



FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAMS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

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ISSUE

Have the ten fire departments and districts within San Mateo County conducted annual safety inspections of all schools, hotels, motels, apartments, and condominiums within their jurisdictions and are they ready to report to their administering authorities as required by SB 1205 (2018)?

SUMMARY

California state law requires that all fire departments and districts in the state (“fire departments”) conduct annual safety inspections of all public and private schools, apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within their jurisdictions (sometimes referred to in this report as “mandated annual inspections”). In June 2018, the Bay Area News Group investigated the fire safety inspection programs of major fire departments across the Bay Area, including the Redwood City Fire Department in San Mateo County. The Bay Area News Group found that fire departments, including the Redwood City Fire Department, were routinely failing to conduct these mandated annual inspections. A state law (SB 1205) which became effective in January 2019, now requires all fire departments to submit Annual Reports to their governing bodies or administering authorities (e.g., city council, fire district board, board of supervisors) regarding their compliance with the state’s mandate for annual fire safety inspections.

Based on the Bay Area News Group’s assertion that at least one fire department within San Mateo County had failed to annually conduct inspections, the Grand Jury undertook a compliance review of all ten fire departments¹ within the County for the years 2015 through 2018 to determine whether their mandated annual inspections were conducted as required. For the period in question, the Grand Jury found substantial non-compliance among seven of the ten fire departments, particularly for the years prior to 2018. Although most departments appear to be making substantial efforts to correct their deficiencies, those departments must address such deficiencies promptly if they are to comply with the requirements of SB 1205.

SB 1205 does not set forth the information to be contained in Annual Reports submitted by fire departments to their administering authorities. The Grand Jury concludes that administrative authorities should provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of Annual Reports in order to provide meaningful oversight of fire departments’ compliance with annual inspection laws. The Grand Jury also recommends that all fire departments establish written policies specifying processes and procedures for conducting inspection programs that comply with state law and for regularly monitoring their performance

¹The ten fire departments in San Mateo County are: Central County Fire Department, Coastside Fire Protection District, Colma Fire District, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, North County Fire Authority, Redwood City Fire Department, San Bruno Fire Department, San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, South San Francisco Fire Department, and Woodside Fire Protection District.

against these requirements. Finally, the Grand Jury recommends that fire departments make data on compliance with annual inspection requirements available on their websites to members of the public.

BACKGROUND

Building safety inspections by fire departments are essential to identify potential fire hazards before they occur. When inspections do not occur, disasters result. Lawmakers have focused special attention on certain categories of buildings and require them to be inspected annually. California Health and Safety Code Sections 13146.2, 13146.3, and 17921(b) mandate that fire departments conduct annual inspections of all the buildings in the following building categories within their jurisdiction:

- Public and private schools²
- Hotels
- Motels
- Apartment buildings, and
- Condominiums³

Fire departments are also authorized, but not required, to annually inspect high-rise buildings in their jurisdictions (California Health & Safety Code, Section 13217a). Significantly, prior to the passage of SB 1205 in 2018, California law did not include any requirement for fire departments to report on their compliance with annual inspection obligations.

The infamous December 2016 Oakland Ghost Ship warehouse fire in which 36 people were killed brought this problem to public attention.⁴ Investigations of the fire by Oakland and Alameda County officials found a number of conditions that contributed to the disaster,⁵ including:

- The Oakland Fire Department (OFD) had no record of the Ghost Ship warehouse property, therefore the property was never the subject of formal fire inspections.⁶

² Includes buildings and structures occupied by more than six children two years of age and older used for educational purposes through the 12th grade. California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Chapter 3, Use and Occupancy Classification. <https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-building-code-2016-v1/chapter/3/use-and-occupancy-classification#305>.

