

CVCI NEWSLETTER

Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative • Volume 5

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.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT NOW CLOSED

The **Technical Assistance Grant (TAG)** application is now closed as January 15, 2025, was the last day to apply. Thank you to all who have expressed interest, and we appreciate the effort from all who have applied. The program team is currently reviewing applications. The organizations will be considered in the order that they were received. Stay tuned for a full announcement of all awardees.

Awardee Spotlight

These three community organizations have been awarded a Technical Assistance Grant in winter 2024. With these grants they will inform people of the work being done on DTSC sites in their communities.



Located in San Francisco's Bayview Hunters Point, **Shipyard Trust for the Arts** is a non-profit organization of the Hunters Point Shipyard Artists, a studio community of more than 300 working artists and musicians in the historic naval shipyard. They have received a TAG for Hunters Point Naval Shipyard Parcel B, Parcel C, and Parcel D/Parcel G sites.



Redeemer Community Partnership is a nonprofit community development corporation committed to creating safe, healthy, opportunity-rich communities for children and their families in the South LA area.

They have received a TAG for 1317 West Jefferson Boulevard site in Los Angeles.



GrassRoots Institute is a network of friends, neighbors, and groups who come together to improve their community and contribute to the common good. The Institute grew out of the Mendocino Coast Chapter of the Alliance for Democracy, a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. They have received a TAG for Georgia-Pacific Corporation site located at 90 West Redwood Avenue in Fort Bragg.



GRANTEE ADVOCACY IN ACTION

The September 2024 California Land Recycling Conference's **Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG)** Summit was a success. ECRGrantees, or grant recipients, shared their journey and feedback while other attendees provided their insightful perspectives to the DTSC's Office of Brownfields and executive management. DTSC took the responses received and approved a program update, demonstrating the power of the ECRGrantee's voice in action.



ECRG Summit Attendees actively listening to grantee presentations.



ECRG announces an extension to the submission deadline for Round 1 grantees. Grantees have until February 26, 2026 to submit their grant agreements, with an option for a bonus time extension through February 26, 2027. This extra time will allow grantees to continue working on their beneficial reuse plans, thereby forwarding equity, and revitalizing their communities.

"Hearing from grantees during the conference highlighted the challenges and the importance of this work." —Thanne Berg, Deputy Director of Site Mitigation and Restoration Program.

ECRG Success Story: Crossroads at Washington Opens for Residents

The City of Santa Ana and County of Orange partnered to redevelop 2.29 acres of land into an 86-unit, 100% affordable housing project. The project provided housing for families with incomes at or below 30% of the area median income. After a Phase II assessment discovered abandoned fuel storage tanks and soil contamination on the site, the County and City applied to the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) for the Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG) funding. The funding helped in the investigation and clean-up efforts so that the land could be converted into much needed affordable housing in Santa Ana. With DTSC's assistance, the project was awarded a \$1.05 million-dollar ECRG Round 1 Site-specific Cleanup Grant, which helped complete the project.



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CHDC and Eden Housing Groundbreaking



On December 16, 2024, community leaders, housing advocates, and local officials gathered in Richmond, California, to celebrate the groundbreaking of Legacy Court, a 43-unit affordable housing project led by the Community Housing Development Corporation (CHDC), an Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG) grantee.

This milestone highlights how targeted investment in environmental cleanup can transform contaminated land into community assets that provide affordable housing and hope. The project site, once a blighted and polluted gas station, underwent significant environmental remediation funded through the ECRG program. With this support, CHDC oversaw the removal of over 900 tons of contaminated soil, clearing the way for safe redevelopment.

At the event, Maryam Tasnif-Abbasi, Brownfield Development Manager at the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), emphasized the persistence behind such projects: *"Somebody saw this old gas station. They had a dream. After that dream, they had an idea. Then they had a conversation. Then they had a meeting. Then they had 100 meetings. Then they had 200 meetings. Then they had 300 meetings. We all know what it's like..."*

Her words underscored the vision, collaboration, and determination it takes to transform pollution into possibility. Legacy Court is that transformation and will feature a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units with on-site amenities, including a community kitchen, computer lab, and bike parking. Designed as all-electric with solar panels and energy-efficient appliances, the project serves as an example of how sustainable practices, environmental justice and housing stability can go hand in hand to create greater, lasting impacts.

