Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative (CVCI) Analysis FY 2024-25 Annual Report to the Legislature

Prepared by the Board of Environmental Safety and DTSC

BOARD OF Environmental Safety

DTSC Department of Toxic Substances Control

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1. Executive Summary

The Board of Environmental Safety (BES) is required to conduct an analysis of the expenditure of funds authorized by Section 106 of Senate Bill 158 (2021), known as the Cleanup in Vulnerable Communities Initiative (CVCI or the "Initiative"); identify the subsequent uses of sites that have undergone investigation or cleanup; and evaluate the public health benefits that those investigations or cleanups have created for the communities in which the sites are located in order to make recommendations to the Legislature on future expenditures of state funds for cleanup. This report includes that analysis, which describes the Legislative's Initiative through the passage of SB 158 and the Initiative status for FY 2024-2025.

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received $500 million of General Fund through SB 158 for CVCI. In 2024, unexpended portions of the initial appropriations for CVCI were reverted to the General Fund due to the State's fiscal situation. However, DTSC was appropriated $65 million of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) through SB 156 (Chapter 72, Statutes 2024, Section 106). DTSC continues to conduct CVCI work to maximize results with available resources.

Through Equitable Community Revitalization Grants (ECRG), DTSC has awarded more than $131 million to 90 grantees—including cities, counties, nonprofits, and tribal governments—for 38 site-specific cleanups, 37 investigations, and 15 community-wide assessments. Independent analysis by the Othering and Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley found that the ECRG program significantly advances environmental justice, public health, and equitable development compared to previous brownfields programs. Across two funding rounds, ECRG is funding the environmental investigations and cleanups that will support the development of nearly 5,000 affordable housing units, of which 650 are currently being constructed or completed. Of the ECRG-funded projects that have completed environmental cleanup and are currently under construction, 10 of 11 are affordable housing developments.

CVCI also includes the Discovery and Enforcement (D&E) Program, which DTSC has used to focus on the investigation of former and current dry-cleaning sites that may be contaminated with chemicals such as perchloroethylene (PCE), a likely carcinogenic chemical commonly used in dry cleaners. A survey conducted by the State Coalition for Remediation for Dry Cleaners estimates that 75 percent of dry cleaner facilities in the United States have caused contamination[1]. Many dry cleaners are small companies with limited funding, located in disadvantaged communities and in close proximity to housing. DTSC identified over 7,500 former dry cleaners throughout the state and used CalEnviroScreen (CES) to prioritize the investigation of former dry-cleaning sites in communities with high cumulative environmental burdens. DTSC has executed 13 contracts totaling $13 million to assess 128 dry cleaners and is poised to execute 9 more contracts totaling $9 million to assess 56 additional dry cleaner sites. Through Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and Discovery Investigations, over 50 sites have been discovered with contamination that warrants further action under an order, demonstrating the importance of the D&E Program in protecting residents and workers in vulnerable communities.

[1] https://p2infohouse.org/ref/15/14451.pdf Authors Schmidt, Robin, R. DeZeeuw, L. Henning, and D. Trippler. June 6, 2001

2. Introduction

With its adoption of SB 158 in 2021, the Legislature identified four (4) core objectives for the Initiative: (1) The discovery, cleanup, and investigation of contaminated properties with a priority on sites that are in communities with high cumulative environmental burdens and proximity to sensitive receptors; (2) a grant program, modeled after US EPA's Brownfield Cleanup Grants, to fund cleanup activities at brownfield sites; (3) a job development training program prioritizing local hires to promote public health and community engagement, promote equity and environmental justice, and support the local economy; and (4) a program to provide technical assistance grants to groups of individuals in communities impacted by a release or a potential release of a hazardous material, with the goal of providing community members with technical information to understand and contribute to response actions that comply with applicable laws.

The Legislature initially allocated a total of $500 million to DTSC for CVCI over three FYs (2021-22 through 2023-24). In 2024, this funding was reallocated to DTSC over six fiscal years (ending in 2026-27). Through the passage of SB 156 in 2024, the total allocation was reduced to $189 million for CVCI, which covers FYs 2024-25 through 2026-27.

3. Background, Intent, and Legislative History

Brownfields are real property of which the expansion, redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence of one or more hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, usually as a result of prior industrial or commercial use. Quantifying the number of brownfields in California is difficult given the challenges associated with identifying properties that are underutilized due to suspected contamination. However, research estimates that California may contain between 150,000 to 200,000 brownfield sites (Center for Creative Land Recycling, 2007), with other sources indicating 300,000 and higher. These brownfield sites are disproportionately located in neighborhoods that have lower average incomes and more people of color *(Ibid*.). Brownfield sites may pose a risk to nearby populations and people who may use the sites in the future if they are not properly remediated.

The $189 million allocated for CVCI prioritizes the investigation and cleanup of hazardous substances sites in communities that suffer from multiple sources of contamination. CVCI is intended to expedite the cleanup and beneficial reuse of properties that might be contaminated and address environmental inequities by prioritizing properties in historically vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. DTSC encourages vulnerable communities to engage in CVCI programs through outreach efforts and by offering grants to communities to acquire technical expertise and perform confirmation sampling at remediation sites.

""ECRG shows how state funding can unlock new opportunities for communities burdened by long-term contamination," said Department of Toxic Substances Control Director Katherine Butler. "By supporting the cleanup of properties, California helps cities attract investment, create jobs, and bring essential services to neighborhoods that have waited too long for renewal."