³ California State Fire Marshal Code Interpretation. http://osfm.fire.ca.gov/codeinterpretation/pdf/2008/08_090.pdf

⁴ Oakland Fire Department, Fire/Arson Investigative Unit, *Origin and Cause Report, Incident #2016-85231, December 2, 2016, 1315 31st Avenue*, March 18, 2017, 3. <https://www2.Oaklandnet.com>.

⁵ Oakland Fire Department, Fire/Arson Investigative Unit, *Origin and Cause Report, Incident #2016-85231, December 2, 2016, 1315 31st Avenue*, March 18, 2017, 3. <https://www2.Oaklandnet.com>.

⁶ Kimberly Veklerov, "Oakland Fire Department Software Blamed for Inspection Lapses," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 9, 2017, accessed May 23, 2018. <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/Oakland-Fire-Department-software-blamed-for-11061705.php>.

- A number of city and county officials were aware of the warehouse and its live/work communal activities but did not take action that may have prevented the disaster.⁷
- A variety of fire and building code violations existed in the warehouse.⁸

The revelations surrounding the Oakland Ghost Ship fire led to an investigation into the building inspection records of eleven large Bay Area fire departments by the Bay Area News Group (BANG) which resulted in a June 1, 2018 Mercury News article entitled, *Burned Out: How overwhelmed fire inspectors fail to protect us*.⁹ The article revealed that many of the fire departments that were investigated by BANG routinely failed to perform all of their required annual inspections. Prevention divisions within these major fire departments, which are responsible for inspections, were described as “overwhelmed and often disorganized.” Failures were attributed to “antiquated data management systems, small staffs and difficulty keeping up with problem properties that require repeat visits.”¹⁰

The one fire department in San Mateo County that was included in BANG’s investigation was the Redwood City Fire Department. The article revealed that:

- Of the 17 public and private schools within its jurisdiction, the Redwood City Fire Department had inspected four of the schools only once and 13 others only twice between 2012 and 2017 when each of the schools should have been inspected at least six times.¹¹
- In 2017, 18 percent of Redwood City apartments, hotels, and motels had not been inspected as required.¹²
- Between 2010 and 2017, 16 percent of apartments, hotels, and motels were overdue for their annual inspections by 6 months or more.¹³

SB 1205, enacted in 2018, now requires fire departments to report annually to their governing bodies (referred to in SB 1205 as their “administering authority”) on their compliance with state inspection requirements (referred to throughout this report as an “Annual Report”). The governing body may be a city council, a fire district board for departments serving multiple cities, or a county board of supervisors. This legislation seeks to hold fire departments accountable and offers a mechanism to ensure compliance with inspection laws.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Thomas Peele, “Burned Out How overwhelmed fire inspectors fail to protect us”, *The Mercury News/East Bay Times*, June 1, 2018.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

DISCUSSION

1. *Fire departments' primary functions*

Fire departments have three primary functions: (a) fire suppression, (b) other emergency responses (primarily for medical emergencies), and (c) fire prevention. Suppression refers to putting out fires that have already started. This entails deployment of fire engines and firefighters that are highly visible to the public and garner significant attention. Interestingly, actual fire suppression accounts for only a small percentage of fire department emergency responses (approximately 3.4 percent in 2016).¹⁴ Responses to medical emergency calls, which involve responses by suppression personnel and equipment, accounted for approximately 64 percent of all 2016 emergency responses by fire departments in California.¹⁵ Prevention, in contrast, involves the low profile, day-to-day work of inspecting buildings for compliance with fire safety codes, reviewing plans for new building developments to ensure compliance with fire code requirements, on-site inspections of building construction to confirm that fire safety features are being installed per approved building plans, and investigating the causes of fires that do occur. Prevention functions within a fire department are usually managed by a Fire Marshal.¹⁶

2. *Necessary elements for carrying out required annual inspection programs*

The elements necessary for a fire department's performance of its required annual inspection obligations and, under SB 1205, their new reporting obligations, are as follows:

