

**Utilities' User Guide  
for  
Regulatory Assessment Fee (RAF)  
Reporting  
in the  
Single-Use Non-CROMERR Submission  
System (SUNSS)**

**Texas Commission on Environmental  
Quality (TCEQ)**



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## 1. Abbreviation & Definitions

Term/Abbreviation	Definition
CCN	Certificate of Convenience and Necessity
RAF	Regulatory Assessment Fee
WSD	Water Supply Division
SUNSS	Single-Use Non-CROMERR Submission System
STEERS	State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System
TCEQ	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

## 2. Introduction

### Regulatory Assessment Fee (RAF)

The regulatory assessment is a fee collected from retail customers by water and wastewater utilities regulated by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). It was first authorized in 1993 in response to a State Comptroller's report that recommended a higher level of user charges be used to finance state regulatory programs. Investor-owned utilities, water districts, water supply corporations, and certain counties are required to collect the assessment from retail customers and send the amount collected to the TCEQ.

### Important Note about RAF Collection

The regulatory assessment is not to be collected from state agencies, wholesale customers, or buyers of non-potable (not drinkable) water.

The assessment is to be applied to customer charges for water and sewer retail charges only. RAF should not be applied to penalty and interest charges, tap fees, impact fees, or other fees that appear on customer bills.

### Important Note about Revenue Reporting for RAF

When reporting revenue to the TCEQ for RAF calculation, it is important to note that revenue is only the money actually collected from the Utility customers for water and sewer services. Revenue is not necessarily the same as what the Utility billed for water and sewer services. If the Utility billed a customer in one calendar year, but did not receive the funds from that customer until the following calendar year, then the Utility will not count those funds as revenue until the calendar year the funds were collected from the customer and they therefore received the RAF from the customer. For example, if a utility issues a bill to their customer for water used from November 15-December 15, 2017 and the bill isn't due and paid until January 1, 2018 that money would not be reported and the RAF paid until FY2018 reporting.

If the Utility does not have any revenue and therefore did not collect RAF, then the Utility must still report for zero revenue to the TCEQ. This can be done through the SUNSS system.

If the Utility has a signed order for a sale, transfer, or merger of the Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) to another Utility from the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), please contact the RAF Program Coordinator for assistance at 512-239-4691 or email at [wufees@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:wufees@tceq.texas.gov).

### Single-Use Non-CROMERR Submission System (SUNSS)

SUNSS provides a platform to water and wastewater utilities for on-line reporting to the TCEQ for the Regulatory Assessment and a few other regulatory programming areas of the TCEQ. Unlike with the State of Texas Environmental Electronic Reporting System (STEERS), Utilities do not need to create a login or STEERS account. Each Utility in the TCEQ database already has an account in SUNSS and needs only use the passcode provided on their annual postcard from the TCEQ to report annual water and sewer revenue for the Regulatory Assessment Fee.

Individuals that have an issue with SUNSS have access to telephone or e-mail assistance from the STEERS team. The STEERS team provides telephone support to the public for help with the SUNSS and STEERS programs only. Any issues the individual has with a regulatory program are referred to the program area for assistance.

#### For SUNSS Help:

**STEERS Help line**  
**STEERS (MC 226)**  
**E-mail: [STEERS@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:STEERS@tceq.texas.gov)**  
**Phone: (512) 239-6925**

## Reasons for and Benefits of Electronic Reporting with SUNSS

Electronic reporting provides the following benefits:

- Users will be able to automatically calculate their accurate Regulatory Assessment Fee (RAF) using the online portal
- Provides greater assurance of receipt of RAF reporting and payment
- Reduces reporting costs by offering a streamlined reporting method using readily available computer tools
- Saves the TCEQ costs by reducing, and better utilizing resources required for managing RAF forms
- Adds to the overall effectiveness of the TCEQ program areas with faster response for data analyses, compliance assessment, and decision-making

### RAF Contact Information

If you need help entering data, checking on the status/receipt of your data, etc., please contact the TCEQ Water Supply Division (WSD) Main Line and ask for the Fee or RAF Program Coordinator.

