



Before

## Site Facts

*Site Name:*

East Bay Habitat for Humanity

*Location:*

Oakland, Alameda County

*Certification Date:*

September 2006

*Site Size:*

2 Acres

*Historical Uses:*

Junk yard, gardening outlet

*Length of Cleanup:*

3 years

*Contaminants of Concern:*

Pesticides, lead, petroleum

*Redeveloped Use:*

Home ownership for low-income families.



State of California



Department of Toxic Substances Control

# Brownfield Revitalization

SUCCESS STORY, November 2006

## East Bay Habitat for Humanity

In 2002, Habitat for Humanity East Bay (Habitat East Bay) purchased a Brownfield property in East Oakland. Brownfields are “abandoned, idled, or under used industrial and commercial facilities/sites where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination” (United States Environmental Protection Agency). Shortly after purchasing this two-acre lot in a blighted area of East Oakland, Habitat East Bay came to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to help it create home ownership opportunities for very low and low-income families on the property. DTSC awarded Habitat East Bay \$425,000 as a low-interest loan to finance the investigation and cleanup of the site. DTSC also signed an agreement protecting Habitat East Bay from future environmental liability. DTSC worked closely with Habitat East Bay to approve a cleanup plan in just over six months. Two and a half years later and with the removal of 3,000 tons of contaminated soil, Habitat East Bay got the green light to start building 26 single-family homes on the property. In May 2006, the first of six homes were built in two weeks following a ground-breaking and “Builder’s Blitz” by partners KB Homes and Pulte Homes.

The history of this site is much like that of many others in California’s urban areas. Businesses come and go, often leaving the landscape silently scarred with a toxic legacy. Properties become vacant and remain under utilized because of environmental liability issues, high clean up costs and the complex regulatory hurdles required for a successful brownfields cleanup. Empty lots attract unwanted activities contributing to the blight of our inner cities.

DTSC’s Cleanup Loans and Assistance to Neighborhoods (CLEAN) loan program provided a significant financial boost to get this East Oakland site back into use. The CLEAN Response Action Agreement that DTSC and Habitat East Bay entered into also waived the costs of DTSC’s regulatory oversight. DTSC also recognized that Habitat East Bay should not bear the economic responsibility for someone else’s past misuse or negligence and signed a Prospective Purchaser Agreement, thereby limiting Habitat East Bay’s liability for past environmental contamination at the property. Brownfields tools such as these give innovators like Habitat for Humanity East Bay what they need to help disadvantaged families build new lives in affordable, sustainable communities.



New homes under construction

