



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Department of Toxic Substances Control

## News Release

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Barbara A. Lee, Director

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### **DTSC Releases Guidelines for Expedited Actions at High-Risk Properties near Exide Facility**

*Plan details how properties will be prioritized based on high lead levels, sensitive populations*

**SACRAMENTO** – The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) announced guidelines today that allow for a limited number of expedited actions, including cleanups, to prevent exposure to lead in soil at properties around the closed Exide facility in Vernon before the residential Cleanup Plan and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) are certified this summer.

“We are utilizing all of the resources at our disposal to ensure that we are able to take action to protect the most sensitive populations impacted by the presence of lead in the soil from the Exide operations,” said DTSC Director Barbara A. Lee.

Under the new [Time Critical Removal Action \(TCRA\) guidance](#), these actions will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be based on properties with high levels of lead in the soil and the greatest exposures to sensitive populations.

As part of the initial screening to determine whether to undertake a TCRA, DTSC will look at properties with sampling results showing lead at or above 1,000 parts per million (ppm) based on a 95% upper confidence level (UCL). Used by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the 95% UCL is a health protective statistical method that analyzes soil sample results across an entire property and is more health protective than simply averaging the samples.

DTSC will act to ensure timely and appropriate actions are taken to prevent exposures to young children and pregnant women from high levels of lead-impacted soils largely at or near the surface. DTSC will also consider expedited actions at properties where a resident has a blood-lead level at or above five micrograms per deciliter, which is the level used by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to identify children with elevated blood-lead levels.

DTSC is overseeing the investigation and cleanup of residential properties, schools, parks, daycares and childcare centers within a 1.7-mile radius of the Exide facility, an area known as the Preliminary Investigation Area. It is the largest environmental cleanup ever of residential properties in California.

Last month, the Department released for public comment a Draft Residential Cleanup Plan and

Draft EIR, which identifies potential environmental impacts associated with the cleanup. Once the cleanup plan and Draft EIR are finalized, cleanup activities are expected to begin in the summer.

However, community members and local leaders have expressed concern that expedited cleanups and other actions be considered for high-risk properties while environmental review is ongoing. The new guidance outlines how these actions will be conducted in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and consistent with the concerns expressed by community members. The Department consulted with the U.S. EPA in developing the guidance.

Based on an assessment of sampling results for more than 6,000 properties, as well as an analysis of similar cleanup projects and the cumulative impacts analysis in the Draft EIR, DTSC anticipates that there will be no adverse environmental impacts from taking expedited actions on a limited number of properties under this guidance.

The new guidance and expedited cleanups are focused on protecting public health in coordination with other cleanup activities. Under the new guidance, DTSC is undertaking the following actions:

- DTSC is conducting an initial screening of properties where a statistical analysis of the sampling shows lead present at levels of 1,000 ppm or greater, based on the 95% UCL.
- DTSC is also evaluating sampling data for evidence of localized exposures where lead is present at concentrations greater than 1,000 ppm in discrete areas where exposure is likely.
- Properties where there is a significant likelihood of lead exposure for sensitive individuals (for example, licensed daycare facilities with very young children) are also being screened.
- All screening will consider factors that affect the degree and likelihood of potential exposure of sensitive individuals, including, but not limited to, the level and extent of lead present and the location of the lead on the property.
- Decisions to conduct a TCRA will be made on a case-by-case basis where the analysis shows an imminent threat to sensitive individuals is likely, after considering all relevant factors as discussed in the TCRA Guidance.
- TCRA may include a range of actions that can effectively interrupt the exposure pathway, including, for example, barriers, stabilization, and removal of soil.
- DTSC will conduct cleanups and other actions only after property owners and tenants have voluntarily agreed to allow such work.

The Department is encouraging individuals within the Preliminary Investigation Area to have their blood tested for lead by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. DTSC is also providing property owners and residents with information regarding measures to prevent exposure to lead, such as covering or eliminating access to bare soil containing elevated levels of lead with barriers, mulch, gravel, or other means.

In April 2016, Governor Brown signed legislation that directs \$176.6 million to expedite and expand testing of approximately 10,000 properties and to clean up about 2,500 properties with the highest levels of lead and greatest risk of exposure.

DTSC recently extended the public comment period on the Draft Residential Cleanup Plan and Draft EIR until February 15, 2017. To review the draft documents and submit a comment, click [here](#).



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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov). To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

***The mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated resources, enforcing hazardous waste laws, reducing hazardous waste generation, and encouraging the manufacture of chemically safer products.***