**Drinking Water Special Functions (MC-155)**  
**Water Supply Division**  
**Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ)**  
**Email: [Wufees@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:Wufees@tceq.texas.gov)**  
**Phone: (512) 239-4691**

**Note:** All questions regarding login issues, technical problems, or with the SUNSS interface should be directed to the STEERS Help Line.

### SUNSS System Overview

As a web-enabled system, the SUNSS system provides Utilities with the capability to report and calculate their RAF payment. The SUNSS system is also designed to take the Utility right from reporting to payment through ePay. If the utility wishes to send payment by check in the mail an invoice statement will be mailed to the address on file for the utility within 2 weeks. The invoice will give the utility the mailing address where a payment by check can be remitted.

In order to provide sufficient security for all submitted information, a 4 digit numerical Secure Code is required to gain access to reporting water and sewer revenue in the SUNSS system.

## 3. Reporting RAF through SUNSS

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### Minimum System Requirements

TCEQ's SUNSS websites is a web-based program that can only be accessed through the Internet. Typically, such access is available either through a dedicated connection (i.e. local area network) or a modem connection to an Internet Service Provider.

To ensure that all of the features of the SUNSS system are available, Utilities must use Microsoft Internet Explorer web browser (version 8.0 or higher) or Firefox (version 10.0 or higher). The performance of the SUNSS system will vary based on the computer's internet

connection speed, CPU, operating system, and available memory. The SUNSS systems has not been tested on mobile devices and will most likely not have full functionality.

The minimum system configuration recommendation is as follows:

- Computer with internet connection
- Web Browser:
  - Microsoft Internet Explorer 8.0 or higher
  - Google Chrome
  - Mozilla Firefox
  - Safari web browser was not tested and will most likely not work with the SUNSS interface
- PDF Reader for viewing of PDF files
- Printer for printing submission and/or Copy of Record
- Email account

## SUNSS Online RAF Data Entry Form

You will need your water and sewer revenue for the calendar year being reported. Please see "[Important Note about Revenue Reporting for RAF](#)" in Introduction Section of this user guide for further guidance on what should be considered for revenue.