4. Equitable Community Revitalization Grants (ECRG)

This section of the CVCI 2025 Report is based on findings from the ECRG Strategic Insights and Outcomes Report, a comprehensive analysis offering in-depth data, trends, and success stories that further illustrate the outcomes summarized here.

California's Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG)—represents the state's largest investment dedicated to cleaning up and reusing contaminated properties, or brownfields. Launched in 2021 through Senate Bill 158, the program targets communities that have long shouldered disproportionate pollution burdens, pairing environmental cleanup with equitable redevelopment and community participation.

ECRG's work directly supports the Administration's housing priorities. The Governor has made accelerating housing production, lowering construction barriers, and directing investment toward sustainable and affordable infill projects central to his agenda. By reducing environmental uncertainty, ECRG transforms unusable sites into land ready for development—including for affordable housing. Nearly 5,000 affordable units are planned across all projects once environmental work is complete. Since its launch, ECRG has demonstrated to be a considerable component of the state's housing and equitable land development strategy.

4.1 Program Overview

Brownfields are properties where known or suspected contamination has stalled investment. Cleanup costs, liability risks, and regulatory complexity often make redevelopment financially unfeasible for local governments, nonprofits, or tribes.

ECRG removes these barriers by funding three categories of work:

1. Community-wide assessments – environmental studies covering multiple sites
2. Site-specific investigations – detailed assessments, cleanup design, and planning
3. Site-specific cleanups – soil, groundwater, or building remediation and compliance activities

Eligible applicants include public agencies, tribes, and nonprofits. Every grantee must also implement a community-engagement approach, ensuring residents are meaningfully involved.

This dual emphasis—environmental restoration and community voice—distinguishes ECRG from past cleanup programs and aligns it with California's broader climate, equity, and housing goals. The Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI)[2] at the University of California, Berkeley found that the ECRG program has significantly advanced California's environmental justice and public health goals.

4.2 Program Scale and Investment

Round of Funding

Grant	~$ Requested	~$ funded	Number of grantees	Number of Active Grants	Number of Closed Grants
Round 1	$112,000,000	$88,257,000	58	40	18
Round 2	$90,000,000	$43,061,000	32	32	0
Total	**$202,000,000**	**$131,318,000**	**90**	**72**	**18**

Grant Type Distribution

Type of Grant	Total Grants	Average Amount of Grant	~Total Amount of Funds Awarded	% of Total Funds
Community-wide Assessment	15	$285,800	$4,287,300	3.3%
Site-specific Investigation	37	$960,400	$35,534,300	27.1%
Site-specific Cleanup	38	$2,472,900	$91,497,200	69.7%

ECRG has directed $131 million across 34 counties, supporting a spectrum of projects from rural park cleanups to large-scale urban housing developments.

4.3 Program Evolution and Continuous Improvement

Round 1: Pilot Launch (2021–2024)
Round 1 tested the program's structure and revealed the complexity of brownfield timelines. Early findings prompted grant-term extensions and gap-funding adjustments to ensure projects could reach completion.

Round 2: Refinement and Reinforcement (2023–present)
Round 2 incorporated recommendations from the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA) and lessons learned from Round 1. During a retreat with the CEJA in February 2023 DTSC learned about concerns related to housing development on previously contaminated sites, with many cleanups relying on engineering controls and deed restrictions. In response to the feedback, new standards were required for Round 2. This included complete cleanup standards for proposed housing sites, meaning

[2] Full OBI report: https://belonging.berkeley.edu/social-equity-in-brownfields-cleanup

contaminated sites had to be cleaned up to residential standards with no deed restrictions or other administrative/engineering controls in addition to meeting affordability criteria. Other key refinements of Round 2 included:

- Streamlined application and reporting requirements
- Expanded technical assistance through the nonprofit Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR)
- Stronger community-engagement criteria using the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation
- Clearer standards for ineligible reuses (e.g., warehouses) and equitable development

This adaptive structure was to ensure that each new funding cycle strengthens performance, accountability, and equity.

Round 3 funding was planned for 2025, but was not opened due to budget cuts.

4.4 Outreach and Capacity Building

The Office of Brownfields implemented an extensive outreach campaign:

- Round 1: 13 webinars, 478 unique contacts, 648 attendees
- Round 2: 12 webinars, 538 unique contacts, 655 attendees
- “100 Communities in 300 Days” campaign reached 124 entities statewide, from tribes to county public works departments
- ECRGathering campaign to obtain feedback on Round 2 approach; included two virtual sessions, one focused on applicants and the other on EJ advocacy organizations, and two in-person sessions, one in Fontana and the other in Fresno

Targeted efforts expanded access in far Northern California, the Central Valley, and the Inland Empire, ensuring environmental-justice communities were not left behind.

The technical-assistance contract with CCLR provided free coaching, grant-writing support, and community-engagement guidance. Together, DTSC and CCLR maintained an open help desk, conducted regular Q&A sessions, and continually updated public FAQs.

4.5 Application and Monitoring Framework

ECRG employs a transparent, four-phase process:

1. Application Submission via the online grant management portal (Fluxx)
2. Eligibility Review for technical and legal compliance
3. Scoring and Prioritization based on environmental impact, project readiness, community benefits (housing, jobs), and CalEnviroScreen scores
4. Award and Agreement, defining deliverables, timelines, and reporting

Once awarded, grantees participate in kick-off meetings, submit quarterly reports, and receive continuous monitoring on environmental progress and engagement milestones.

