

**RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS
NEWS RELEASE - AUGUST 4, 2008**

VICTOR G. CARRILLO
Commissioner

MICHAEL L. WILLIAMS
Chairman

ELIZABETH A. JONES
Commissioner

Contact: Ramona Nye

512-463-4817

**CLEANUP PROGRAM HELPS NUECES COUNTY DEVELOP FORMER OILFIELD SITE
INTO MALL**

AUSTIN—Due to its successful completion of the Railroad Commission's Brownfields Redevelopment Program, the Commission has awarded Nueces County with a certificate of completion for cleanup of a 30-acre, former oilfield tract in Robstown. Nueces County has sold the property to a developer who plans to build a 350,000-square-foot outlet mall on the site.

The Nueces County site is the sixth site cleaned up in Texas under the RRC's Brownfields Program since it began in 2004. The Brownfields Program identifies abandoned oil and gas drilling and production sites, and promotes voluntary cleanup by providing EPA federal grant funding for site assessments and cleanup.

In 2002, oil and other hydrocarbons were found at one area of the Nueces County site at a depth of 5 to 8 feet. In September 2004, Nueces County notified the RRC Brownfields Response Program about the site. An environmental site assessment confirmed the presence of hydrocarbons in a limited area and indicated that the hydrocarbons were associated with former oil and gas well lease activities. The county applied for and received a Targeted Brownfields Assessment through the Commission's Brownfields program. In August 2004, the County had approved using \$46,000 to perform its own cleanup and assessment at the site. However, the RRC's Brownfields Program enabled the Commission to conduct the assessment at no cost to the county.

The RRC reviewed historical aerial photographs and oil and gas records to pinpoint the source of crude oil and verify no other sources were present. A soil investigation was completed in 2006, and 15 yards of soil were removed from the site in May 2008. A Brownfields certificate of completion was granted to the county in July 2008.

Commission Chairman Michael L. Williams said, "I commend Nueces County on their efforts at redeveloping this site, which will now result in new jobs for Nueces County and increased property tax revenue for Robstown."

Commissioner Victor Carrillo said, "This program provides exciting new opportunities to landowners, developers and local governments to turn former abandoned oilfield sites into useful, productive properties."

Commissioner Elizabeth Ames Jones said, "The commission encourages landowners who believe their property may be a former oil or gas well site to apply to this program to benefit from our staff's expertise in properly assessing and cleaning up the property."

County Judge Loyd Neal said, "We appreciate the assistance of the Railroad Commission on this important project. Working together, we were able to turn a problematic piece of real estate into one of the most exciting retail developments Nueces County has seen in years."

For more information on the [RRC's Brownfields Response Program](#) see the Commission's website: www.rrc.state.tx.us under "Agency Services-Environmental Protection," or call Aimee Beveridge at 512-463-7995 or Byron Ellington at 512-463-5983.
