the equipment, resolve unexpected problems, collect samples and record data following required procedures, and deal professionally with all the people who ask them what they're doing (and want to know about the water).