

# DTSC ANNOUNCEMENT

**Department of Toxic Substances Control** – DTSC's Mission is to protect California's people, communities, and environment from toxic substances, to enhance economic vitality by restoring contaminated land, and to compel manufacturers to make safer consumer products.

## DTSC Revises Sea Level Rise Guidance

**Who?** The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)

**What?** DTSC is releasing the following documents:

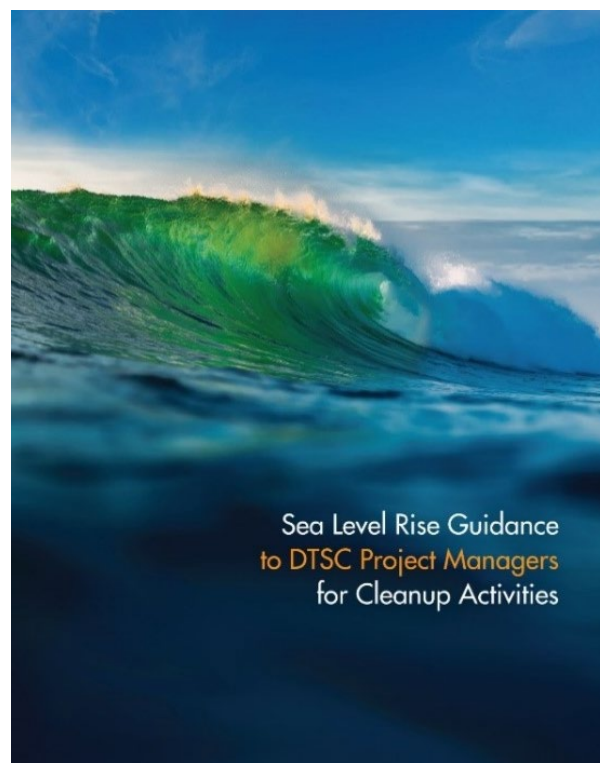
1. Response to Comments (RTC) document addressing public comments/questions/concerns submitted during the public comment period regarding the draft Sea Level Rise Guidance.
2. Revised Sea Level Rise (SLR) Guidance based on public comments received and evolving science.

**When?** Both the RTC document and the revised SLR Guidance will be available for review on **October 1, 2024**; however, it is important to remember the development of the SLR Guidance is an ongoing process and will be revisited as SLR science evolves.

**Why?** The SLR Guidance is a statewide guidance that DTSC Site Mitigation and Restoration Program (SMRP) project managers use at all project sites when evaluating and deciding on cleanup remedies; therefore, revisions to the SLR Guidance are necessary to ensure the best cleanup remedies are selected to protect human health and the environment.

**Where?** The RTC document and the revised SLR Guidance will be available for review at DTSC's SLR website: <https://dtsc.ca.gov/climate-change/>

**Public Comment Information:** A public comment period was held from February 2023 through October 2023. 401 comments were received and evaluated for incorporation into the revised SLR Guidance. Along with the revised SLR Guidance issuance, an RTC document has also been issued to share the comments received. Responses to the comments received are grouped into generalized categories for ease of review.



**Hearing impaired** individuals may use the California Relay Service at 711 or 800-735-2929 TTY/VCO/HCO to voice. Additional information on DTSC sites can be found through our [EnviroStor database](#).



# About Sea Level Rise

Climate change is causing Sea Level Rise (SLR) to negatively impact communities all along California's coastline. SLR is defined as an increase in the water level of the Earth's oceans resulting from the thermal expansion of ocean water and the melting of land ice. SLR threatens human health and the environment for several reasons. **At DTSC we're focused on mitigating the impact Sea Level Rise can have on contaminated properties we're tasked with cleaning up or overseeing.** Without proper protections and remedy resilience, SLR may adversely affect public health and degrade the environment through an increased presence or release of uncontrolled hazardous substances in surface water, groundwater, air, soil, and sediment. This protection is at the core of DTSC's mission to protect California's people, communities, and environment from toxic substances, to enhance economic vitality by restoring contaminated land, and to compel manufacturers to make safer consumer products.

While DTSC has expertise in the investigation and cleanup of contaminated sites, DTSC partners with other experts for the most current science on SLR. DTSC is collaborating with other state agencies to identify and assess the feasible remedies to mitigate the impacts of SLR. In 2024, the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) updated the [State Agency Sea Level Rise Action Plan for California](#) (California SLR Action Plan) as well as the [State of California Sea Level Rise Guidance: 2024 Science & Policy Update](#), which resulted in significant changes in the DTSC Guidance.

## DTSC Guidance

DTSC has developed guidance to support consistency in addressing sea level rise across all phases of the DTSC cleanup project life cycle. We revised the SLR Guidance for consistency with the current state of SLR science. The content of the SLR Guidance has significantly changed from the first draft because of the 401 public comments, as well as changes to the Ocean Protection Council guidance document. Although revised, the SLR Guidance ensures that DTSC Project Managers evaluate remedies at contaminated sites using a consistent process, so that remedies are resilient both now and into the future. DTSC requires Responsible Parties (RPs) to account for SLR by assessing the vulnerability of sites to SLR. If potential issues with remedy resilience are identified through the assessment, RPs will be required to develop and implement adaptation plans. The Guidance provides information on SLR and related phenomena that can result in damage to remedies and requires **DTSC project managers to consider SLR in the remediation process consistent with the [California SLR Action Plan](#) and California Ocean Protection Council guidance.** DTSC requires an SLR vulnerability assessment (SLRVA) to be conducted to specifically evaluate the proposed or existing remedy at the site for future SLR impacts.

## Timeline

Planning for SLR is an ever-changing process because scientific discoveries and changes in the multitude of factors that influence SLR projections can evolve. DTSC made significant changes to this SLR Guidance since our first draft due to public comments, as well as to coincide with changes to the OPC Guidance. DTSC will continue to update the SLR Guidance as the state of the science continues to evolve. For updates and to sign up for notifications, visit the DTSC SLR website at: <https://dtsc.ca.gov/climate-change>

## Questions?

If you have questions or concerns regarding the SLR Guidance, please contact:  
[DTSC\\_SeaLevelRise@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:DTSC_SeaLevelRise@dtsc.ca.gov)



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