



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
**Department of Toxic Substances Control**

## News Release

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**Barbara A. Lee, Director**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **DTSC Releases Exide Residential Cleanup Plan and Environmental Impact Report**

SACRAMENTO - Today, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) released its Cleanup Plan and Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the cleanup of lead-impacted soil in neighborhoods around the former Exide Technologies, Inc. battery recycling facility in Vernon. The Cleanup Plan calls for cleaning up approximately 2,500 properties within 1.7 miles of the former battery-recycling facility over a two-year period.

“DTSC engaged in extensive public outreach and worked with the community to prepare the EIR and Cleanup Plan and to ensure the community is protected during this ambitious project,” said DTSC Director Barbara A. Lee. “This is the largest cleanup of its kind ever in California. We are eager to get to work removing lead from the soil of family homes impacted by the operations of the former Exide facility.”

To select properties for cleanup, DTSC will evaluate those properties with the highest levels of lead in soil and greatest risk of exposure. For each property sampled, the results were statistically analyzed to determine a representative, property-wide lead level that is more health protective than a simple average of results. Using these sampling and analysis criteria, the Cleanup Plan provides for the following categories of properties:

- Residential properties with a representative soil lead concentration of 400 parts per million (ppm) or higher.
- Residential properties with a representative soil lead concentration of less than 400 ppm, but where any soil sampling result of 1,000 ppm or higher is detected.
- Daycare and child care centers with a representative soil lead concentration of 80 ppm or higher that have not yet been cleaned up.
- All parks and schools that require cleanup will be cleaned up during this phase.

Initial prioritization for this cleanup is based on properties sampled prior to June 30, 2017. DTSC may identify additional properties for cleanup if funding permits.

Due to the size of the cleanup, and in response to community concerns, DTSC needed to complete an Environmental Impact Report before the cleanup could start. The EIR analyzes potential environmental impacts of the cleanup and ways to mitigate them. The EIR was completed in approximately one year.

After DTSC certifies the EIR and approves the Cleanup Plan on July 17, the Department will invite bids on the cleanup contract and expects to award the contract in August. Over the next month, DTSC will also host a series of community workshops for residents to learn more about the cleanup process and to ask questions related to their specific properties.

To promote a safe and efficient cleanup, DTSC will try to schedule cleanups of neighboring properties at the same time. This minimizes disruption, reduces costs, and limits impacts of cleanup activities in any single area. A cleanup includes removing contaminated soil from properties, replacing it with clean dirt, and then applying a cover of sod, decomposed granite, or mulch. Dust control measures will be used during cleanup activities. Temporary relocation will be offered to residents who may have special needs or concerns.

DTSC conducted extensive public outreach to prepare the Cleanup Plan and EIR. DTSC held three public meetings to solicit input, discussed the proposed plan at five city council meetings, and received about 1,000 public comments that DTSC carefully considered.

“We listened to the communities’ concerns throughout this process, worked with them to finalize the cleanup plan, and will continue to involve them throughout the cleanup process,” said Mohsen Nazemi, Deputy Director for DTSC’s Brownfields and Environmental Restoration Program. “We are now ready to begin this next important step in removing contaminated soil from these neighborhoods.”

Soil samples have been collected and analyzed for more than 8,200 of the 10,129 properties within the 1.7-mile area. DTSC has sought access agreements for the remaining properties and is asking residents or property owners who have not signed up for sampling to do so.

Concurrent with the EIR process, DTSC also conducted a limited number of expedited cleanups, called Time Critical Removal Actions (TCRA), at properties with high levels of lead in the soil and where sensitive individuals such as young children or pregnant women were at the greatest risk of exposure. Past cleanup actions have already resulted in 261 properties being cleaned up, including the 25 under the TCRA program.

The EIR and Cleanup Plan can be found [here](#). DTSC will certify the EIR and approve the Cleanup Plan on July 17.

## **Background**

In April 2016, Governor Brown signed into law a \$176.6 million General Fund loan to expedite and expand testing of approximately 10,000 properties and clean up about 2,500 properties with the highest levels of lead and greatest risk of exposure. Ultimately, DTSC will hold Exide and any other responsible parties accountable for the costs of cleaning up the contamination.

As part of the funding, DTSC created the Workforce for Environmental Restoration in Communities (WERC) program to train residents who live in the communities impacted by the Exide Facility. Between July and December 2016, the WERC program hired 45 local residents as Certified Lead Sampling Technicians to safely perform lead sampling in their communities during the sampling and investigation phase of the program. During the cleanup phase, the program will include additional training for skilled jobs in soil remediation, lead hazard control, interior home cleaning, landscaping, and health education.



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***The mission of DTSC is to protect California's people and environment from harmful effects of toxic substances by restoring contaminated resources, enforcing hazardous waste laws, reducing hazardous waste generation, and encouraging the manufacture of chemically safer products.***