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Gavin Newsom
Governor

August 4, 2025

Andrew Rakestraw
Chair
Board of Environmental Safety

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 DIRECTOR'S PRIORITIES

Dear Chair Rakestraw:

I am pleased to present the annual progress report outlining DTSC's work over the past year and reflecting on the priorities I set during my first nine months as Director. Your recent appointment brings a fresh perspective to our shared commitment to protecting the environment and bringing transparency to our operations. This report on the FY 2024-2025 Director's Annual Priorities offers a review of our achievements, ongoing challenges and opportunities to advance our goals in the year ahead.

FY 2024-2025 presented many challenges to DTSC and to the communities we serve. These included responding to the devastating wildfires that the Los Angeles area experienced in early 2025, ongoing budget challenges, federal immigration raids and other federal administration actions. Despite such, DTSC achieved a substantive portion of the Director's Priorities. In summary, 67% of deliverables were complete and 31% are partially complete, with the remainder being continued to next year.

The highlights of our accomplishments are:

- **Consistent, Timely and Equitable Enforcement:** Through the important work of DTSC's Enforcement Strategic Governance Committee, DTSC built on decades of enforcement work by bringing its culture of enforcement to all corners of the department. DTSC drafted an enforcement policy for the Site Mitigation

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and Restoration Program. DTSC also started ramping up the compliance and enforcement efforts in the Safer Consumer Products Program. DTSC will continue developing and implementing enforcement policies and procedures in FY 2025-2026.

- **Community Engagement and Equity:** DTSC met some significant milestones in these areas, delivering on significant aspects of reform: launched the Environmental Justice Advisory Council; published the revised framework for SB 673 Community Vulnerability regulations; completed the cleanup of 5,940 residential properties around Exide; developed an environmental justice training for staff; and tracked outcomes of the Equitable Community Revitalization Grant program. DTSC began to overhaul its Public Participation manual with community engagement best practices and this work will continue into the next fiscal year.
- **Hazardous Waste Management Plan:** DTSC released the first statewide Hazardous Waste Management Plan (HWM Plan) in March 2025. In FY 2025-2026, DTSC continues to work with the Board of Environmental Safety in amending the plan. DTSC will begin implementing the plan once approved.
- **Generation and Handling Fee:** DTSC implemented the necessary changes that were authorized by the FY 2024-2025 state budget. As a result, DTSC has been able to address the shortfall that was experienced with the Generation and Handling Fee.

We faced a number of unanticipated challenges, with multiple emergency response activities, staffing changes and federal administration actions. While these are not reflected in the Director Priorities, this is an opportunity to share some additional accomplishments from FY 2024-2025 that aren't reflected in the Director's Priorities annual progress report:

- **LA Wildfires:** At the beginning of 2025, the State of California experienced unprecedented wildfires in Los Angeles. DTSC was mission tasked, alongside US EPA to conduct Phase 1 Debris Removal under extremely tight timelines; Phase 1 operations were completed in record time, less than 30 days. . Additionally, DTSC has been collaborating with state and county partners to provide technical assistance.

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- **Chiquita Canyon Enforcement:** On April 1, 2025, DTSC issued a Summary of Violations (SOV) and an Imminent and/or Substantial Endangerment (ISE) Order against Chiquita Canyon Landfill for the multiple violations of California hazardous waste control laws. The DTSC team, in partnership with its CalEPA colleagues, will continue to oversee the facility's implementation of the Order.
- **Federal Administration Changes:** While we see a shift in policy and actions at the federal level, DTSC remains committed to its core values of transparency, accountability, and equity to protect the people and the environment of California. DTSC continues to evaluate the impacts of the Federal Administration and is working towards finding ways to address potential gaps in services to communities. Furthermore, with recent programmatic changes at federal agencies, such as the United States Environmental Protection Agency, DTSC is exploring ways to continue its work without the use of tools developed by the Federal Government that are routinely used by DTSC programs.

I am proud of our exceptional team at DTSC and their accomplishments in FY 2024-2025. While we still have more work to do to advance our goals, we have made substantial progress strengthening our approaches to enforcement, community engagement and equity. I look forward to continuing the work that was started and continuing to collaborate with the Board of Environmental Safety in FY 2025-2026.

Sincerely,

Katherine M. Butler

Director

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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cc: Alexis Strauss Hacker
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Board of Environmental Safety

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