- *Written policies and procedures:* Fire departments should have written policies and procedures in place that set forth: (a) how an inspection program is to be carried out, (b) staff responsibilities, (c) the specific inspection data that must be gathered and available for retrieval, (d) how performance of inspections is to be measured and reported, and (e) oversight and management processes for the inspection program.¹⁷
- *Lists of buildings required to be inspected:* Fire departments need to have an up-to-date list of all of the buildings within their jurisdiction that must be inspected annually. Developing and maintaining such lists is time consuming and requires the investment of significant resources. In order to do so, fire department staff may review parcel lists, walk through neighborhoods to update the list, and review building permits or tax information to identify owners of apartment buildings.¹⁸

¹⁴ 2016 data from the U.S. Fire Administration/California Fire Loss/Fire Department Profile www.usfa.fema.gov/data/statistics/states/california.html.

¹⁵ 2016 data from the U.S. Fire Administration/California Fire Loss/Fire Department Profile. www.usfa.fema.gov/data/statistics/states/california.html. The other incident types were: Good Intent 17.9 percent, False Alarms 6.5 percent, Service Calls 6.1 percent, Hazards 1.8 percent, Other 0.3 percent, Explosions 0.1 percent. The information does not total 100 percent due to rounding.

¹⁶ Grand Jury interviews.

¹⁷ Grand Jury interviews.

¹⁸ Grand Jury interviews.

- *Inspection Process:* Building inspections are usually carried out by a mix of prevention inspectors, who have specialized expertise on building code requirements, and regular engine company suppression firefighters. In some fire departments, engine company firefighters conduct most inspections, though in others they are assigned to carry out only simple, routine inspections and prevention personnel carry out the more complex inspections where a higher level of expertise is needed.¹⁹
- *Record keeping and data retrieval:* Accurate records must be maintained of all inspections completed, the dates performed, building addresses, and the types of building inspected (e.g., school, hotel, apartment building). These records need to be organized and maintained in a manner that allows fire departments to monitor performance of their annual inspection obligations, identify inspections yet to be done, monitor follow up when deficiencies are identified, and report to management and administrative authorities on compliance. In all but the smallest fire departments, this necessitates storing inspection data in electronic databases that can be queried for reports reflecting progress against inspection requirements and follow up to ensure deficiencies are corrected.²⁰

Fire departments' inspection reports completed in the field have, in the past, been filled out on paper. Paper field reports are either filed manually and maintained only in paper form, or data from the field reports is entered into an electronic database to allow storage, retrieval and analysis. Most departments are moving toward the use of electronic tablet devices such as iPads for field reports.²¹

- *Staffing:* Adequate specially trained inspectors who understand the requirements of city and state fire codes are needed. Such staff are usually part of prevention units within fire departments.²²

3. *Grand Jury's review of individual fire departments' inspection programs*

(a) *Written policies and procedures:*

Of the ten fire departments in San Mateo County, only the following six have written policies and procedures applicable to their mandated annual inspection obligations:²³

- Central County Fire Department,²⁴
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District,

¹⁹ Grand Jury interviews.

²⁰ Grand Jury interviews.

²¹ Grand Jury interviews.

²² Grand Jury interviews.

²³ The Grand Jury requested each department to submit policies and procedures. Those received were reviewed by the Grand Jury.

²⁴ According to written communication, the policy on school inspections was updated 1/30/19. The policy on inspections for all occupancies is in draft form but has not been through the department's approval process.

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- North County Fire Authority,²⁵
- South San Francisco Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District.

One additional department, Coastside Fire Protection District, submitted an inspection policy, though it was specific to how engine company staff conducts business inspections and was not specifically for mandated annual inspections. The following fire departments do not have written policies and procedures regarding their inspection programs:

- Colma Fire District,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

Of the policies submitted to the Grand Jury, the Grand Jury found the most comprehensive were from Menlo Park Fire Protection District (MPFPD) and North County Fire Authority (NCFA). The MPFPD’s policy defines the buildings to be inspected, the procedures to be followed, and inspection fees. Additionally, the MPFPD has an Engine Company Manual that includes occupancy classifications, information on the maintenance of records, an inspection flow chart, a referral form to the Fire Prevention Division for follow up, and a master list change request form. MPFPD also has a detailed slide show presentation on building inspections for engine company staff. The NCFA policies include detailed information on staff responsibilities, assignments, and the inspection process.

