

In 2011 TCEQ Commissioner Garcia and his counterpart in the Mexican State of Tamaulipas at the Secretary of Environment and Urban Development, Homero de la Garza, signed a Memorandum of Cooperation, vowing to work together in solidarity on environmental issues of common mutual interest.

The two states drafted a work plan and began collaborating on key areas of interest. The areas identified included: municipal hazardous waste, landfill operations, and implementing a vehicle inspection and maintenance program.

On February 16, 2012, Heberto Cavazos, the Undersecretary for the environment of Tamaulipas' environmental agency SEDUMA, and their general council Victor Arceo came to Austin to learn about Texas' Inspection and Maintenance program.

We reached out to Texas DPS, with whom TCEQ runs the I/M program, and they were extremely helpful in providing valuable insight on administration of such a large program.

TCEQ management presented on Texas' program and SEDUMA talked about their program – which led to some very interesting comparisons. The group toured TCEQ's I/M laboratory, getting a feel for the testing equipment and procedures. At the end of the day, Texas DPS led a tour of a private testing facility in north Austin where the group saw a real-world test and viewed the program from the perspective of the customer and the shops that perform the test.

Our colleagues from Tamaulipas got to tour and see the dynamometer which is an acceleration simulation mode and the on-board diagnostic, which is the EPA-preferred method, so there are two different kinds of tests, and this will help them decide which they'd actually like to do.

We share 370 miles of common border with Tamaulipas and so whatever we can do in Texas to help them improve their environmental programs and environmental management will benefit not only Tamaulipas residents but will benefit Texas residents and the shared environmental border that we both have.