### Report Revenue in SUNSS

1. Open your browser and go to <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/sunss/>.

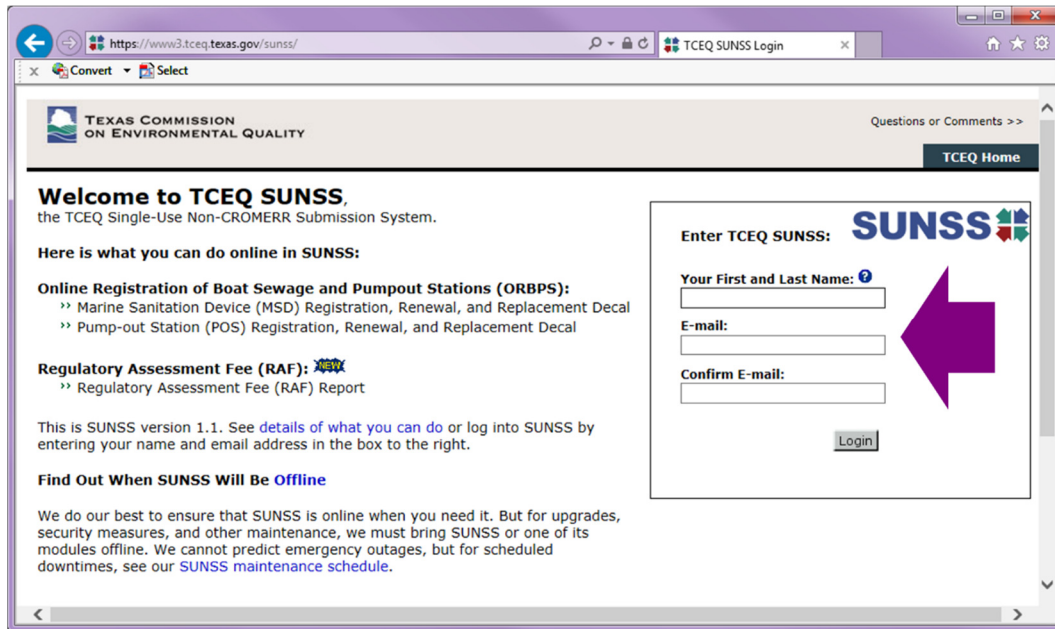


Figure 1 - SUNSS Login

2. Fill out the three fields in the "Enter TCEQ SUNSS" box: First and Last Name, e-mail, and confirmation of the e-mail. Click Login.

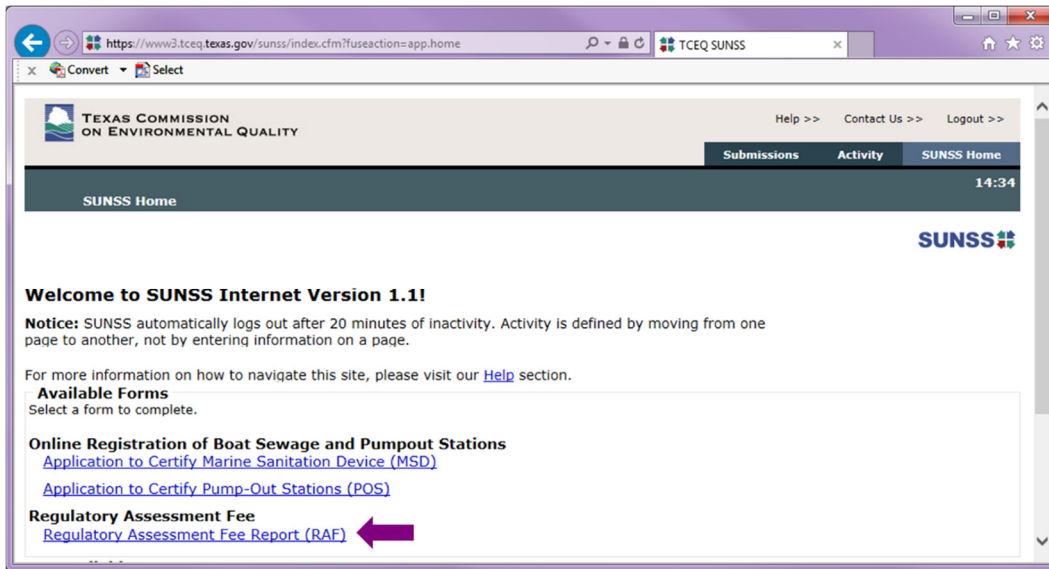


Figure 2 - Welcome Page

3. On the Welcome page you will see a list of all available forms using the SUNSS system. Click on the “Regulatory Assessment Fee Report (RAF)” form.