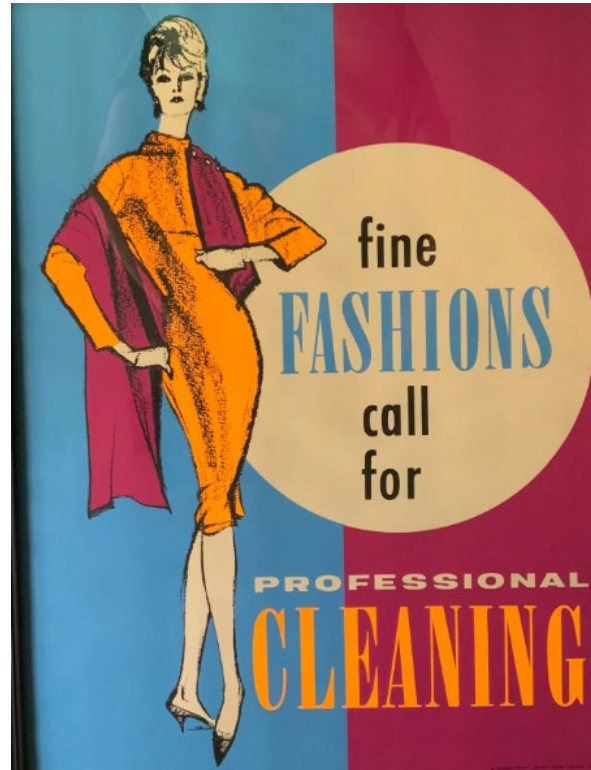
State leaders, including Senator Jesse Arreguín, praised the effort: *"Know that in the state of California, we have a committed partner working with you."* Through ECRG funding and the dedication of CHDC, Legacy Court transforms a contaminated site into 43 homes for families who need it most, providing stability, safety, and a chance to thrive.



PROGRAM COMPLETES OUTREACH TO 112 CURRENT AND FORMER DRY-CLEANING SITES

In 2024, the **Discovery & Enforcement (D&E)** program Year 1 list had 112 current and former dry-cleaning sites. From May to September 2024, D&E Public Participation Specialists (PPS) completed community profiles for each site and community surveys when people were available. The PPS creates Community Profiles to better understand the needs of the community near the site. Community Profiles are public and provide DTSC and the public with information about demographics, as well as a summary of the community survey. The information paints a holistic portrait of the impacted community. The D&E approach was to canvass and talk to people who live and work near the sites. They asked residents about the community to understand their concerns and shared information about upcoming site testing. The outreach helped the PPS determine the need for community meetings, language translation, and guides DTSC with additional public outreach when needed.

In 2025, the D&E program will focus on year 2 sites. For year 2 sites, PPS staff are actively reviewing D&E lessons learned



from Year 1 community engagement to enact a more effective approach to Year 2 engagement. D&E strives to improve the quality and quantity of engagement with community members.

The D&E team looks forward to visiting more communities for year 2 sites as well as engaging with more community members and our local community partners.

Are you aware of a site that might need investigation or enforcement?

If so, you can tell us about it by filling out a [petition application](#).

Do you have any questions about the D&E program? Email us at DiscoveryEnforcement@dtsc.ca.gov or call toll-free: (833) 862-1615.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IS SEEKING YOUR INPUT!



The **Workforce Development Program (WFD)** is developing a program that offers exposure to careers in the environmental field to members of vulnerable communities. Vulnerable communities are communities with multiple impacts from environmental burdens as indicated by [CalEnviroScreen 4.0 scores](#). WFD is in the process of developing a program framework to provide education, training, and certification opportunities to community members. We need your input!

WFD's goal is for participants from these communities to gain a pathway toward significant employment. Let us know what you would like to see in the career development and job training program in your community! Please take our 90 - second survey using this link or QR code:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KMJMRRM>



CVCI IN THE COMMUNITY



CVCI staff attending the Northern California Registered Apprenticeship training in Sacramento.

On October 30, 2024, Workforce Development Program (WFD) staff attended the Aligning California Workforce Systems with Registered Apprenticeship Programs training in Sacramento. The training provided WFD staff with the knowledge and tools on developing apprenticeships as part of a potential workforce solution. WFD staff networked with a total of 14 groups, consisting of Northern California nonprofit organizations, workforce boards, and businesses, providing them with an update on developing the CVCI Workforce Development Program's framework.

