



Indoor Air Pollution Risk

VOC Contamination and Groundwater Rise in the Bay Area



Rising groundwater, caused by sea level rise, could mobilize Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) buried underground and push the VOCs through sewer lines and under buildings where it can travel into indoor air through pipes, *like the ones in your kitchen or bathroom!* This is especially dangerous when there is already existing air pollution in your community, from sources like trucks, heavy industry, or contamination.

WHAT'S THE RISK?

Groundwater rise will impact hundreds to thousands of sites along the San Francisco Bay shoreline that are contaminated with VOCs. These **volatile** contaminants can travel *up* through underground infrastructure

and enter buildings, polluting indoor air quality

Sea level rise could affect my indoor air quality?

Yes! By rising groundwater that can mobilize buried VOCs!

Deeper Dive Into Definitions

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs): include a variety of chemicals that can have short- and long-term adverse health effects. **Volatile** means that they evaporate easily and can be released into the air as gases, making the contamination airborne.

Sea Level Rise: Climate change causes higher temperatures that melt ice caps and expand water molecules, both increasing the amount and size of water molecules, which will impact our Bay Area and coastal communities



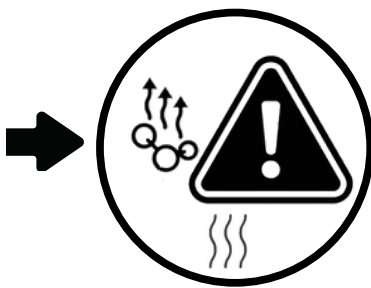
Based on the report "Characterizing Contaminated Sites in the San Francisco Bay Region and Their Exposure to Future Sea-Level Rise and Groundwater Flooding (2025). Contact skylar@greenaction.org with questions.

DID YOU KNOW THAT RISING SEA LEVELS & GROUNDWATER CAN THREATEN INDOOR AIR QUALITY?

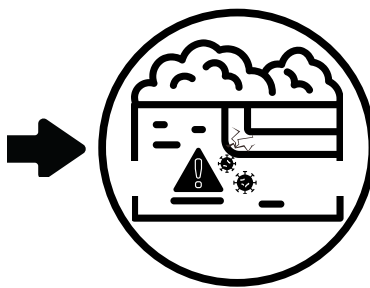
Rising groundwater, caused by sea level rise, could mobilize Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) buried underground and push the VOCs through sewer lines and under buildings where it can travel into indoor air through pipes, like the ones in your kitchen or bathroom. This is especially dangerous when there is already existing air pollution in your community, from sources like diesel trucks or heavy industry.



Sea Level Rise & Groundwater Rise, Caused by Climate Change



Buried or Untreated Contamination Moves and Spreads, Increasing Exposure Pathways



Airborne Pollutants Can Enter Cracked or Damaged Underground Infrastructure and Can Travel Up Into Buildings, Impacting the Indoor Air Quality



KEY DEFINITIONS:

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs): include a variety of chemicals, some having short- and long-term adverse health effects. **Volatile** means that they evaporate easily and can be released into the air as gases, making the contamination airborne.

Sea Level Rise: Climate change causes higher temperatures and is driven by human activity, especially fossil fuels (oil and gas). Climate change makes sea levels rise because warmer temperatures melt the ice caps, adding water to the ocean.

UNDERSTANDING THE RISK

Groundwater rise will impact hundreds to thousands of sites along the San Francisco Bay shoreline that are contaminated with VOCs. These volatile contaminants can travel up through underground infrastructure and enter buildings, polluting indoor air quality



Based on the report *"Characterizing Contaminated Sites in the San Francisco Bay Region and Their Exposure to Future Sea-Level Rise and Groundwater Flooding (2025)"*. Contact skylar@greenaction.org with questions.