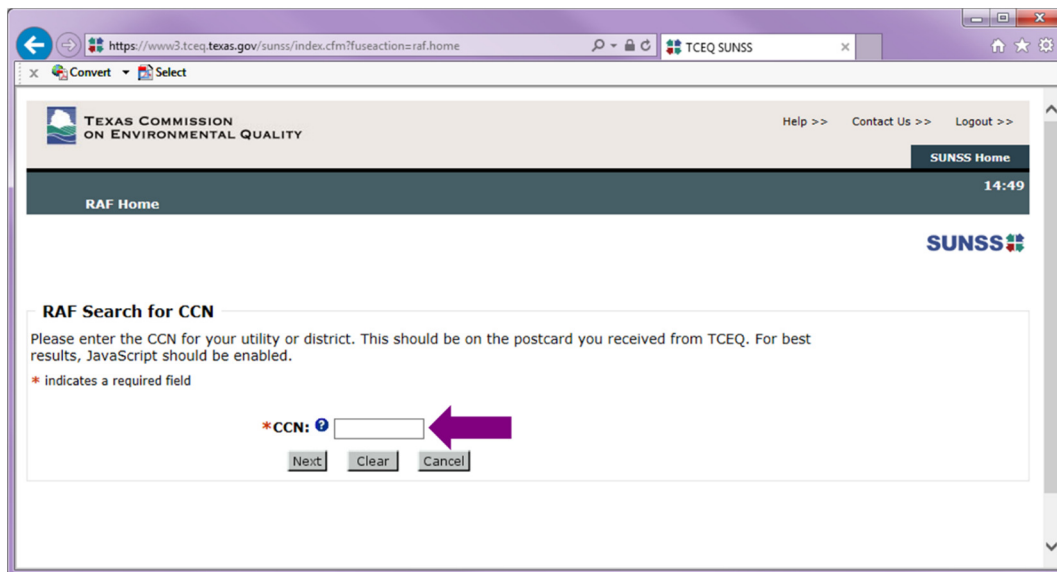


Figure 3 - CCN Search

4. Enter your CCN number and click Next.

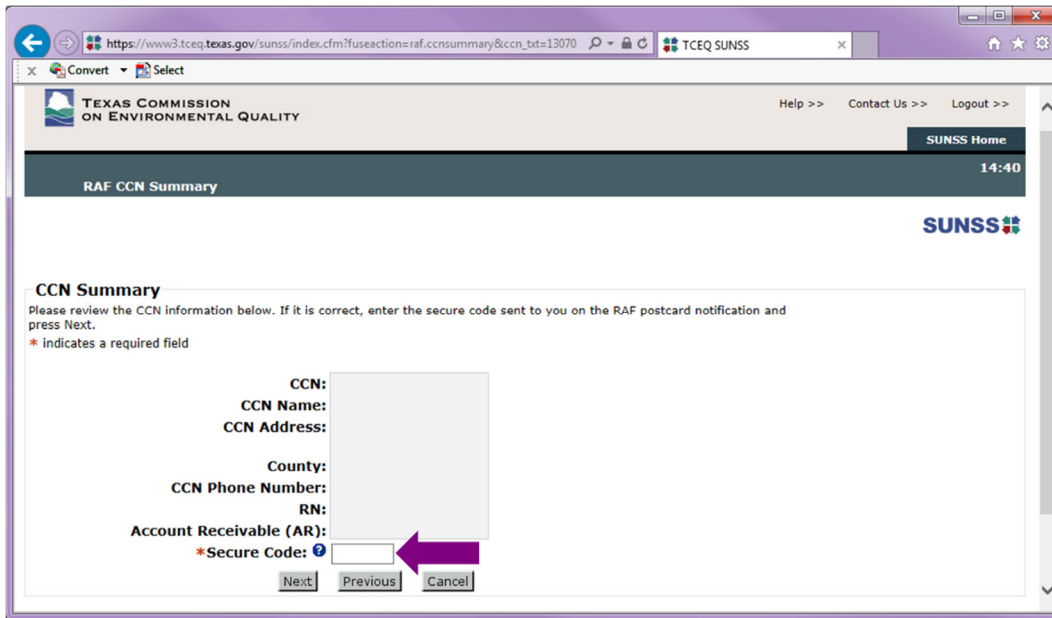


Figure 4 - Secure Code

5. Review your CCN information as shown on the CCN Summary Page.
  - 5.1. If the information shown is correct, enter the Secure Code found on the RAF Postcard you should have received in the mail from the TCEQ and click Next.
  - 5.2. If the information shown is incorrect, click Previous and try reentering your CCN number.

**Note:** If for any reason you cannot locate your utility's 4 digit Secure Code, please contact the RAF Program Coordinator at 512-239-4691 or email [wufees@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:wufees@tceq.texas.gov) for assistance.