This proactive management approach ensures accountability and timely performance, while also allowing flexibility when real-world obstacles—supply chains, regulatory delays, or contamination complexity—arise.

4.6 Integrating Lessons Across DTSC

ECRG's principles have informed broader Site Mitigation and Restoration Program (SMRP) reforms. In 2023, DTSC convened the Treatment Technology Council (TTC), a collaborative of 26 participants—including environmental-justice advocates, consultants, developers, and agency representatives—to ensure that the best available, cost-effective remediation tactics and treatment technologies were applied to ECRG-funded projects. Though the council is no longer active, three landmark frameworks were born out of that council:

1. Community Considerate Cleanups (C3) – a planning model emphasizing transparent decision-making, equity, and responsiveness to community health and safety.
2. Community Considerate Cleanup Collaborative (C3C) – a continuing forum where stakeholders jointly develop practical tools such as Quick Reference Guides for excavation and disposal cleanups.
3. C3 Ambassadors Program – a pilot initiative empowering DTSC project managers to apply the Community Considerate Cleanup Quick Reference Guide in active projects, helping to operationalize and standardize these practices across DTSC's cleanup work through real-world implementation and feedback

Together, C3 and C3C institutionalize a more thoughtful, people-centered approach to remediation, ensuring that technical solutions reflect community priorities.

4.7 Why ECRG Matters for California's Future

Thousands of acres of developable land remain idle because of potential contamination. ECRG has demonstrated that with targeted state investment and robust community partnership, polluted land can become a foundation for equity, health, and community transformation.

Spotlight: EBALDC secured an $829,966 Round 1 Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG) Site-specific Cleanup Grant to remediate an underutilized site in the San Pablo Corridor area of West Oakland. “EBALDC is thankful for DTSC’s ongoing support for this recently completed project,” said James Perez, Senior Project Manager for EBALDC, “What was once a blighted vehicle storage facility is now home to 58 households...”

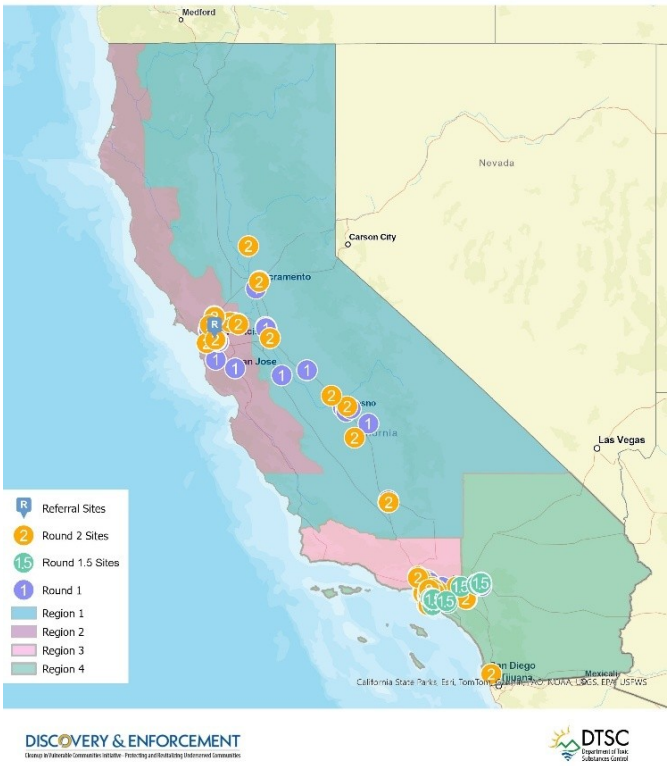
Photo: Devin Hutchings (DTSC), Janelle Chan (EBALDC), Katherine Butler (DTSC), Surlene Grant (DTSC), Ms. Margaret Gordon (community advocate), and Maryam Tasnif- Abbasi (DTSC) snapped a photo together at the grand opening of the Ms. Margaret Gordon West Port affordable housing community.

Spotlight: DTSC Director Katie Butler and Project Manager Wyatt George at the Lincoln Beach Groundbreaking Ceremony, August 2025. With $1.3 million from the Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG), the long-blighted Lincoln Beach site in Anaheim was cleaned up and cleared for reuse. On August 4, 2025, DTSC leaders joined the City of Anaheim, nonprofit developer Innovative Housing Opportunities, and community partners to break ground on 47 affordable housing units for seniors and transitional-aged youth — a transformation made possible by ECRG support and strong local partnerships.

