

# **Radioactive and Toxic Threat to the Health and Environment of Treasure Island Residents and San Francisco Bay**

**Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice**

Presentation to San Francisco Board of Supervisors

February 8, 2021

**[www.greenaction.org](http://www.greenaction.org)**

# Magic Isle ... or Toxic & Radioactive Island?



# “Controlled for Radiation Protection Purposes”



# Contaminants include:

- **DIOXIN**
- **POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS (PCBS)**
- **POLYNUCLEAR AROMATIC HYDROCARBONS (PAHS)**
- **RADIOACTIVE WASTE**
- **LEAD**
- **ACIDS**
- **SOLVENTS**
- **HEAVY METALS**
- **PESTICIDES**

**SOURCE: CalEPA/DTSC Envirostor website**

# Treasure Island should be a Superfund Site

“Treasure Island has a Superfund Site ID because it went through the Site Assessment process... the Site scored high enough for NPL listing, ...the cleanup is making good progress under the State’s oversight...”

*Email from USEPA to Greenaction, August 4, 2018*

## **California EPA Confirms Treasure Island Residents at Risk**

**California Environmental Protection Agency's  
CalEnviroScreen 3.0:**

**Treasure Island Residents have a  
higher pollution burden than 85% of  
California**

Pollution burden represents potential exposures to pollutants and adverse environmental conditions caused by pollution.

# Radioactive Waste feet from homes



# Health Problems, Fear of Homelessness & Retaliation

Investigative reporter Carol Harvey's research documented that many residents fear losing their homes. Many are formerly homeless mothers of color, who believe that nothing is worse than living on the street.

After Amy Brownell of San Francisco Department of Public Health refused to do a health survey in 2014, Ms. Harvey began documenting disease patterns.

**Islanders report strokes, heart attacks, tumors, radiation burns, cancers, seizures, tremors, skin sores, crusty painful rashes, pustules, hair and tooth loss, breaking bones, miscarriages, birth defects, and blood disorders.**

CHRONICLE INVESTIGATION

# **‘Extremely unlikely that they will find anything’**

A helicopter scan for radioactivity at SF’s former bases had limited value. The city relied on it anyway.

Amy Brownell, the principal health expert for Treasure Island and Bayview Hunters Point, acknowledged in internal emails that she knew that helicopter scans were likely to not yield any findings of radioactivity, and that was why she wanted them to be used to reassure developers.

**In an August 2012 email to two S.F. development officials, Amy Brownell, an environmental engineer and city health official, wrote that the helicopter was “extremely unlikely” to find anything.**

and then we also need to request it for HPS - otherwise people might ask - what are they trying to hide?  
why didn't City request for both?

the reasons to request:

1. extremely unlikely that they will find anything because they are just doing a gamma survey at 300 feet - the instruments and lab tests that Navy does on the surface at HPS are much more sensitive
2. if they don't find anything - it will be another layer of evidence to add to all our other information that provides assurance that the property transfers are safe
3. if they do find any anomalies:
  - at HPS - they probably already have the area identified and will be able to explain exactly what it is from all their surveys they've already done. If by chance it is something "new" - they have all the equipment and lab personnel on site - it will be extremely easy for the Navy to investigate further

**“California’s coast faces a significant risk of experiencing SLR of up to 1.0 feet by 2030 and 7.6 feet by 2100”**

**California Coastal Commission, May 1, 2020**

**“MAKING CALIFORNIA’S COAST RESILIENT TO SEA LEVEL RISE: PRINCIPLES FOR ALIGNED STATE ACTION”**

# Climate Change, Rising Sea Levels and Rising Groundwater

- Bay Conservation and Development Commission's projections of 7 foot sea level rise would result in Treasure Island being underwater
- **Rising sea levels will inundate the radioactive and toxic waste that city, state and federal officials plan to leave buried and capped on Treasure Island and at the Hunters Point Shipyard Superfund Site – a public health and environmental disaster in the making.**

# Groundwater Beneath Your Feet Is Rising With the Sea. It Could Bring Long-Buried Toxins With It

[Laura Klivans](#), Dec 15, 2020 KQED

- Article about study by Silvestrum Climate Associates
- **As sea level rises, it pushes groundwater up, causing contaminants in the soil to move, and possibly infiltrate homes**
- “Naugle, from the Water Quality Control Board, says contaminated sites are at risk of flooding all along California shorelines”
- Grant Cope, DTSC deputy director for site mitigation and restoration, “said the organization plans to tackle the problem as well”

# Our government must:

- **Protect at-risk residents by relocating them away from contamination, provide full compensation, long-term, equivalent, healthy and safe housing, and rental support**
- **Guarantee that Treasure Island residents will not be evicted in retaliation for speaking out**
- **Protect residents and San Francisco Bay by conducting comprehensive retesting and cleanup – NOT CAPPING - of all contamination at Treasure Island, Bayview Hunters Point, and along the entire waterfront.**



For more information contact

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