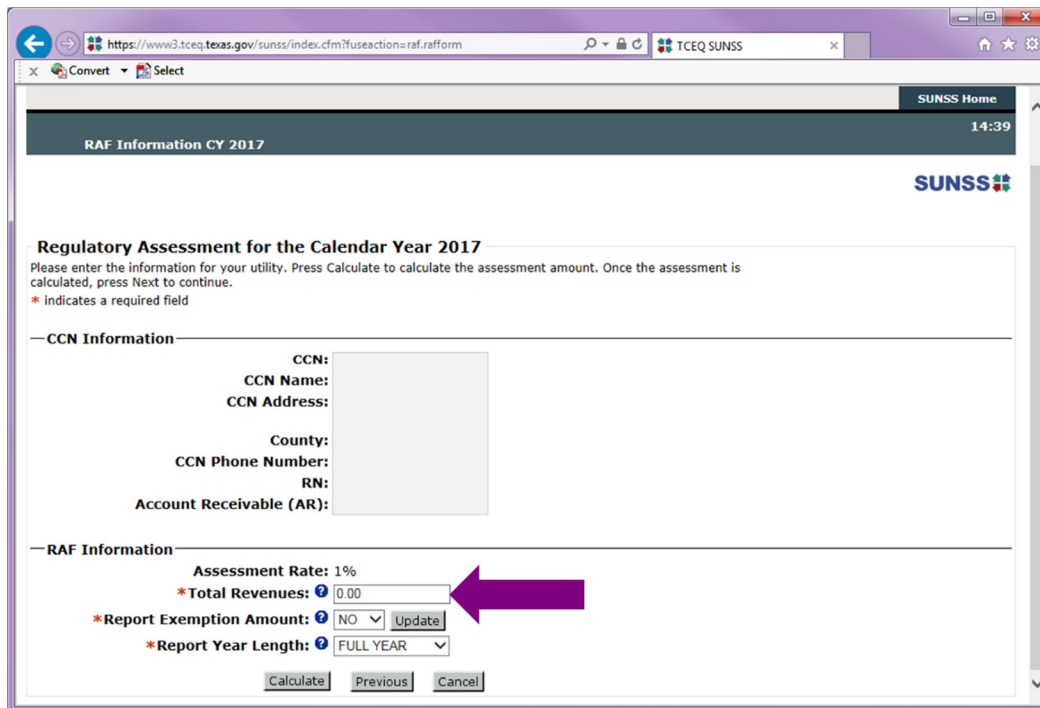


Figure 5 - Revenue - No Exempt Customers

6. Enter the Utility's water and sewer revenue in the "Total Revenues" field.



**Note:** Please see [“Important Note about Revenue Reporting for RAF”](#) in the Introduction Section of this user guide for further guidance on what should be considered for revenue.

- 6.1. If the utility has zero revenue to report, leave the zeros in the Total Revenue field and select Calculate.
- 6.2. A drop down box will appear for you to select the reason that best fits the Utility's situation.
7. If the Utility did not have any customers who would be exempt from paying RAF, leave the “Report Exemption Amount” as “NO.”
  - 7.1. If the Utility did have customers who would be exempt from paying RAF, change the “Report Exemption Amount” to “YES” and click the Update button.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/sunss/index.cfm?fuseaction=raf.upd.exemptflg>. The page title is "RAF Information CY 2017". The main heading is "Regulatory Assessment for the Calendar Year 2017". Below the heading, there is a note: "Please enter the information for your utility. Press Calculate to calculate the assessment amount. Once the assessment is calculated, press Next to continue." and a note: "\* Indicates a required field".

The form is divided into two sections:

- CCN Information:** Fields for CCN, CCN Name, CCN Address, County, CCN Phone Number, RN, and Account Receivable (AR).
- RAF Information:** Fields for Assessment Rate (1%), Total Revenues (0.00), Report Exemption Amount (YES), Total Exempt Revenues (0.00), and Report Year Length (FULL YEAR). The "Report Exemption Amount" field is highlighted with a purple box and a purple arrow points to it. The "Update" button next to the dropdown is also visible.

