



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Department of Toxic Substances Control

News Release

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Barbara A. Lee, Director

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DTSC Announces Funding for Initial Cleanup and Further Testing in the Expanded Area Around the Exide Facility

SACRAMENTO – Demonstrating its commitment to protect the health of residents, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) announced it will begin the cleanup of residential properties contaminated with lead in an expanded testing area near the Exide Technologies battery recycling plant in Vernon. DTSC has secured \$7 million to begin the cleanup and to continue testing the properties in the expanded area.

DTSC recently announced that preliminary test results from the expanded area determined that between 5,000 to 10,000 residential properties may be affected. DTSC will use more than \$3 million of the secured funds for the cleanup of affected properties and will begin work as soon as possible on the properties with the greatest potential exposures to lead. The remaining funding will be used for continued testing.

“DTSC is committed to putting in place ongoing funding to continue testing and cleanup as long as needed in these communities,” DTSC Director Barbara A. Lee said. “We are unwavering in our dedication to making these neighborhoods safe.”

Lee announced the cleanup and funding at a meeting of the Exide Technologies Advisory Group on Thursday evening at the Huntington Park Community Center. DTSC will work with the Advisory Group, members of the community and other agencies, including the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the California Department of Public Health while developing the cleanup plan for the contaminated properties.

DTSC will hold Exide Technologies accountable for its lead contamination. DTSC also will identify and pursue others who may be responsible for the lead contamination. DTSC will work collaboratively with other federal, state and local agencies to leverage expertise and resources to recover the costs of the cleanup which may also involve the remediation of lead based paint.

DTSC’s strategy going forward involves developing and implementing a plan to test other potentially affected properties, identify properties for cleanup and determine the full extent of Exide’s contamination. The cleanup plan will follow twin tracks of putting funding in place to begin the earliest action cleanups and quickly address the greatest exposure, while developing and implementing a longer-term cleanup plan for the larger project to address all the contaminated properties.

The next stage of the testing plan will include testing in properties to the east of the Exide

Technologies facility in the City of Commerce and other areas. DTSC plans to present a Draft Testing Plan to the Advisory Group in September. After gathering input from the Group, DTSC will finalize and begin testing shortly thereafter.

In 2013, DTSC determined that the Exide facility was responsible for lead contamination in the yards of two residential neighborhoods that the South Coast Air Quality Management District determined were the most likely impacted from Exide's emissions. DTSC ordered Exide to sample and cleanup the contaminated properties. Cleanup has been completed at 150 residential properties in those areas.

The Exide Technologies facility recycled lead from used automotive batteries and other sources. DTSC informed Exide in February 2015 that it would not approve a permit for the facility, and on March 12, DTSC issued an order to close the facility. The order requires Exide to pay \$26 million into a trust fund while they close and cleanup contamination at the facility. Exide has already deposited \$9 million into an account for residential cleanup and will provide another down payment of \$5 million by March 2020 for residential cleanup.



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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. 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 properties, identifying and promoting safer ingredients in consumer products, and ensuring stewardship through enforcement, regulation and pollution prevention.