



# **OEHHA - CalEPA Tribal Advisory Committee Report Second Quarter (April- June 2025) and Third Quarter (July- September 2025) Update**

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) is the lead entity within the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) for assessing health risks posed by environmental chemicals. As part of OEHHA's participation in the TAC, we submit a quarterly report to CalEPA informing Tribes of activities that may be of interest, consultations, and projects. Tribes are welcome to [contact OEHHA](#) at any time with questions or for assistance.

## **Consultations**

Consultations during Q2 & Q3: 0

## **Tribal Activities Update**

OEHHA presented in depth on our programs at the June TAC meeting hosted by the Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians. OEHHA had eight people attending in person at the June TAC, including our new Director. Highlights of OEHHA activities between April and September 2025 that may be of interest to Tribes come primarily from the following projects.

1. [Fish Consumption Advisories](#)
2. [HAB-related illnesses](#)
3. [Indicators of Climate Change in California](#)
4. [CalEnviroScreen and DAC Designation](#)
5. [CalHeatScore](#)
6. [Pesticide-related Illnesses](#)
7. [Contaminated Site Assessments](#)
8. [Community Science Model](#)
9. [Trainings/Meetings](#)

## 1. Fish Consumption Advisories

OEHHA's fish advisories provide "safe eating guidelines" that recommend how often people can safely eat fish caught from California water bodies. They are based on sampling results for persistent chemicals in common fish species that people catch and eat from California water bodies. The advisories are available at <https://oehha.ca.gov/fish/advisories>.

### OEHHA Fish Advisory Development Priorities

OEHHA is assisting the State Water Boards with the development of a [Tribally-centered Fish Consumption Application](#) to provide Native American Tribes and members of the public who consume fish for cultural and subsistence purposes with transparent and accessible information. Additionally, results from OEHHA's most recent water body [prioritization](#) were presented at the [Safe to Eat Workgroup \(STEW\)](#) on October 29, 2025. OEHHA staff are participating in the Delta Stewardship Council's [Science for Communities](#) program with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians.

## 2. HAB-related illnesses

OEHHA investigates and tracks potentially Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB)-related illnesses as part of the [California Interagency HAB-related Illness Workgroup](#). Nearly 10% of all California freshwater HAB-related illnesses in humans, domestic animals, and wildlife are associated with Clear Lake. OEHHA regularly engages with the Big Valley Rancheria Environmental Protection Department to ensure that HAB data are used to benefit both scientific research and the local community living around or engaging with Clear Lake. Representatives of the OEHHA HAB Program attended the Tribal Advisory Committee hosted by the Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians at Clear Lake in mid-June and discussed HAB-related challenges experienced at Clear Lake and across California.

### HAB-related Illness Workgroup and Cal-WATCH updates

OEHHA, as part of the [California Interagency HAB-related Illness Workgroup](#), participates in and provides regular updates at the [California Cyanobacteria Harmful Algal Bloom](#) (CCHAB) Network meetings. CCHAB meetings are co-chaired by the Big Valley Rancheria Environmental Protection Department (EPD) Director, Sarah Ryan, and are open to representatives of other California Tribal communities. OEHHA provides scientific expertise at biweekly meetings as part of the [California Water Assessment of Toxins for Community Health](#) (Cal-WATCH) project, along with Big Valley Rancheria's EPD, to monitor and address ongoing HAB-related drinking water concerns in the Clear Lake community.

## 3. Indicators of Climate Change in California

OEHHA is continuing to collaborate with 9 California Tribes on additions and updates for the fifth edition of the Indicators of Climate Change in California report. OEHHA works with California Native American Tribes (both federally and non-federally recognized) and, with their permission, publishes information on the unique impacts that they face from climate change. The unique impacts of climate change on California

Tribes were first included in OEHHA's fourth Indicators of Climate Change in California report, which was released in November 2022.

### [Tribal video series](#)

#### **California Tribes and Climate Change: Voices from the Frontlines**

OEHHA is producing a series of videos in which Tribes tell their own climate change stories. Through these videos, OEHHA aims to help amplify Tribal voices and recognize the value of Indigenous knowledge on climate change issues. Conveying this information in a narrative video format alongside information presented in the report is intended not only to make Tribal experiences accessible to a broader audience but also to deepen viewers' personal connection with the topics that are shared. OEHHA has a contract with California State University Sacramento (CSUS) for filming/video production. OEHHA works closely with Tribes throughout the production process to ensure that the final video tells their story in their own words.