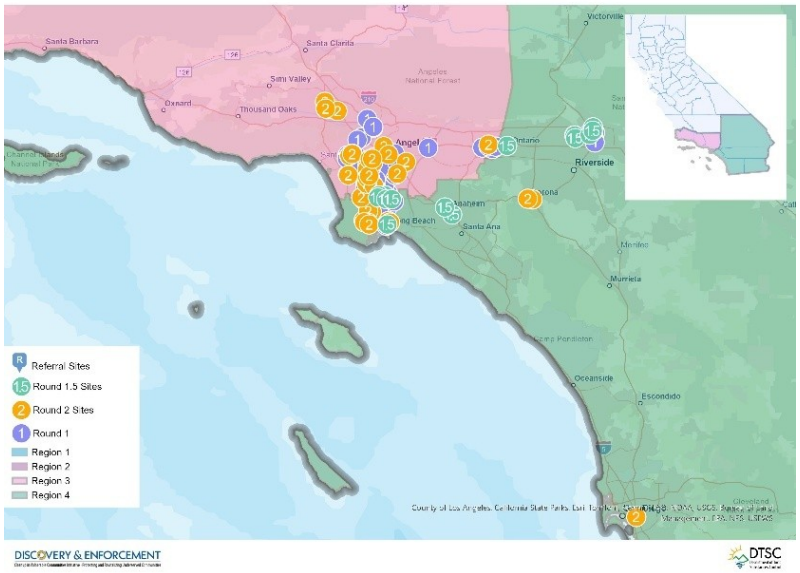
5. Discovery & Enforcement

The Discovery and Enforcement (D&E) Program is charged with safeguarding the public health of communities through the investigation and cleanup of potentially contaminated properties. There are five (5) specific objectives for the D&E Program: (1) Evaluate contaminated sites; (2) Issue enforcement orders on contaminated sites; (3) Reduce contamination from sites located in vulnerable communities; (4) Improve DTSC’s process so that it is efficient and expedient; and (5) Improve the public health of vulnerable communities.

CVCI D&E SITES STATEWIDE



CVCI D&E SITES SOUTH DIVISION



DTSC selected dry cleaners as the focus for the D&E Program due to the vast number of facilities in the state and the public health threat posed by PCE, a likely carcinogenic chemical historically used in dry-cleaning operations. There are approximately 7,500 known active and inactive dry-cleaning sites in California, and some sources have estimated that approximately 17,000 dry cleaners have historically operated in California. Once PCE is released into the subsurface, it can form vapors that travel through soil, reach under buildings, and contaminate indoor air. Vapors can migrate into buildings located

above or near the release through cracks in foundations, utility pipes and sewer lines. If groundwater is contaminated with PCE, contamination can spread and affect buildings and homes a significant distance from the source site.

To evaluate sites, the D&E Program first conducts a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) to understand the site history. The Phase I ESA involves the collection and review of records of past and present land uses and industrial activities to produce evidence of activities that may have caused releases of PCE and other hazardous substances. When the Phase I ESA suggests there may have been a release, the D&E Program performs a Discovery Investigation, which includes subsurface soil vapor, subslab vapor, indoor air, and outdoor air sampling to evaluate if there has been a release from dry-cleaning operations.

The D&E Program uses the results to prioritize which sites require further action by the D&E Program. Sites with concentrations of PCE or related dry-cleaning chemicals in indoor air that present a concern and/or sites with the highest concentrations in the subsurface are moved into the enforcement phase.

In the enforcement phase, DTSC issues orders to responsible parties that compels them to conduct further investigation and cleanup to ensure the site is safe for current and future uses. If the responsible parties are unwilling or unable to conduct the necessary investigation or cleanup, DTSC will conduct the work and conduct cost recovery.

5.1 Site Discovery

In 2022, for Round 1 of the Program, DTSC identified 112 target dry cleaner sites for Discovery Investigations based on the site's location within 50 feet of a sensitive receptor (residence, schools, registered daycares, hospitals, etc.) in a census tract with a high CalEnviroScreen (CES) score. The D&E program used the following CalEnviroScreen 3.0 score ranges for various regions in Round 1 to ensure geographic representation across the state:

- Southern California (South Region) – 95-100%
- Central Valley (East Region) – 90-100%
- Bay Area and North Coast (West Region) – 80-100%

In 2023, DTSC identified 291 sites for Discovery Investigations based on a CES score at or above the 75th percentile and location within 150 feet of a sensitive receptor. DTSC ultimately selected 16 of the 291 sites for Discovery Investigations via three additional contracts that are termed Round 1.5 sites. For the 128 sites included in Round 1 and Round 1.5, Phase 1 ESAs and Discovery Investigations have identified:

- At least 50 sites (approximately 40%) have contamination that warrants further action under an order
- At least 17 sites (approximately 15%) have or will exit the D&E Program because of
  - Referrals to other Agencies or Programs for regulatory oversight
  - A determination of "No Action" based on information identified during the Phase I ESA
  - A determination of No Further Remedial Action Planned due to low concentrations
- 21 sites are undergoing a second sampling event to confirm low concentrations
- Discovery Investigations at the 40 remaining sites are in process or may be delayed due to the property owner not allowing access. In these cases, DTSC is pursuing an inspection warrant or collecting samples in the public right-of-way.

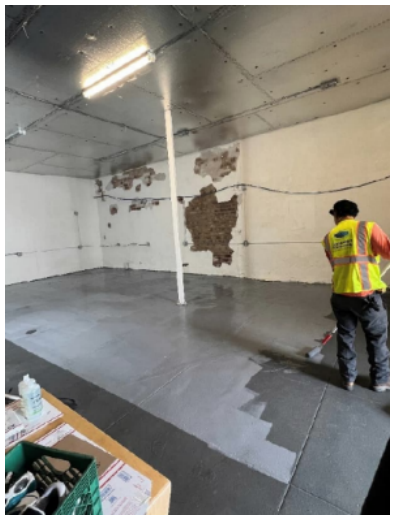
In 2024, DTSC was awarded Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds (GGRF) to continue the ECRG work. The GGRF is funded through the state's cap-and-invest (formerly known as cap-and-trade) auction proceeds that support California Climate Investment programs. California Climate Investment programs help California achieve its greenhouse gas emission reduction goals while also achieving health, economic, and environmental benefits. Funds provided through GGRF enabled the D&E Program to identify 56 new sites for Phase I ESAs and Discovery Investigations and conduct Discovery Investigations on seven roll-over sites from Round 1. The 56 new sites were selected from the original list of 291 Round 2 sites and represent 56 sites within 100 feet of sensitive receptors. The D&E Program is currently finalizing contracts for the Round 2 sites and anticipates starting Phase I ESAs in early 2026.

