



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Department of Toxic Substances Control

## Media Advisory

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FOR PLANNING PURPOSES

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### California Department of Toxic Substances Control Joins in *JUNK* Raft Event to Reduce Plastic Marine Debris

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – Cal/EPA's Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is partnering with the Algalita Marine Research Foundation and other environmentalists to host an event highlighting the growing problem of debris and chemical pollution in our oceans.

A huge "*JUNK* raft" – made from 15,000 empty plastic bottles and plastic waste products that were discarded as ocean debris – was sailed from California to Hawaii last year and will be on display. DTSC Chief Scientist Jeff Wong will highlight what the department is doing to address the adverse effects of ocean pollution, where plastic is accumulating in an area twice the size of Texas. In this zone, called the North Pacific Gyre "garbage patch," there is evidence that marine birds, mammals and fish are being adversely affected. Dr. Wong will also highlight DTSC's innovative work in pollution prevention, green chemistry, and other programs fostering ocean protection.

**WHAT:** *JUNK* Raft Event, "Our Synthetic Sea"  
(to raise awareness of plastic marine debris issues)

**WHEN:** Thursday, May 21  
9 a.m. News Conference and display of "*JUNK* raft"

**WHERE:** 915 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA, 95814

**WHO:** Jeff Wong, Ph.D., DTSC Chief Scientist;  
Marcus Eriksen, Ph.D., Algalita Marine Research Foundation, and Joel Paschel, who sailed the *JUNK* Raft;  
Captain Charles Moore, Algalita's Director;  
Anna Cummins, accompanying Dr. Eriksen on a 2,000 mile *JUNK* bicycle ride from Vancouver to Tijuana to draw attention to this important issue;  
Leslie Tamminen, Seventh Generation Advisors

Algalita is a non-profit, independent research organization based in Long Beach and dedicated to protecting the marine environment. Algalita teamed up with local high schools to build the *JUNK* raft out of plastic beverage bottles and other plastic waste and sailed it from Southern California to Hawaii to heighten awareness of the marine debris issue.

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FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES: Contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control by phone at (800) 728-6942 or visit [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov). To report illegal handling, discharge, or disposal of hazardous waste, call the Waste Alert Hotline at (800) 698-6942.

***The mission of the Department of Toxic Substances Control is to provide the highest level of safety, and to protect public health and the environment from toxic harm.***