



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NEWS RELEASE

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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**State Delivers \$425,000 to East Bay Habitat for Humanity to Clean
Up “Brownfield” for Homes**

Berkeley --- Top officials of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) today delivered loan money to East Bay Habitat for Humanity representatives to clean up a two-acre site in East Oakland that will soon become home to up to 25 families. East Bay Habitat for Humanity representatives received a symbolic check for \$425,000 from Cal/EPA Agency Secretary Winston Hickox and Ed Lowry, Director of the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

The low-interest loan funds were made available through the Cleanup Loan and Environmental Assistance to Neighborhoods (CLEAN) program. The CLEAN program, part of Governor Gray Davis' Urban Cleanup Initiative, was launched in 2000 following passage of Senate Bill 667 (Sher). To date six loans have been made statewide. These loans are being used to encourage redevelopment of “brownfields”, which are contaminated properties, or properties thought to be contaminated, and are underutilized due to perceived remediation (cleanup) costs and liability concerns. When the loan for the site was approved in August 2002, the interest rate was set at 5.7 percent.

“The initial success of the CLEAN Loan Program in providing financial assistance and fostering brownfield revitalization clearly demonstrates that economic redevelopment can go hand-in-hand with protecting public health and our environment,” Hickox said.

CLEAN loans have been made to private developers, nonprofit groups, and local governments. East Bay Habitat for Humanity will be the developer of the two-acre parcel at 10900 Edes Avenue in East Oakland, where up to 25 single-family homes will be built. The site is around the corner from 40 homes on 105th Avenue, completed by East Bay Habitat for Humanity two years ago.

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“The CLEAN Loan Program provides a real incentive to developers, nonprofit groups, and cities such as Oakland, to clean up brownfield sites and return them to productive use”, Lowry said. “This East Bay Habitat for Humanity project will not only provide much-needed affordable housing, but will also enhance the East Oakland environment by cleaning contaminated areas.”

The site historically was used as a nursery from 1926 through 1952, and as a truck dismantling and salvage yard between 1952 and 1996. Soils at the site that have elevated levels of lead, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and petroleum hydrocarbons will be cleaned up to levels appropriate for residential land use. DTSC expects cleanup of contaminated soils to begin at the site in Spring 2003 and be completed by Fall 2003. “Without the CLEAN program, East Bay Habitat for Humanity would not have sufficient resources to clean up this brownfield site. We are grateful for their (DTSC’s) commitment to making this happen,” stated Joel Mackey, Executive Director for East Bay Habitat for Humanity.

Throughout California there are currently six loans for projects in Los Angeles, Riverside, Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano counties. Proposed end uses of these projects include job creating commercial and industrial developments, retail uses, market-rate and low-income housing, and public access waterfront areas.

The CLEAN program was signed into law in September of 2000 to provide loans of up to \$2.5 million for brownfield and underutilized properties. Loans to date have totaled \$5.4 million and program funds are fully committed. Additional applications will be solicited as existing loans are repaid. DTSC will continue overseeing current projects, servicing loans, and aggressively pursuing additional funding options.

More information on brownfield sites in California can be obtained on the DTSC website at the following address: <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/SiteCleanup/Brownfields/index.html>

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The Department of Toxic Substances Control’s mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the environment and ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.

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“The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Web-site at www.dtsc.ca.gov.”