(b) *Lists of buildings required to be inspected:*

All ten fire departments investigated by the Grand Jury appear to have comprehensive lists of buildings in their jurisdiction subject to mandatory inspections. These lists may also include businesses in a department’s jurisdiction. (Single family residences are excluded since they are not routinely inspected.)²⁶

(c) *Inspection Process:*

Departments use different combinations of staff with different expertise to conduct inspections. Prevention staff receive training on fire safety codes and must understand the design and function of building systems, such as heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning (HVAC), smoke

²⁵North County Fire Authority’s policy did not mention school inspections.

²⁶ Grand Jury interviews.

control, and alarm systems, and sprinklers. Fire suppression staff (also referred to as engine company staff) may only have a general understanding of fire codes.²⁷

Of the ten fire departments investigated by the Grand Jury, the following three use prevention staff alone to complete mandated inspections:²⁸

- Colma Fire District,
- South San Francisco Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District.

Though South San Francisco Fire Department now uses prevention staff, engine company staff were used along with prevention staff in 2015, 2016, and 2017 to inspect apartments and condominiums.

Of the seven remaining fire departments, the following four primarily use engine company staff to conduct inspections, though prevention staff will inspect schools and some large structures (which are more complex to inspect):²⁹

- Central County Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department,³⁰
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, and
- North County Fire Authority.

For example, Central County Fire Department engine company staff inspect all but two apartment buildings. Prevention staff inspects the remaining two apartment buildings plus all hotels, motels, and schools.³¹

Finally, three of the fire departments– the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, Redwood City Fire Department and Coastside Fire Protection District – staff their inspections in other ways. Redwood City Fire Department uses fire prevention staff to conduct inspections of schools, hotels, motels and high-rise occupancies. Engine company personnel conduct inspections of other apartments.³² Menlo Park Fire Protection District uses a combination of prevention and

²⁷ Grand Jury interviews.

²⁸ Not all fire departments inspect day centers, though such facilities are classified as “Educational” under California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Chapter 3, Use and Occupancy Classification. <https://up.codes/viewer/california/ca-building-code-2016-v1/chapter/3/use-and-occupancy-classification#305>.

²⁹ Grand Jury interviews.

³⁰ San Bruno Fire Department also uses truck company staff to conduct inspections. Written correspondence.

³¹ Grand Jury interviews.

³² Prevention staff also inspects four jails bi-annually. Engine and truck company suppression staff were trained to perform fire and life safety inspections. The Department is also inspecting non-mandated business occupancies

engine company staff for inspections and assigns inspections based on the level of technical expertise appropriate for each building. Assignments made to engine company staff will generally be those that require less inspection expertise and prevention staff handle inspections that require higher-level inspection expertise, or that require a greater amount of time to complete. Prevention staff, rather than engine company staff, are also tasked with following up on safety issues in buildings that had earlier been identified by engine company staff.³³

Coastside Fire Protection District's (CFPD) inspection staffing is not yet decided. In 2017, its Unit Chief learned that there had been significant failures in the department in carrying out mandated inspections. As a result, the CFPD hired consultants to complete all of the department's mandated annual building inspections in 2017 and 2018.³⁴ CFPD will continue to use consultants and engine company personnel to conduct inspections. However, CFPD is considering adding a full-time position in the Fire Marshal's Office to facilitate inspections (as well as for other duties).³⁵

(d) *Record keeping and data retrieval:*

Until recently, all ten of the fire departments completed their inspection reports on paper, though three of them would then enter data from the reports into an electronic database.³⁶ Four departments that continue to use paper filing system (as opposed to electronic) are:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District.³⁷

Woodside Fire Prevention District, however, reported that the department would like to digitize reports and eliminate paper files but because of its small size and the cost of a database system, it is unlikely to purchase one.³⁸ Colma Fire District with only thirty-six mandated inspections, is also too small to purchase a database system.³⁹

throughout their jurisdiction on a multi-year cycle using engine and truck company personnel. Written correspondence.