At the bottom of the form, there are buttons for "Calculate", "Previous", and "Cancel".

Figure 6 - Revenue - With Exempt Customers

- 7.2. In the new “Total Exempt Revenues” field, type in the amount of water and sewer revenue the Utility received from exempt customers not subject to RAF. This will allow the program to subtract out the exempt customers' revenue before calculating the Utility's required RAF payment amount.

**Note:** Please see [“Important Note about RAF Collection”](#) in the Introduction Section of this user guide for further guidance on what customers are exempt from paying RAF.

8. If the same owner owned the Utility for the calendar year, leave the “Report Year Length” as “FULL YEAR.”
  - 8.1. If there was a change in ownership at any point during the RAF reporting calendar year and another owner collected RAF for a portion of that year, change the “Report Year Length” to “PARTIAL YEAR.” This will help flag TCEQ staff to reach out to the other owner to collect the remainder.
9. Once you have completed entering the RAF information, click Calculate and your calculated RAF amount owed will display at the bottom of the screen.
10. Image shows the Regulatory Assessment page with the Calculated Total Assessment Amount owed.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/sunss/index.cfm?fuseaction=raf>. The page header includes the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality logo and navigation links. The main content area is titled "RAF Information CY 2017" and contains the following sections:

- Regulatory Assessment for the Calendar Year 2017**: A message stating "The Total Assessment Amount has been calculated. Please review it below and press Next to continue." and instructions to enter utility information.
- CCN Information**: Fields for CCN, CCN Name, CCN Address, County, CCN Phone Number, RN, and Account Receivable (AR).
- RAF Information**: Fields for Assessment Rate (1%), Total Revenues (100000.00), Report Exemption Amount (YES), Total Exempt Revenues (1000.00), and Report Year Length (FULL YEAR).
- RAF CY 2017 Assessment Amount**: A summary section showing "Total Assessment Amount: \$990.00". A red arrow points to this value.

At the bottom of the form are buttons for "Calculate", "Next", "Previous", and "Cancel".

Figure 7 - RAF Total Assessment Amount Owed

**Note:** It is important that you make sure the amount displayed is correct before moving on to the next step. If the amount does not match your records, verify that you entered in the correct Total Revenue and Total Exempt Revenue for your utility. If you have any questions, please contact the RAF Program Coordinator at 512-239-4691 or email [wufees@tceq.texas.gov](mailto:wufees@tceq.texas.gov) for assistance.

11. Once you have verified the Total Assessment Amount owed, click Next.

12. Regulatory Assessment Signature Page

https://www3.tceq.texas.gov/sunss/index.cfm?fuseaction=raf

TCEQ SUNSS

SUNSS Home 14:16

RAF CY 2017 Sign & Submit

**Regulatory Assessment for the Calendar Year 2017**

Please review the data to verify it is correct. Then enter your legal name, check the signature statement, and press the Sign and Submit button to submit your report to TCEQ.  
\* indicates a required field

**CCN Information**

CCN:  
CCN Name:  
CCN Address:  
County:  
CCN Phone Number:  
RN:  
Account Receivable (AR):

**RAF Information**

Assessment Rate: 1%  
Total Revenues: \$100,000.00  
Report Exemption Amount: YES  
Total Exempt Revenues: \$1,000.00  
Report Year Length: FULL YEAR

**RAF CY 2017 Assessment Amount**

Total Assessment Amount: \$990.00

I certify that I have personally examined and am familiar with the information being submitted in this regulatory assessment report and that the submitted information is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information. By entering my name below and pressing the "Sign and Submit" button, I certify that:

1. I am TCEQ TESTUSER.
2. I have the authority to submit this information.
3. I am submitting the Regulatory Assessment for the Calendar Year 2017.
4. By entering my name below and pressing "Sign and Submit", I am executing an electronic signature equivalent to my written signature.

