

Department of Toxic Substances Control Environmental Justice Policy July 2008

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (Department) is committed to developing and conducting its public health and environmental protection programs in a manner that ensures fair protection for all Californians, without regard to color, national origin or income, fair treatment, accessibility, and protection for all Californians, regardless of race, age, culture, income, or geographic locations.

The Department will:

- Protect public health or the environment if a reasonable threat of serious harm exists based upon the best available science and other relevant information, even if absolute and undisputed scientific evidence is not available to assess the exact nature and extent of risk.
- Promote investigation/cleanup of contaminated sites in areas with ethnic minority and low-income populations using both voluntary agreements and enforcement tools.
- Facilitate and advocate that the issue of environmental justice for communities most impacted, including low-income and racial minority populations, is considered in the continued efforts of Brownfields activities of DTSC.
- Ensure that limited State funds for orphan sites are allocated in a fair manner.
- Ensure that hazardous substances sites that most impact, or threaten to impact, public health or the environment are prioritized and remediated expeditiously.
- Consider regional impacts of our decisions and activities, utilizing Geographic Information System (GIS), census, and other demographic data to the extent feasible to meet Public Participation and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) obligations.
- Participate in area studies dealing with health, sensitive receptors, facility data, demographics or other pertinent issues to ensure permitting and site regulatory decisions impacting targeted communities are responsive to environmental justice concerns. The Department will evaluate the study results and determine if permit modifications are needed.
- Ensure all rulemaking proposals, notices and educational efforts address associated environmental justice issues.

- Characterize areas with demographic data surrounding sites and facilities where contamination may have migrated offsite; evaluate potential exposures to sensitive receptors, such as children; and minimize potential cumulative impacts from facilities and sites on community health and the environment by significantly reducing exposure risks from individual sites.
- Work with the Office of the Secretary and the Cal/EPA boards, departments and office to promote implementation of policies and procedures that ensure low-income communities and/or communities with minority populations have access to environmental and health-related information utilized in making project determinations. This will include providing the information in appropriate languages, based on needs assessments, and encouraging early and continuous public involvement.
- Work with EJ stakeholders to develop cross-media and cross-agency approaches to community concerns.