³³ Grand Jury interviews.

³⁴ Coastside Fire Protection District staff reported that in 2016 a Deputy Fire Marshal position was eliminated. This staff member had been responsible for managing inspections. No other staff member was assigned that responsibility. The Fire Marshal position was vacant, though it was filled in February 2019.

³⁵ Grand Jury interviews

³⁶ Grand Jury interviews.

³⁷ Grand Jury interviews.

³⁸ Grand Jury interviews.

³⁹ Written correspondence.

San Bruno Fire Department (SBFD) reported that records had not been kept in a single, central location but had been scattered across various locations, including fire officers' personal files.⁴⁰ It was only after receiving a document request from the Grand Jury that SBFD's inspection reports were collected, reviewed, and stored centrally.⁴¹ Since it is likely that files had been misplaced or purged, SBFD does not have an accurate record of the number of inspections that were completed (2015 – 2018). SBFD has addressed these issues and is now confident that it is accounting for all completed inspections on spreadsheets that list the date each building was inspected and by whom. In 2019, the San Bruno City Council approved funds for a Records Management System which is being implemented. Once implemented, staff will use electronic tablets to document inspections which will improve tracking and accounting of inspections.⁴²

The following three fire departments complete their inspection reports on paper but then enter the information into a computer database:⁴³

- Central County Fire Department,⁴⁴
- Redwood City Fire Department,⁴⁵ and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.⁴⁶

Since field report data must be entered manually, there can be delays in accessing up-to-date information and human entry errors or omissions occur.⁴⁷ In response to Grand Jury queries, all three fire departments reported that they have difficulty retrieving accurate information from their current database systems regarding inspections.⁴⁸ Though Central County Fire Department (CCFD) plans to continue using its current database, CCFD will implement software for the system using iPads to input field inspection data directly into the database system in 2019.⁴⁹ Redwood City Fire Department issued an RFP for a new database system and as of June 2019 was in the final phase of evaluating the responses. The new database system will allow for an all-electronic process using iPads in the field.⁵⁰ South San Francisco Fire Department is not investing in a new database.

As of January 13, 2019, the fire departments of San Mateo, Belmont, and Foster City completed their five-year transition to a single department called the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department. The three city fire departments had used different database systems, though field inspection reports were completed on paper. San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department has

⁴⁰ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴¹ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴² Written correspondence.

⁴³ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴⁴ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴⁵ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴⁶ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴⁷ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴⁸ Grand Jury interviews.

⁴⁹ Implementation of the iPad-based system has been delayed by the database company for two years. The department is hopeful that problems will be resolved soon. Grand Jury correspondence.

⁵⁰ Grand Jury interviews and correspondence.

implemented a new database system that incorporates the inspection data of its three predecessors going back to July 2018. This database is able to track and report on the completion of mandated inspections in the department's jurisdiction. However, data for inspections done prior to July 1, 2018 are not included in the new system and can only be accessed by querying each of the three predecessor databases individually and then consolidating the results manually. All paper field inspection forms were eliminated in 2018 when staff transitioned to iPads for field reports.⁵¹

The Grand Jury identified two fire departments, Menlo Park Fire Protection District (MPFPD) and North County Fire Authority (NCFA), that currently have robust database systems on which they maintain inspection data. MPFPD staff has utilized iPads for approximately three years to complete field inspection reports. Inspection reports completed prior to that time and stored in paper form were digitalized so that their data could be incorporated into the database system, allowing staff to compare multiple years of inspections.⁵²

In 2017, NCFA implemented an electronic records management system. Field inspection reports are currently completed on paper and then entered into the electronic system manually but NCFA expects that staff will begin using iPads for their field inspection reports in 2019. A demonstration of the database showed that inspections for individual sites are complete and easily accessible, though the reporting functionality was limited. For example, staff could not easily run a report to determine the percentage of mandated inspections completed.⁵³ The Grand Jury noted that customized reports may still need to be created by the database vendor to meet all NCFA's reporting needs.

