



Upcoming Changes in California's Air Toxics Program

California's Air Toxics Improvement: California has significantly reduced the concentration of toxic air pollutants in the air and the risk of getting cancer from breathing those pollutants is now 80% lower than it was in 1990. Emissions of toxic air pollutants have been substantially reduced and, in some cases eliminated, due to changes in equipment and processes, which also reduces the health impacts on Californians living and working near those air pollution sources. These reductions happened while California added 8 million people and 8 million cars and our economy grew by 70%.

California's Air Toxics Program: A comprehensive suite of laws, regulations, and programs weave together federal, state, and local requirements to reduce exposure to toxic air pollutants and inform the public about the issues. Among other requirements, state law requires industries and businesses in California to maintain inventories of their emissions of over 180 pollutants that can cause adverse health impacts.

- Air Districts review and prioritize inventories and health risk assessments, notify the public where risk is significant, and require risk reduction at higher risk facilities. Air Districts also review risks from new or modified operations, require the best available control of toxic emissions, and can deny permits as appropriate. Districts also implement aggressive toxic reduction rules, evaluate impacts in local communities, and provide grants that reduce toxic emissions.
- Statewide regulations by the Air Resources Board require cleaner fuels (like lead-free gasoline) and improved technology resulting in significantly cleaner trucks, buses and construction equipment, as well as substantial reductions in hexavalent chromium from plating, perchlorethylene from dry cleaning, and other important rules. ARB also supports many of the Air Districts' efforts.
- Investments by businesses to comply with, and many times achieve emission reductions beyond, these requirements, and consistent advocacy by the environmental community and the public, have helped bring cleaner air to California's communities.

Upcoming Program Changes: The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) Health Risk Assessment Guidelines underpin much of California's Air Toxics Program. OEHHA reviews advances in science concerning health effects and exposure assessment and periodically updates the Guidelines.

- Studies over the last 10 years show children are exposed differently to pollutants in the environment – compared to adults – and those exposures have a different effect on their health. The Legislature directed OEHHA to ensure the Guidelines consider and protect children's health.
- OEHHA proposed updates to the Guidelines on June 20, 2014 that better characterize early childhood exposures, and refine exposure assessment for all ages. The updates incorporate three peer-reviewed elements that were completed in 2008, 2009, and 2012.

- The combined effect of the updates will result in different calculations of the health risk posed by breathing toxic pollutants in the air. In most cases, calculated risks will be higher – ranging from a very small increase to as much as a factor of 2.7, depending on exposure type and other parameters.

Next Steps: OEHHA is accepting comments on the proposed revisions to the Guidelines (see below) after which they will be presented to the Scientific Review Panel for approval, likely in the fall of 2014. During this time, Air Districts and ARB are taking a number of steps to prepare for new risk assessment methods.

- Air Districts and ARB are reviewing their rules, programs, and policies to determine what changes may be needed to implement the revised Guidelines. This includes ARB’s inventory and risk management guidance as well as the Hot Spots Analysis Reporting Program (HARP) software; the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association Prioritization Guidelines; and local permitting, public notification, and risk reduction requirements. Other state and local rules and emission control strategies will also be evaluated for potential updates, as well as ARB’s Land Use Handbook and Air District guidance to lead agencies under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- Air Districts will also require and review revised risk assessments for facilities subject to requirements under the Air Toxics Hot Spots program, beginning with the highest risk facilities, and will use the quadrennial update process to complete the review. Air Districts will work with ARB to identify specific categories of facilities to streamline and expedite the review process.
- The Air Districts and ARB are committed to have key tools and processes in place in time to ensure a smooth transition to new risk assessment procedures.

Workshops and Hearings:

- There will be two public workshops on the proposed Guidelines changes (July 15, 2014, in Diamond Bar, and July 16, 2014, in Sacramento) and comments are due on August 4, 2014. Information about the hearings, instructions to submit comments, and the proposal and supporting documents are available at:
http://oehha.ca.gov/air/hot_spots/riskguidancedraft2014.html.
- The ARB will hold an informational update during its Board meeting on July 24 and 25, 2014, about the OEHHA proposal and the efforts by ARB and the Air Districts to prepare for and implement the changes.
- Air Districts are engaging local stakeholders, and will hold workshops and hearings as appropriate for changes to their local programs.

For the Placer County Air Pollution Control District, please contact Todd Nishikawa, at (530) 745-2322 or tnishika@placer.ca.gov, if you have any questions.

Placer County APCD will post on its webpage any changes determined to be appropriate.