For the 184 Round 1, 1.5, and 2 sites, approximately two-thirds of the sites are located in Southern California, while the remaining one-third of sites are split between the Central Valley and Bay Area.

5.2 Enforcement, Equity, and Engagement

Based on available data for Round 1 and 1.5 sites, approximately 40% of sites have contamination that warrants further action under an order issued by DTSC. This demonstrates the large scale of the problem presented by the legacy of dry cleaner contamination in the state.

Discovery Investigation sampling also identified two sites with elevated indoor air concentrations that required time-critical vapor mitigation measures to protect occupants.



At one site, DTSC's contractor applied an epoxy coat to the entire floor to prevent vapors from entering the building. At the other site, DTSC's contractor sealed cracks in the building foundation and upgraded filters in the building's HVAC system. The D&E Program successfully completed the measures to reduce workers' exposure to contamination in indoor air.

One of the D&E Program's greatest challenges is the significant cleanup cost and difficulties imposed on responsible parties that are owners of independent small businesses. Because the objective of the D&E Program is to ensure cleanup of sites through the enforcement process, which is also required by the Health and Safety Code, owners of identified sites are often required to perform and pay for cleanup activities. However, the full cost of cleanup often exceeds the limited resources of an independent small business, resulting in financial hardship. The D&E Program has been approaching property owners with transparency when communicating the requirements and expectations of the Health and Safety Code, which generally demand that responsible parties pay for all expenses associated with the cleanup. Approximately 10 to 20 percent of sites requiring cleanup have indicated that they are willing and able to implement the cleanup, and the D&E program is preparing agreements. The remaining Sites will require additional action, such as an order requiring the current and former property owners to implement cleanup.

The D&E Program's engagement activities are designed to ensure transparent communication, equitable participation, and meaningful collaboration with communities impacted by former and current dry-cleaning operations. Conducted in partnership with DTSC's Office of Environmental Equity (OEE), these activities include obtaining access agreements, community liaison efforts, and regulatory public participation tasks such as community profiles, surveys, updates, and work notices. Each step incorporates equity through multilingual outreach, plain-language materials, and culturally responsive engagement. Public Participation Specialists (PPS), D&E Program technical staff, and contractors coordinate closely to deliver timely information, build community trust, and ensure residents and property owners understand the investigation and cleanup process.

Additional engagement measures include maintaining a dedicated hotline and email for community inquiries, conducting educational webinars for community stakeholders, and collaborating with environmental justice and nonprofit partners to enhance outreach. The D&E Program and OEE have drafted four informational sheets to help the public understand the Discovery Investigation and Enforcement processes. The four informational sheets are expected to be released in late 2025. Tribal engagement remains a priority, with consultation and collaboration efforts built into the program's standard procedures. Together, these activities strengthen relationships with stakeholders, promote transparency in cleanup operations, and foster community empowerment throughout the Discovery Investigation process.

5.3 Petition Process

As part of its proactive community engagement activities, the D&E Program has developed a petition process for members of the public to refer sites to the program for evaluation. The petition process is open to any site that may concern a member of the public, and sites that meet D&E's criteria will be eligible for evaluation given the availability of future funds.

Thus far, DTSC has received 14 petitions and accepted one. DTSC reports that the remaining petitions either did not meet the criteria for site selection for the D&E Program or were under another agency's regulatory oversight. Members of the public are encouraged to submit petitions via the program's website: https://dtsc.ca.gov/petition/.

6. Additional Funding for Orphan Sites

Orphan sites are properties contaminated by hazardous substances that have no financially viable responsible party. When viable responsible parties cannot be found, DTSC uses California State funding to conduct the appropriate response action. Orphan sites include an array of projects associated with California's industrial past, and as such represent a diverse scale and scope of hazardous substances releases. SB 158 identified 21 Orphan sites located in vulnerable communities to receive additional funding to accelerate cleanup in these communities.

In FY 2024-25, $3 million was allocated through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund that will be encumbered into contracts for the Visalia Dry Cleaners site to continue investigating vapor intrusion and groundwater impacts and implementing a soil vapor extraction system pilot study to select a remedy for vapor intrusion at the source. Contracts will be executed within the 1st quarter of 2026.

DTSC selected the 21 sites based on the following factors:

- There is no known responsible party that is paying for cleanup activities at these sites.
- Sites have cancer-causing chemicals that impact drinking water supplies, indoor air, and/or soil. Some sites have current, ongoing hazardous exposures.
- These sites are close to having a cleanup or interim measure constructed, and additional funding can expedite the completion of the needed work.
- Completing these cleanups or interim measures will protect public health and groundwater resources, and address threats located in or near residential areas.

CVCI funding for the 21 orphan sites supplements existing funding for DTSC's Orphan Site program, which are funded through the Site Remediation Account. The 21 orphan sites are in various stages of the cleanup process with a majority in the investigation phase while a few are in the remediation or operation and maintenance phase.

