

CVCI NEWSLETTER

Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative • May 2024

The Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative (CVCI) is a multi-year investment in communities that suffer from multiple sources of contamination and is one of the boldest Environmental Justice budget initiatives in California history.

STUDENT INTERNS EXPLORE CAREER PATHWAYS WHILE BUILDING JOB-FINDING SKILLS

Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities (CVCI) **Workforce Development (WFD)** Getting in Gear: In partnership with Riverside County's Workforce Development Center, CVCI's student interns participated in Resume Writing and Interviewing workshops on March 25 and 27. The facilitator tailored the workshop to provide students from vulnerable communities the essential skills needed to write compelling resumes that showcase their qualifications and experiences to employers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. On March 29, the interns participated in a DTSC Career Panel with a



diverse group of DTSC Staff who shared career advice and expertise in sectors the student interns wish to pursue. Check out the new [Workforce Development](#) page on the DTSC website, where you can see student spotlights profiling each intern, as well as upcoming events such as the first CVCI Student Intern Symposium coming up on May 30-31.



ADVANCING COMMUNITY INTERESTS AT CLEANUP SITES

DTSC is drafting a **Community Benefits Agreement (CBA)** policy to ensure that the department is aligned with CVCI's goals of advancing environmental justice and investing in vulnerable communities. The CBA team is diligently crafting a comprehensive and effective policy that promotes benefits beyond traditional site cleanups. Stay tuned to CBA updates by

[signing up for the CVCI CBA Program E-List](#)



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT FUNDING NOW OPEN!

Our [Technical Assistance Grant \(TAG\)](#) program provides communities near DTSC cleanup sites with grants to hire technical advisors to interpret data, explain the regulatory process, and prepare for public engagement. The grant amounts range between \$40,000-\$150,000. Applications are now open on DTSC's [application portal](#).

Wondering if you're eligible? Start with the [Eligibility Checklist](#). If you meet the

criteria and want to apply, you can begin the application process.

The first step in the application is to send a [Letter of Intent](#) to DTSC_TAGprogram@dtsc.ca.gov. The Letter of Intent is a notice posted on the DTSC website for 15 days that announces to the public the cleanup site for which you are applying. Since only one grant is awarded per site, we highly encourage groups to work together rather than sending competing Letters of Intent for the same site.

The second step is to consult the [TAG Application User Guide](#) to get started on your application. After completing the application, learn about finding and hiring a Technical Advisor by using the [Technical Advisor Guide](#).

Because we understand that many groups don't have the startup funds to launch their projects, DTSC offers an advanced payment option, providing community groups with up to 25 percent of grant funds up front. For more information on this option, review our [Advance Payment Checklist](#) and [Advanced Pay Guidance](#).

ROUND 2 REVITALIZATION GRANT AWARDEES ANNOUNCED, ROUND 1 APPLICATION AMENDMENTS NOW OPEN!

On February 29, DTSC's Office of Brownfields announced the awardees for Round Two of its **Equitable Community Revitalization Grants (ECRG)**! Thirty-two grantees received a total of \$41 million to revitalize properties in three categories:

- 8 community-wide assessments
- 17 environmental investigations
- 7 site cleanups.

While the awardees are at different stages of the cleanup process, the funding they

receive will promote beneficial reuse of contaminated brownfields across California.

In response to needs highlighted in ECRG discussions and in a survey, Round One awardees have an exciting opportunity to request time extensions and/or budget amendments to their applications. Office of Brownfields staff

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have begun screening applications.

The unincorporated Alameda County community of Ashland needs more open space, so the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District (HARD) is determined to develop new parks for this diverse and underserved community. In 2021, HARD purchased a 1.7-acre parcel on the historic East 14th Street thoroughfare to expand Ashland's community green space and build a park.

But the development faced a hurdle – arsenic and lead contamination in the soil, uncovered during pre-purchase due diligence investigation.

HARD applied for and received an ECRG Round One Site Cleanup grant to

remediate the soil and has used the funds to:

- Create and receive approval for a Remedial Action Plan
- Perform public outreach and hold a public comment period about the plan
- Bid and award the remediation project
- Dig out contaminated soil
- Complete sampling and a Remedial Action Completion Report

As of the end of March 2024, HARD has successfully removed the contaminated soil, and replaced it with clean fill soil. Construction can soon begin on what will be Ashland's largest park, showing tangible progress for equity in the community.



East 14th St. Park site after excavation of contaminated soil.

DRY CLEANER CLEANUP EFFORTS MOVING FORWARD

DTSC's **Discovery and Enforcement (D&E)** program continues to make progress on its work holding polluters accountable in communities excessively burdened by environmental contamination. It is focusing on sites containing dry-cleaning chemicals such as perchloroethylene (PCE), which can potentially cause cancer if released in the environment.

D&E is moving forward this spring in the Discovery Phase work for its Year One projects. That will lead to summer field work testing soil and air for contamination levels, followed by reporting those results into the fall. Later this year, work will begin on Year Two sites, beginning with Environmental Site Assessments.

Members of the public can submit any sites for evaluation through a petition process. If you'd like to recommend a site for investigation and/or enforcement, please submit a [petition application](#).

On May 8, D&E held the first of three webinars to discuss the petition process and other topics with our local and county partners. This first webinar was for the 33 counties in the program's East region. Future workshops will be scheduled in the summer and fall for the West and South regions. Participants from local governments, public health departments, and California Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs) will get an overview of the D&E program, discuss its future sustainability, and learn about the sampling activities being done in their areas. CUPAs are entities certified by the California Environmental Protection Agency to administer the state's Unified Program by carrying out and enforcing hazardous waste management regulations. This first webinar will be for our partners in the Eastern Region of the State. Dates for the next two events – focusing on the West and South regions – will be announced once they're solidified. Do you have any questions about D&E program? Email us at

DiscoveryEnforcement@dtsc.ca.gov or call our toll-free hotline: (833) 862-1615.



Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Engagement Team at a former dry cleaner site In Fresno: L-R: Tracy Fuerte, Samantha Reid, Denise Won, Vivian Huynh, Tito Sanchez



A canister set on site will capture vapor gas from the air for an 8-hour period.