



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 21, 2017

Ms. Elizabeth Reynolds  
Paralegal  
City of Dallas  
City Hall  
1500 Marilla Street, Room 7DN  
Dallas, Texas 75201

OR2017-26710

Dear Ms. Reynolds:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 684741.

The City of Dallas (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to back flow assemblies located in the city. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.<sup>1</sup>

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 of the Government Code encompasses information protected by other statutes. As part of the Texas Homeland Security Act, sections 418.176 through 418.182 were added to chapter 418 of the Government Code. These provisions make confidential certain information related to terrorism. You assert the submitted

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<sup>1</sup>We assume that the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. See Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

information is made confidential by section 418.181 of the Government Code. Section 418.181 provides;

Those documents or portions of documents in the possession of a governmental entity are confidential if they identify the technical details of particular vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure to an act of terrorism.

*Id.* § 418.181. The fact that information may relate to a governmental body's security concerns does not make the information *per se* confidential under the Texas Homeland Security Act. *See* Open Records Decision No. 649 at 3 (1996) (language of confidentiality provision controls scope of its protection). Furthermore, the mere recitation by a governmental body of a statute's key terms is not sufficient to demonstrate the applicability of a claimed provision. As with any exception to disclosure, a governmental body asserting one of the confidentiality provisions of the Texas Homeland Security Act must adequately explain how the responsive records fall within the scope of the claimed provision. *See* Gov't Code § 552.301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must explain how claimed exception to disclosure applies).

You inform us the submitted information contains the exact location and technical details of portions of the city's water system. You assert, and we agree, the city's water system is critical infrastructure. *See generally id.* § 421.001 (defining "critical infrastructure" to include "all public or private assets, systems, and functions vital to the security, governance, public health and safety, economy, or morale of the state or the nation"). You explain the submitted information "reveals the exact placement of water lines together with the flow directions." You argue "release of the requested information would expose potential vulnerabilities of the city's [water] system by showing persons where the most damage could be inflicted[.]" You further argue "[t]he information could be used by terrorists or other criminal actors to disrupt water service on a massive scale[.]" Based on your arguments and our review, we find you have demonstrated release of the submitted information would identify the technical details of particular vulnerabilities of the city's water system to an act of terrorism. Thus, the city must withhold the submitted information in its entirety under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 418.181 of the Government Code.<sup>2</sup>

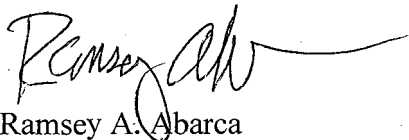
This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

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<sup>2</sup>As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of this information.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at [http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl\\_ruling\\_info.shtml](http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml), or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ramsey Abarca", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ramsey A. Abarca  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

RAA/gw

Ref: ID# 684741

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)