Legal Name:

This constitutes an electronic signature legally equivalent to my written signature.

Do Not Sign Sign and Submit

**Important:** It may take several minutes to sign and submit your data. Please do not click the "Sign and Submit" button again.  
Thank you.

Figure 8 - Sign Off and Certify Page

13. Before completing the electronic signature step, review all the information for the CCN and the Revenue for the Utility.
14. When you are certain that all information is correct and you have read the full statement beginning with "I certify..." type in your full legal first and last name into the "Legal Name" field.
15. Check the box next to the statement "This constitutes an electronic signature legally equivalent to my written signature."
16. Click Sign and Submit.

https://www3tst.tceq.texas.gov/sunss/index.cfm?fuseac  
 TCEQ SUNSS

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
 Help >> Contact Us >> Logout >>  
 SUNSS Home  
 14:30

**RAF CY 2017 Confirmation**  
 SUNSS

Please print this page.  
 This page confirms your submittal to the TCEQ.  
 Your confirmation number is 49.  
 The security data hash code is  
 85F9EAEF7E037E9C3343DC4363115ED72DCAB482EB79CBA4DEBD4B59062C4D44.  
 You will also receive a confirmation e-mail.

Your assessment amount is listed below. You may pay electronically using the TCEQ ePay application. Please press either the Pay with TCEQ ePay or the Other Payment below for more information.

**Regulatory Assessment for the Calendar Year 2017**

**CCN Information**  
 CCN:  
 CCN Name:  
 CCN Address:  
 County:  
 CCN Phone Number:  
 RN:  
 Account Receivable (AR):

**RAF Information**  
 Assessment Rate: 1%  
 Total Revenues: \$100,000.00  
 Report Exemption Amount: YES  
 Total Exempt Revenues: \$1,000.00  
 Report Year Length: FULL YEAR

**RAF CY 2017 Assessment Amount**  
 Total Assessment Amount: \$990.00

I certify that I have personally examined and am familiar with the information being submitted in this regulatory assessment report and that the submitted information is true, accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information. By entering my name below and pressing the "Sign and Submit" button, I certify that:

1. I am TEST USER.
2. I have the authority to submit this information.
3. I am knowingly and intentionally submitting the Regulatory Assessment for the Calendar Year 2017.
4. By entering my name below and pressing "Sign and Submit", I am executing an electronic signature equivalent to my written signature.

Legal Name: TEST USER

Figure 9 - Calculated Assessment Amount

17. The page will again show you all the information you just certified along with the calculated Total Assessment Amount (RAF amount owed)
18. You will receive an email with your RAF information. However, still make sure to **print this page for your records.**
19. The Utility has the option of paying now by clicking the "Pay with TCEQ ePay" or by mail by clicking "Other Payment."