The third video, featuring members of the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe, received formal Tribal approval and was screened by the Tribe at their annual event, Nisenan Heritage Day. It is available to watch on the California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project's [YouTube channel](#), and from the [Indicators of Climate Change webpage](#).

## **4. CalEnviroScreen and DAC Designation**

OEHHA develops [CalEnviroScreen](#), an environmental justice mapping tool used to identify California communities burdened by multiple sources of pollution and vulnerable to its effects. The most recent version, CalEnviroScreen 4.0, was released in 2021. OEHHA is currently preparing to release a draft of CalEnviroScreen 5.0 for public input in 2026. In preparation for this update, OEHHA engaged in a co-design process with community-based organizations to inform proposed updates to the tool. Tribal engagement efforts for CalEnviroScreen 5.0 were focused on addressing tribal data gaps, where the CalEnviroScreen team developed an approach to representing tribal water systems. This was first shared with the TAC in January 2025, and then in July 2025, OEHHA presented on CalEnviroScreen updates and the proposed approach at the inaugural California Native American Tribal GIS summit. OEHHA looks forward to working with Tribes and welcomes their input and collaboration on the forthcoming draft.

### [SB535 Map Updates](#)

CalEPA uses CalEnviroScreen to designate [disadvantaged communities \(DACs\)](#), which are prioritized for the state's climate investments. Federally recognized Tribal lands are designated as DACs. Federally recognized Tribes who would like to add additional Tribal lands to the map are welcome to consult with OEHHA at any time. The SB535 map for 2024, which incorporated additional Tribal lands, is available [online](#). No update was made in 2025, as there were no new requests for consultation.

## **5. CalHeatScore**

The California Communities Extreme Heat Scoring System ([CalHeatScore](#)) is an online extreme heat ranking and early warning system that launched at the beginning of 2025.

The purpose of CalHeatScore is to reduce heat-related illness and save lives by translating meteorological, weather, and health data into easy-to-understand heat risk alerts. This tool raises awareness of extreme heat events and empowers parents, older adults, caregivers, and communities to plan for, mitigate, and survive extreme heat events. CalHeatScore is committed to prioritizing the most vulnerable populations and ensuring that everyone has the information they need to stay safe during extreme heat.

As part of ongoing efforts to ensure the tool is accessible and culturally responsive, CalHeatScore launched an initiative to engage with Tribes. As part of a contract between the Department of Land Use, Climate & Innovation and the UCLA Luskin center, Tribes were identified as a key group to engage with via a cohort process. These cohorts are focused discussions between Tribes, Tribal Representatives, and OEHHA to learn about how extreme heat impacts Tribes, how they develop resilience to extreme heat, and how the CalHeatScore tool could be used among Tribal Nations. Five tribes are part of the first cohort, and the first meeting occurred in September 2025. This engagement is helping develop a more effective plan to integrate Tribal knowledge and priorities into the tool, ensuring that CalHeatScore better serves Tribes in addressing the growing public health threat of extreme heat.

## 6. Pesticide-Related Illnesses

OEHHA continues to offer medical education on the health effects of pesticide exposure to health professionals, including those working with Tribes. Tribal engagement in pesticide-related illness prevention focuses on ensuring that tribes have access to relevant information and can participate in discussions on exposure risks. OEHHA's engagement strategy includes ongoing collaboration with Tribes to address concerns related to pesticide exposure.

With input from the Pesticide Working Group, OEHHA continues to develop a story map webpage. This resource will provide pesticide exposure prevention strategies tailored to Tribal lifeways, as well as information on the health effects of pesticides and resources for both clinicians and patients.

## 7. Contaminated Site Assessments

OEHHA has completed a risk evaluation of the potential health impacts to the Cahto Tribe of contaminants found at the Laytonville Rancheria. The risk evaluation was prompted by long-standing concerns expressed by Rancheria residents about contamination from the nearby landfill. The risk evaluation was sent to the Cahto Tribe for review in March 2025.

## 8. Community Science Model

OEHHA and CARB are working with community partners and Tribes to develop guidance on community science for CalEPA. Current work is focused on finalizing a Community Science practitioner guideline for CalEPA and training modules for staff, Tribes, and community-based organizations.

## 9. Tribal meetings/Trainings

- [California Native American Tribal GIS 2025 Summit](#) (attendance and CalEnviroScreen presentation at summit, July 2025)
- [Safe to Eat Workgroup \(STEW\)](#) presentation on OEHHA's water body [prioritization](#) (October 2025)
- Delta Stewardship Council's [Science for Communities](#) program with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians (participation)
- National Tribal Resilience Data Workgroup (ongoing participation)