In all of the fire departments, inspection reports that document hazards and/or fire safety violations lead to re-inspections.⁵⁴ The Grand Jury noted that inspection data submitted by fire departments identified sites that had been inspected multiple times in a year. Inspections of these sites⁵⁵ were repeated to ensure violations were addressed. Departments' use of iPads or tablets allows inspectors to more easily take and attach photographs to inspection reports to document violations.⁵⁶

e. *Staffing issues*

Of the ten fire departments investigated by the Grand Jury, three reported the need for additional fire prevention staff:⁵⁷

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and

⁵¹ Grand Jury interviews.

⁵² Grand Jury interviews.

⁵³ Grand Jury interviews.

⁵⁴ Grand Jury interviews.

⁵⁵ Grand Jury interviews.

⁵⁶ Grand Jury interviews.

⁵⁷ Grand Jury interviews.

- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.⁵⁸

Since first contacted by the Grand Jury, San Bruno Fire Department added a full-time prevention staff position⁵⁹ and Redwood City Fire Department retained two contract fire inspectors and is in the process of filling a vacant Deputy Fire Marshal position.⁶⁰

Two others -- Coastside Fire Protection District (CFPD), and South San Francisco Fire Department (SSFD) -- stated that they need to further assess their prevention staffing needs because of their unique staffing issues.⁶¹ Specifically, prevention staff in the SSFD has been tasked with code enforcement for all city code violations. SSFD estimates that general code enforcement (which does not include fire inspections) at times can consume up to 75 percent of prevention staff's time based on code case volume and the complexity of individual code cases. SSFD's general code enforcement responsibility is being transitioned to the city's Public Works Department in 2019. Once that shift in responsibility is completed, SSFD's prevention staffing needs will be assessed.⁶²

With respect to the Coastside Fire Protection District, the Grand Jury learned that positions tasked with conducting inspections and oversight had been left vacant since 2016.⁶³ Following the hiring of a new Fire Marshal, however, officials from CFPD informed the Grand Jury that they intend to re-assess staffing needs, particularly since CFPD's annual inspections have been conducted by consultants rather than fire department personnel since 2017.

f. *Data on compliance with mandated annual inspection laws*

The data gathered and analyzed by the Grand Jury on San Mateo County fire departments' compliance with their annual inspection obligations from 2015 through 2018 is set forth in Table 1 below. It paints a mixed picture, showing widespread failures to conduct mandated annual inspections, particularly in the earlier years, with substantial improvements taking place in 2018.

As Table 1 shows, the following seven fire departments did not conduct at least 90 percent of the annual mandated inspections as required in all or some of the years from 2015 through 2018:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Central County Fire Department,
- Colma Fire District,⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Grand Jury interviews.

⁵⁹ Written correspondence.

⁶⁰ Written correspondence.

⁶¹ Grand Jury interviews.

⁶² Grand Jury interviews and written correspondence.

⁶³ Grand Jury interviews.

⁶⁴ Colma Fire District was unaware of the public space inspection requirements for condominiums but has now included them on their list of required inspections. Written correspondence and Grand Jury interviews.

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department,
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

The reasons for lapses in inspections vary.

