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## Know what snake gassing is? You can do it in Texas

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Snake gassing is still a legal thing in Texas and it appears likely to stay that way, at least for a while longer.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission this week yanked a proposed ban on the practice from the November meeting agenda.

For those not familiar with snake gassing, it is the practice of spraying gasoline into their winter dens until the fumes flush them out.

That makes them easier to catch and bundle for sale.

Hunters sell rattlesnakes by the pound at an annual spring roundup. They're displayed, milked for venom used in medicine, then slaughtered for their skin and their meat. Fried rattlesnake tastes like chewy chicken. Only the snake has lots of bones.

But, the practice has long-standing critics. Groups, including The Center for Biological Diversity and the Texas Snake Initiative, have asked the state over several years to put a halt to snake gassing.

They say the practice befouls the ground and hurts other, non-targeted animals in the process.

"Not just snakes, but foxes, burrowing owls, toads and hundreds of insects can be killed when snake dens are gassed," Collette Adkins, a scientist and attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity said in a statement.

Currently, 29 states ban the gassing of snake burrows.

Proponents of the practice say gassing makes it easier to catch the snakes and is an efficient way to handle the hunting.

The decision to drop the issue from the November agenda was made by Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission chairman Dan Friedkin. But, the commission hasn't given any reason for pulling the agenda item.