

Fact Sheet, August 2008



DEPARTMENT OF
TOXIC SUBSTANCES
CONTROL

*The mission of the
Department of Toxic
Substances Control is
to provide the
highest level of safety,
and to protect public
health and the
environment from
toxic harm.*

Guidance for Environmental Investigations of School Sites Available for Public Review

A draft guidance document that will serve as a comprehensive reference for conducting environmental assessments and investigations for proposed school site acquisition and new school building construction is available for public review and comment. The draft document titled, *School Environmental Assessment Manual (SEAM), Interim Guidance Document for Environmental Assessments and Investigations of School Sites* was developed by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and intended for use by school districts, county offices of education, charter entities, and their qualified environmental assessors.

Description of the Draft Guidance Document

This guidance document provides guidelines and requirements for conducting the following environmental assessments and investigations in accordance with the Education Code:

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Preliminary Environmental (or Endangerment) Assessment
- Supplemental Site Investigation

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD (EXTENDED) **August 25 – October 7, 2008**

The draft guidance document is available for review and public comment beginning August 25 and ending October 7, 2008. Copies of the draft guidance document can be viewed at the information repositories listed on page 3 or on-line at http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/Schools/index.cfm#Advisories_and_Guidance. Please submit written comments by October 7, 2008 to:

Cynthia Miller, Public Participation Specialist
Department of Toxic Substances Control
9211 Oakdale Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311

You may also email your comments before the deadline date no later than 5 p.m. to: cmiller@dtsc.ca.gov or fax them to: (818) 717-6575.

Before finalizing the draft guidance document, DTSC will review and respond in writing to all who submit comments and provide their name and address. This document, called a Response to Comments document will also be placed in the information repositories.

*Si desea información en español, comuníquese con: Jeanne Garcia al
(818) 717-6573 o número gratis 1-866-495-5651.*



State of California



Cal/EPA



This guidance document does not address cleanup (removal or remedial actions) covered by the Health and Safety Code. This guidance document should be used in conjunction with the most current DTSC advisories, fact sheets, and guidance documents available via the School Site Evaluation Web page at

[http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/Schools/index.cfm#Advisories and Guidance](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/Schools/index.cfm#Advisories%20and%20Guidance).

Appendices include annotated samples of documents submitted to DTSC with subject matter headings and associated information. The body is organized into the following five chapters:

- **Chapter 1** describes the purpose and organization of the guidance document.
- **Chapter 2** describes the environmental review process for school sites. This includes history of DTSC involvement in school sites, an overview of the California school site and plan approval process, and how environmental review conducted under DTSC oversight fits into the overall process. This chapter also describes statutory requirements, cost recovery agreements, environmental assessor qualifications, roles and responsibilities of parties involved, and document submittal.
- **Chapter 3** summarizes the Phase I Environmental Assessment and Phase I Addendum processes, including objectives, possible determinations, recommended supplemental evaluation areas, and areas not addressed by DTSC.
- **Chapter 4** summarizes the Preliminary Environmental (or Endangerment) Assessment process, including objectives, scoping meetings, public participation activities, human health screening approaches, possible determinations, available sampling guidelines, and sampling methods.
- **Chapter 5** summarizes the Supplemental Site Investigation process, including objectives, scoping meetings, public

participation activities, human health screening approaches, and possible determinations.

This guidance document will be subject to review and revision as necessary. It should not be considered enforceable or regulatory in nature, and does not have the force or effect of law or regulation. Use of this guidance document will not substitute for professional judgment exercised by qualified environmental assessors conducting assessments and investigations of school sites.

Applicability

The guidance document applies to school districts, county offices of education, and charter entities seeking state funding pursuant to the Leroy F. Greene School Facilities Act of 1998 (Ed. Code, tit. 1, div. 1, pt. 10, ch. 12.5) to acquire, build upon, or expand school properties in accordance with Education Code section 17078.54, subdivision (c)(1)(A) (charter schools) or sections 17268 and 17213.1 (public schools).

These statutes require environmental review, with DTSC oversight, of proposed acquisition of school sites and construction of new school buildings, with the exception of minor additions exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Education Code section 17268, subdivision (c).

How to Submit Comments

Submit comments by standard mail, facsimile, or electronic mail to:

Cynthia Miller
Public Participation Specialist
Department of Toxic Substances Control
9211 Oakdale Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311
Phone: (818) 717-6568
Fax: (818) 717-6575
E-mail: cmiller@dtsc.ca.gov

Information Repository Locations

The draft guidance document is available on-line at:
http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/Schools/index.cfm#Advisories_and_Guidance and at the following DTSC offices:

Berkeley Regional Office
700 Heinz Avenue Suite 200
Berkeley, CA 94710-2721
Contact Lule Varela at (510) 540-3800 for an appointment.

Imperial County CUPA (Certified Unified Program Agency) Office
301 Heber Avenue
Calexico, CA 92231-2861
Contact Laura Florez at (760) 768-7107 for an appointment.

Chatsworth Regional Office
9211 Oakdale Avenue
Chatsworth, CA 91311-6505
Contact Vivien Tutan at (818) 717-6521 for an appointment.

Clovis Field Office
1515 Tollhouse Road
Clovis, CA 93611-0522
Contact Sarah Toles at (559) 297-3905 for an appointment.

Cypress Regional Office
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630-4732
Contact Julie Johnson at (714) 484-5337 for an appointment.

Sacramento Regional Office - Cal Center
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento, CA 95826-3200
Contact Bobbie Jensen at (916) 255-3758 for an appointment.

San Diego Field Office
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 150
San Diego, CA 92123-4340
Contact Cleo Navarette-Munoz at (858) 637-5531 for an appointment.

For More Information

For more information about this guidance document, please contact the following DTSC representatives:

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Notice to Hearing-Impaired Individuals

You can obtain additional information about the draft guidance document by using the California State Relay Service at 1 (888) 877-5378 (TDD). Request to speak to Cynthia Miller at (818) 717-6568.

