

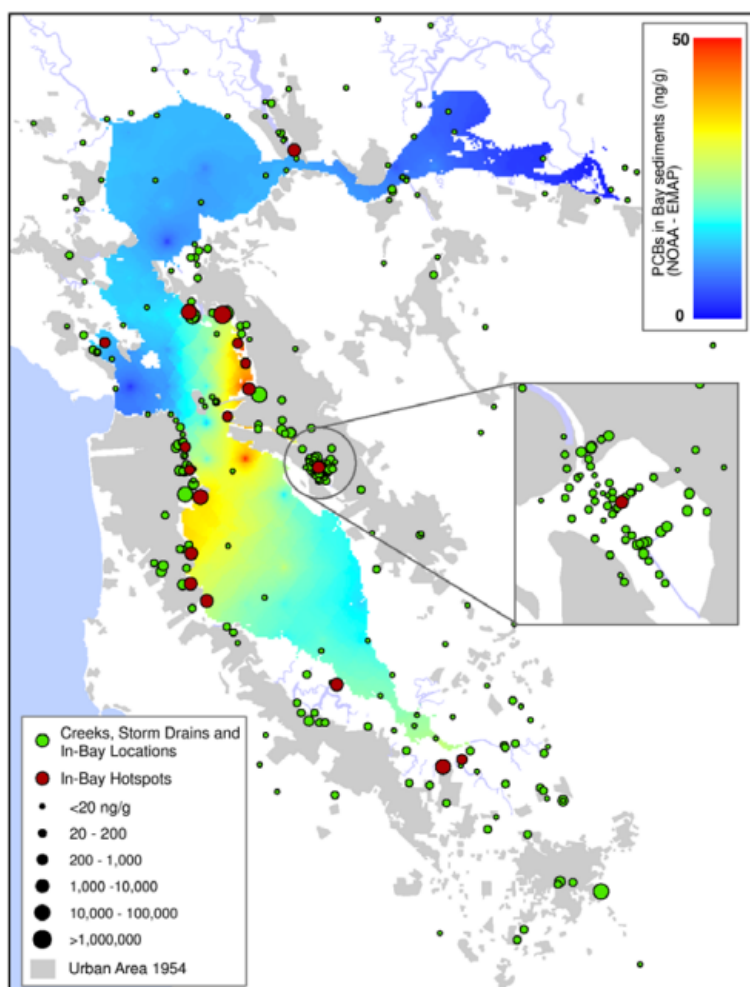
# San Francisco Bay PCBs TMDL – Source Property Referral Program

*The purpose of this fact sheet is to explain the source property referral process implemented by stormwater agencies to reduce polychlorinated biphenyls in municipal storm water.*



## Background

In 2010, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) adopted a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) with an implementation program to reduce polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) loads to San Francisco Bay. The TMDL set the total maximum average yearly PCBs load to San Francisco Bay at 10 kilograms per year (kg/yr) and allocated 2 kg/yr to urban stormwater around the Bay. The Municipal Regional Stormwater NPDES Permit (MRP) regulates stormwater discharges from municipalities in the San Francisco Bay Region pursuant to Section 402(p) of the federal Clean Water Act. The MRP is the key tool used by the Regional Water Board to implement the stormwater load reduction requirements in the TMDL. Estimated loads from urban stormwater need to be reduced from 20 kg/yr to 2 kg/yr, a 90 percent decrease. Much of the PCBs pollution in Bay sediment is the result of PCBs released in urbanized areas decades ago that are continuing to be transported into the Bay through stormwater runoff.



This figure shows concentrations of PCBs in sediment samples collected from the San Francisco Bay, creeks, and storm drains since 2000.

## Source Identification

The MRP requires stormwater agencies to implement control measures to reduce discharges of PCBs from their municipal stormwater systems. To do this, PCBs sources to the municipal stormwater system must be identified.

Stormwater agencies conduct investigations in old (pre-1980) industrial land use areas to identify properties that may be contributing PCBs to the municipal stormwater system. Tasks to identify such properties include records review for historical property uses, site visits, sampling in the adjacent public right of way, and sampling on the property to analyze for PCBs.

## Referral Process

When concentrations of PCBs indicate properties may be contributing PCBs to the municipal stormwater system, those PCBs source properties are referred to the Regional Water Board for further investigation and potential abatement actions. The Regional Water Board may require property owners to submit additional information and investigate suspected discharges that may affect water quality and beneficial uses.

Stormwater agencies are also required by the MRP to implement enhanced operation and maintenance (O&M) in the vicinity of PCBs source properties to prevent PCBs from the source properties from being transported through the municipal stormwater system. The enhanced O&M proposal must be included with the source property referral.

## Applicability of the Environmental Screening Levels

The Regional Water Board publishes Environmental Screening Levels (ESLs) for various exposure pathways and concerns. The human health direct soil exposure ESLs do not address aquatic receptors and, hence, cannot be used to evaluate compliance with the TMDL. Discharges of PCBs at any concentration are prohibited under the California Water Code. The TMDL calls for “on-land source control measures, to ensure that on-land sources of PCBs do not further contaminate in-Bay sediments.”

## Additional Resources

Additional Regional Water Board PCBs fact sheets and informational items can be found at the following links:

- [Regional Water Board PCBs TMDL Homepage](#)
- [Fact Sheet - Identifying PCBs in Industrial Settings](#)
- [Fact Sheet - What to Do When PCBs are Present in Soil](#)
- [San Francisco Bay Basin Plan](#)
- [PCBs TMDL Staff Report](#)