## ePay Payment

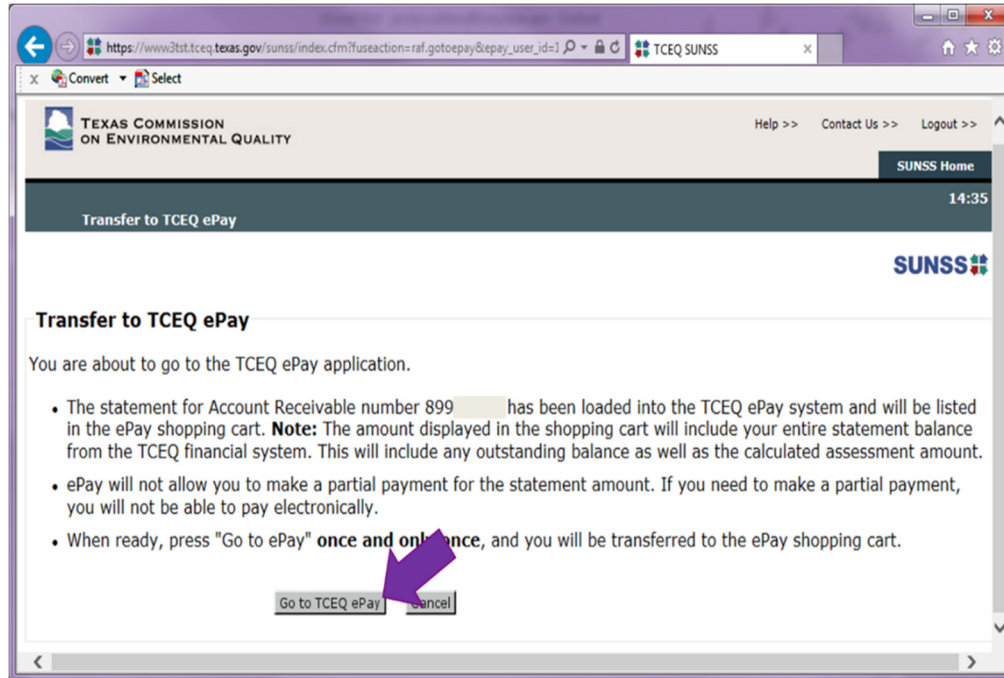


Figure 10 - Go to ePay

20. Carefully read the information on the Transfer to TCEQ ePay.

21. This will direct you from the SUNSS portal to the TCEQ ePay Shopping Cart with the Total Assessment Amount (RAF amount owed) already loaded.

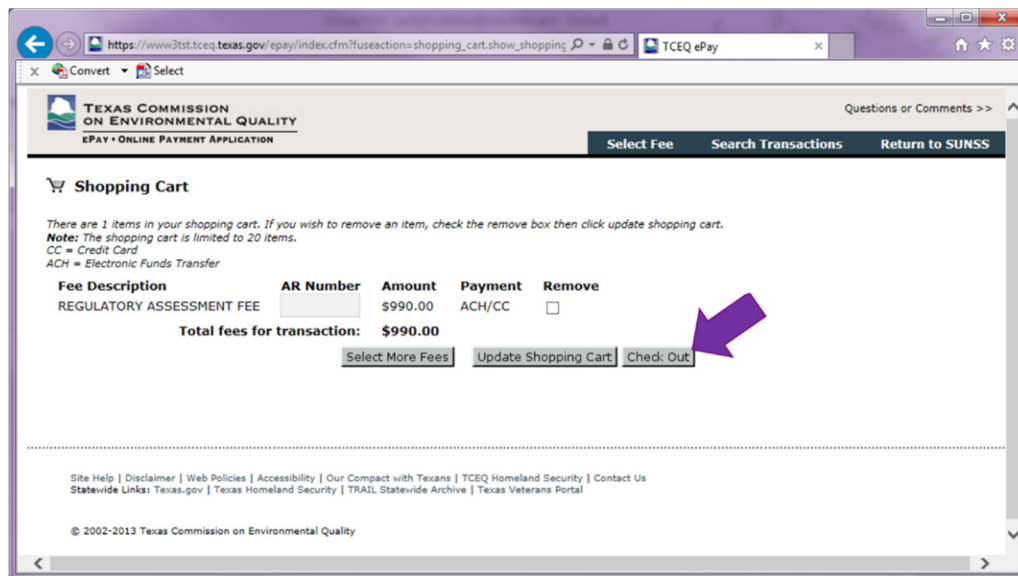


Figure 11 - ePay Shopping Cart

22. Confirm the Amount shown and click on Check Out.

23. Follow the TCEQ ePay prompts to remit your RAF payment by credit card or electronic bank transfer (ACH).

## Other Payment

24. If the utility wishes to send payment by check in the mail, an invoice statement will be mailed to the address on file for the utility within 2 weeks.

25. Please remit your payment with the invoice statement to the TCEQ.