Additional information on the 21 sites is available through EnviroStor:

Cal Tech Metal Finishers
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=01340118

DWA Plume
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=01990002

Harris Dry Cleaners
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=01720109

Lane Metal Finishers
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60000594

McNamara and Peepe Lumber Mill
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=12240115

Singer Friden
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=01360094

Delano PCE Plume
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001327

Madera PCE Groundwater Plume
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001450

North Fresno PCE Plume
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001424

Porterville PCE
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001216

San Luis Obispo PCE Plume
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001343

Visalia Dry Cleaner Investigation
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60000403

Engineering Plating Corp.
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=71003391

Green's Cleaners
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60002279

Momin Lodge
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001010

Alumin-Art Plating
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001398

Modern Dry Cleaners
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=60001154

South Broadway & 65th Street
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=60002974

Oasis Cleaners
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=60002269

Former National Cleaners
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report.asp?global_id=60002270

Electro Forming Co – Richmond
https://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/profile_report?global_id=01330044


CVCI Orphan Sites Locations
CVCI Orphan Site
California Counties
Cal EnviroScreen 4.0
(Upper 25%)
Medford
Sprague
Klamath
Pit
Trinity
Eel
Redding
NEVADA
Chico
Feather
Reno
Carson City
Sacramento
Santa Rosa
Fairfield
SIERRA-NEVADA MOUNTAINS
Tonopah
Concord
Stockton
Modesto
Fremont
San Jose
Pioneer Seamount
Guide Seamount
San Joaquin
Fresno
Salinas
Visalia
Davidson Seamount
MOJAVE DESERT
Bakersfield
San Luis Obispo
Santa Maria
Lompoc
Lancaster
Palmdale
Victorville
Santa Barbara
Santa Clarita
Oxnard
790
Rodriguez Seamount
Los Angeles
Riverside
Long Beach
3032
Murrieta
4838
San Juan Seamount
Oceanside
San Diego
Tijuana
923
2528
Merced County Association of Gov, California State Parks, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, USFWS, Esri, USGS

7. Community Benefit Agreements

Section 106 of SB 158 requires DTSC "to the extent feasible, require the use of community benefit agreements for those sites where a responsible party has been identified and is available." A Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) is typically entered into between a Responsible Party and an appropriate community organization to promote benefits beyond the scope of the site mitigation and restoration program's typical activities, prioritizing vulnerable communities affected by high cumulative environmental burdens. While CBAs are a powerful tool for community restoration, DTSC did not previously have a policy to request or evaluate CBAs. The CBA team has completed development of DTSC's CBA policy, which will be evaluated via a pilot test in the D&E program. The CBA team has identified pilot sites in the D&E program that will require cleanup and have a viable Responsible Party. The CBA team will train D&E Project Managers on implementing CBA components at the pilot sites and the D&E program will incorporate the pilot CBA language into the orders issued to the pilot site responsible parties.

Approximately six months after the D&E Program issues orders to CBA pilot sites, the CBA team will prepare a CBA Policy Implementation Status Report to present findings and provide recommendations for CBA implementation beyond the pilot test.

8. Workforce Development

According to Section 106 of SB 158, funds are to be used for "a job and development training program prioritizing local hires to promote public health and community engagement, promote equity and environmental justice, and support the local economy."

8.1 Program Background

DTSC developed a statewide CVCI Student Internship Program that promotes hiring youth from vulnerable communities across the state with educational backgrounds in public health, community engagement, environmental justice, and related CVCI program fields. The CVCI internships were established in November 2023, and the cohort consisted of four DTSC mentors and six college interns who completed their internships at the end of June 2024. Interns received firsthand experience in public sector and environmental sector careers, in addition to conducting research projects that align with each intern's area of study and respective vulnerable community. Through mentorship, training, and networking opportunities, the program was intended to create career-readiness opportunities for students.

Four DTSC mentors volunteered their time in addition to managing DTSC priorities. Mentors provided expertise, inspiration and support to empower interns to make meaningful contributions to environmental justice. Mentors helped interns navigate challenges with their research projects and helped them develop skills for their future careers. Through their guidance, interns gained firsthand experience in addressing environmental injustices and exposure to the work needed to drive positive change in their respective communities. Through overseeing the student intern's work product and research projects, mentors were able to determine best management practices as well.

8.2 Student Internship Symposium

The interns presented their research projects at a department-wide virtual symposium on May 30 and 31, 2024. Over 120 participants attended the two-day event. Through this symposium, interns gained exposure to academic and professional communities. During the process of their research, interns worked with DTSC mentors to engage with multidisciplinary industry professionals. Interns were asked to perform outreach activities for CVCI's Technical Assistance Grants Program and communicate directly with EJ and non-profit organizations in vulnerable communities across the state. Interns were able to develop professional networks and received job training.

The interns further developed public speaking skills and practiced communicating complex ideas from fellow researchers to the general public. The Q&A sessions were structured to allow interns to adopt a structured, logical and fair approach to their thinking and discussions. Interns were able to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise to the audience and panelists. This event also was an opportunity for interns to enhance their professional visibility in their respective STEM fields and network with other professionals via LinkedIn.

In both 2024 and 2025, DTSC provided ongoing career coaching and support after the conclusion of the internship. Four of the six interns were able to secure professional work in the public or non-profit sectors of their respective fields such as IT services, geology, air quality control, and the medical field. The two remaining interns are continuing higher education, with one in the process of transferring to a four-year university for mechanical engineering and the other pursuing a doctoral program in public health while also working at their respective county's public health office.

