

Office of Pollution Prevention and Green Technology

The Office of Pollution Prevention and Green Technology (OPPGT) administers programs that protect public health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous waste and products that contain toxic substances. The Office includes the Pollution Prevention, Green Technology and Toxics in Products branches.

The Pollution Prevention branch provides guidance and technical support for businesses and the public on pollution prevention strategies and tools to reduce hazardous waste generation, including reducing the toxicity of waste. The Green Technology branch evaluates innovative technologies to treat, recycle, and eliminate or reduce hazardous waste generation, and to clean up contaminated sites. The Toxics in Products branch works to reduce toxic chemicals in consumer products and ensure that products are appropriately managed at the end of their useful life.

The Pollution Prevention and Green Technology branches have formed the core of DTSC's pollution prevention program since the late 1980s. Consistent with DTSC's new focus on Green Chemistry in consumer products, the Toxics in Products branch was moved from the Hazardous Waste Management Program to OPPGT in 2008.

Pollution Prevention Branch

The Pollution Prevention branch identifies best management practices for reducing and eliminating hazardous waste generation, including toxics use reduction. The program works directly with businesses, and indirectly, through local programs, to deliver this information to those who can use it. These strategies often help businesses save money while protecting the environment and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements. The branch provides technical guidance for California businesses, and supports local Green Business programs.

- Green business program
 - The P2 Program provides technical and administrative support to the state's green business programs. These programs oversee a voluntary green business certification program that assists businesses in "greening" their operations. Businesses participating benefit by saving money, increasing worker safety and productivity, minimizing their impact on the environment and gaining a marketing edge from their green certification.
- SB 14 and SB 1916 –Sector-based programs
 - The Hazardous Waste Source Reduction and Management Review Act, commonly known as "SB 14," requires that businesses that routinely generate large quantities of hazardous waste do the following, every four years:
 - Evaluate waste-generating processes
 - Identify strategies and a plan to reduce the generation of hazardous waste; and

- Report on progress in reducing waste and improving hazardous waste management practices.
- DTSC's pollution prevention program also implements sector-based voluntary technical assistance programs ("SB 1916"). Examples of P2 focus areas and projects conducted recently include the vehicle service and repair program, the metal finishing and coatings sector, and operations at marinas and boatyards.

Green Technology Branch

The Green Technology branch evaluates technologies that reduce the use of hazardous chemicals or reduce hazardous waste generation. This branch provides objective information on innovative environmental technologies through research, demonstration projects, data analysis, and technology performance evaluation. Branch activities include:

- Facilitating the development and deployment of new environmental technologies, programs, and initiatives through participation on the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC) which is a state-lead coalition that includes 50 states, USEPA, industry, academia, and community stakeholders as members.
- Serving in a leadership role on the Sustainable Remediation Forum (SURF) to create a framework and opportunities for incorporating sustainability principles and practices into remediation activities.
- Researching the development of sustainable bioplastics made from waste, to address the plastic ocean debris problem and to increase recycling rates.

Toxics in Products Branch

Even before moving to OPPGT in 2008, what is now known as the Toxics in Products branch was responsible for implementing a number of programs that regulate hazardous substances in consumer products. Most of these programs – electronic waste, universal waste, and household hazardous waste – focus on how products should be managed when discarded. The branch efforts focus on reducing toxic chemicals in products through regulation, research, education and outreach efforts to industry, local partners, and stakeholders.

The branch is also working on implementing laws that restrict or ban toxic chemicals in products sold in California (e.g., lead in jewelry, heavy metals in packaging, lead in faucets, and lead wheel weights) or that require manufacturers to take responsibility for their hazardous products at the end of their useful life, such as the Mercury Thermostat Collection Act, which requires manufacturers to establish a collection and recycling program for out-of-service mercury-added thermostats.