8.3 Program Evolution

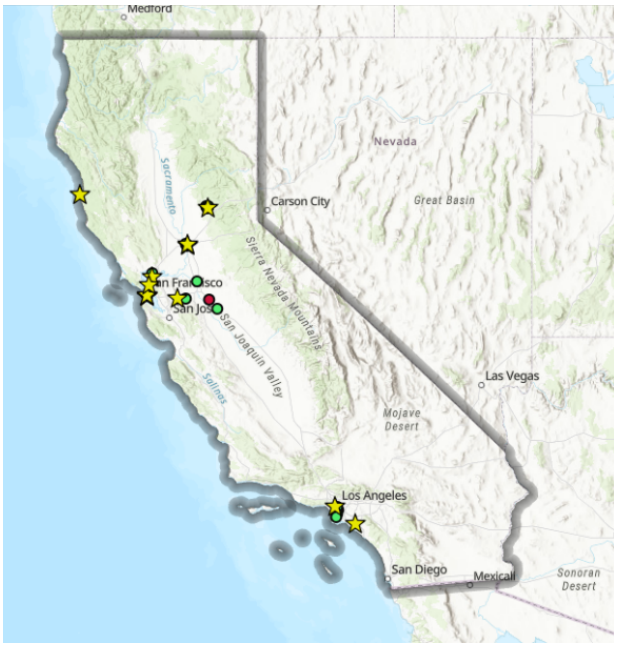
Due to the changes in WFD funding, DTSC plans to transition its student internship program to a statewide Environmental Remediation Training to address the needs of vulnerable communities impacted by hazardous waste clean-up sites statewide. DTSC is in the process of developing a contract to solicit a public entity or non-profit organization to develop the new program framework. The selected entity will design a training and job preparedness program that would meet the needs of vulnerable communities based on labor market research data and industry growth for their respective communities. The framework would include determining what and how to secure resources and additional services needed for program implementation such as career coaching in the areas of job search, resume writing, and job search tools to identify employers hiring in their areas. This approach focuses on providing education and training for careers in the environmental and remediation sectors.

Once the program design is developed, implementation of the framework is dependent on future funding sources. Through implementing the program's framework, the WFD Program could include training for 300-350 residents of vulnerable communities across the state (with a focus on three main locations: Northern, Southern, and Central California) with both on-the-job training and industry specific certifications in environmental fields. With future investments in the local communities, WFD will be able to achieve the requested outcomes for SB 158.

9. Technical Assistance Grants

The goal of the Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) Program is to increase community engagement with cleanups by awarding grants to qualifying community groups. Qualified groups can apply for grants ranging from $40,000 to $150,000 to select and hire a technical advisor to assist with public

participation, education, and analysis related to cleanup sites within their communities. In the first round of funding, the program received 32 letters of intent to apply for a TAG. Eighteen applications were received between December 2023 and January 2025. Fifteen applications representing twelve unique grantees from EJ communities were accepted for awards totaling $2 million.



Three grants were awarded in Southern California, and 12 grants were awarded in Northern California. The TAG website hosts an interactive map[3] that displays cleanup sites that community groups have expressed interest in and applied for and/or were awarded a grant.

TAG grants are available for disadvantaged communities to become more engaged with cleanup sites. It is important that these priority populations, who are more at risk of experiencing burdens from pollution and contamination, are provided support to become more involved in and educated about cleanup sites that directly affect their communities. TAG grants allow community groups to hire an independent expert that can devote time and expertise to researching a nearby cleanup Site of interest, and who the community trusts to accurately interpret the Site history, data, and ongoing response actions being taken. Through funding community science activities, TAG allows groups to conduct their own research projects to gather environmental data about sites and/or to learn more about scientific principles such as sampling techniques. Community groups are able to conduct their own outreach to promote wider community involvement with these Sites.

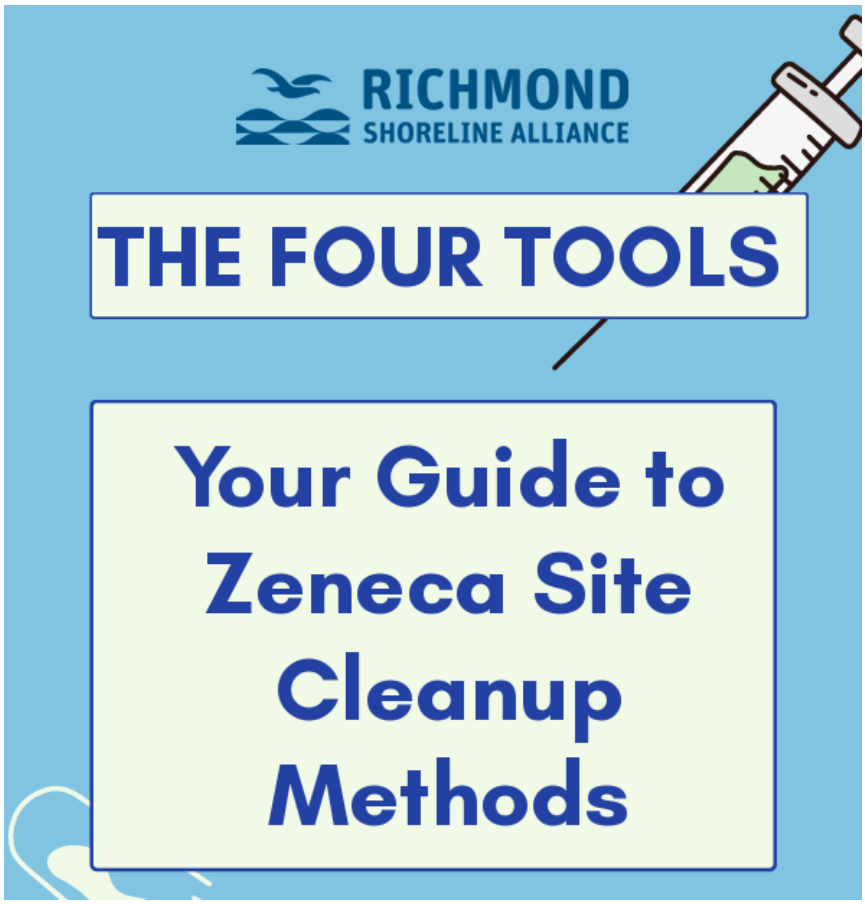
TAG Spotlight (left): Shipyard Trust for the Arts (STAR) conducted educational Youth Tours of the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard with input from their chosen Technical Advisor.

By empowering local communities to understand and respond to cleanup activities, DTSC is able to make more community-focused decisions that consider how response actions at cleanup sites affect the surrounding communities. Without TAG funding, many of these disadvantaged communities would not have the resources to thoughtfully and technically engage with regulatory actions that directly impact their health.

[3] https://dtsc.ca.gov/tag-awards/

9.1 Grantee Support and Community Engagement

The TAG Program has conducted outreach efforts to inform the public about the opportunities offered by DTSC and encourage potential applicants to apply. A range of communication and engagement activities were undertaken to inform, consult, and involve participants. Among other activities, the TAG Program hosted two Lunch-and-Learn webinars in July and November 2024 to discuss the application and guide the development of grantee work plans. Statewide engagement included a TAG awareness campaign from December 2023 to January 2025. Outreach was conducted via phone, email, social media, and in-person. Research was conducted to identify new organizations across California, and DTSC shared the grant opportunity with both new and existing networks. Environmental Justice and local community groups were identified and contacted via email and phone call. Monthly email blasts were made to the TAG and OEE mailing lists. DTSC posted on Facebook, Instagram, X, and LinkedIn, and connected with local groups virtually. In-person outreach was conducted at any opportunity to meet local organizations and distribute TAG flyers to raise awareness of the grant opportunity.



TAG Spotlight (above): Richmond Shoreline Alliance (RSA) developed a fact sheet[4] for community members about the Zeneca Cleanup Site with input from their Technical Advisor. The fact sheet details current cleanup responses and challenges. RSA also hosted an online community meeting about the cleanup methods.[5]

The Program conducted internal outreach with various branches of DTSC's Site Mitigation and Restoration Program to identify potential applicants. Interested applicants can set up a time with

[4] https://www.richmondshorelinealliance.org/s/Zeneca-Cleanup-Infographic.pdf
[5] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iwREmYhtAiM

DTSC's Application Assistance contractor, Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR), to discuss any questions about TAG and/or the application. In the FY 2024-25, CCLR has had 13 inquiries/meetings with entities that did not end up applying for TAG, 12 inquiries from entities that applied for TAG, 8 meetings with entities that applied for TAG, and 3 inquiries from entities once they became grantees.

10. Conclusion

Despite shifts to its funding, CVCI has made substantial progress in addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities. Although there have been significant successes with the Initiative, there is room for improvement to ensure CVCI meets its stated objectives to reduce community exposure to potential contamination and advance redevelopment projects designed to improve infrastructure, increase investment, and spur job growth in impacted communities.

ECRG is the state's largest investment in the revitalization of brownfield sites. It has become an effective investment strategy for transforming underused land in disadvantaged communities into beneficial reuse. The ECRG program should ensure that CVCI grants align with environmental justice principles and community priorities.

The D&E Program has proven to be an effective program at identifying contaminated sites in vulnerable communities with a focus on sites occupied by former and existing dry cleaners. Aside from the 7,500 sites initially identified by the D&E program, DTSC discovered approximately 206 additional dry cleaners that were not previously identified in DTSC's Hazardous Waste Manifests through review of the records, which illustrates the universe of dry cleaner sites is larger than initially estimated. There have been challenges in fully remediating these sites, particularly for small business owners of dry cleaners. Limited resources and financial hardship have made full remediation of all contaminated sites nearly impossible. This financial burden indicates that there needs to be a policy discussion on how to pay for remediation efforts associated with dry cleaners to protect public health. Moreover, the number of Orphan sites will likely increase.

The CVCI Student Internship Program is a job and development training program developed by DTSC that enlists youth from vulnerable communities across the state to gain experience in the public and environmental career sectors. However, the program has fallen short of encouraging the hiring of a local workforce for remediation efforts. Due to budgetary changes, DTSC plans to transition the internship program into a statewide Environmental Remediation Training. This move would more closely align with SB 158's mandate of prioritizing local hires to promote public health, equity and environmental justice, and support the local economy.

Ongoing CVCI work is funded through existing awarded grants and contracts. New funding has not been proposed for the 2026-27 fiscal year state budget. Given the importance of the CVCI programs to address current regulatory and funding gaps, the magnitude of PCE contamination in the state, the disproportionate impact of contaminated lands in vulnerable and disadvantaged areas, and the progress and productivity of the programs within CVCI, the state should adopt a permanent and long-term funding stream for CVCI.

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