- Two departments, Coastside Fire Protection District and South San Francisco reported staffing issues, already described, which negatively impacted the ability of staff to complete inspections.
- A lack of oversight was reported by staff in two departments, San Bruno Fire Department, and Coastside Fire Protection District.⁶⁵ The Grand Jury believes this lack of oversight was also a factor that contributed to the lack of inspections by Redwood City Fire Department.
- The lack of searchable database systems was also a factor in the seven departments noted above since staff could not readily assess their compliance with state inspection mandates throughout the 2015 – 2018 timeframe.
- The disjointed storage of files by staff in San Bruno Fire Department meant SBFD could not verify that inspections were completed.⁶⁶

The Grand Jury was unable to analyze the data submitted by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department (SMCFD) for 2015 through 2017. The data submitted came from the three city fire departments (Belmont, Foster City, and San Mateo) that now make up SMCDF and came from different database systems and which appeared incomplete. The Grand Jury was unable to combine the data for analysis. The data for 2018 was from one database and although inspections for all schools in the jurisdiction were complete, inspections for apartments, condominiums, hotels, and motels were incomplete.

Three departments consistently performed at least 90 percent of mandated annual inspections from 2015 through 2018. These departments are:

- Menlo Park Fire Protection District (MPFPD),
- North County Fire Authority (NCFA), and
- Woodside Fire Protection District (WFPD).

⁶⁵ Grand Jury interviews.

⁶⁶ Written correspondence.

All three have well developed inspection programs including written policies and procedures for inspections. Two of the departments, MPFPD and NCFA, have also invested resources for database systems that permit monitoring and oversight. Even though WFPD did not have a computer database, the department was sufficiently well-organized, and the number of mandated inspections was small, such that management was able to effectively oversee the process to ensure annual inspections of schools in the district.

Table 1: Inspections Completed Annually Compared to Required Inspections by Fire Department

Name	Jurisdictions Served	School Inspections					Apt/Condo/Hotel/Motel Inspections				
		Required	Completed				Required	Completed			
			2015	2016	2017	2018		2015	2016	2017	2018
Coastside Fire Protection District	Half Moon Bay, Miramar, El Granada, Princeton-by-the-Sea, Moss Beach, Montara	22	6 27%	5 23%	8 36%	20 91%	52	30 58%	35 67%	22 42%	34 65%
Central County Fire Department	Burlingame, Hillsborough, Millbrae	22 to 23	18 of 22 82%	16 of 22 73%	22 of 23 96%	20 of 23 87%	790	NA ⁶⁷	483 61%	764 97%	746 94%
Colma Fire District	Colma, Broadmoor, Sterly Village, unincorporated Daly City	3	3 100%	3 100%	3 100%	3 100%	33 ⁶⁸	2 6 %	2 6%	7 21%	6 18%
Menlo Park Fire Protection District	Atherton, Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, some of unincorporated San Mateo County	76 ⁶⁹	77 100%	80 100%	77 100%	74 97%	749	745 99%	772 100%	765 100%	747 100%
North County Fire Authority	Brisbane, Daly City, Pacifica	81 to 87 ⁷⁰	84 of 84 100%	85 of 85 100%	87 of 87 100%	81 of 81 100%	930	925 99%	920 99%	924 99%	902 97%
Redwood City Fire Department	Redwood City, San Carlos, some of unincorporated San Mateo County	36	24 69%	1 3%	6 17%	36 100%	1,002 ⁷¹	619 62%	484 48%	629 63%	775 ⁷² 77%
San Bruno Fire Department	San Bruno	14	12 86%	12 86%	12 86%	14 100%	367	245 67 %	235 64%	242 66%	290 79%
San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department	Belmont, Foster City, San Mateo	57	NA	NA	NA	57 ⁷³ 100%	1,837	NA	NA	NA	1,505 82%
South San Francisco Fire Department	South San Francisco	18	5 28%	9 50%	9 50%	18 100%	456	124 27%	408 89%	87 19%	28 6%
Woodside Fire Protection District	Woodside, Portola Valley, Ladera, Los Trancos, Skyline, Vista Verde	6	6 100%	6 100%	6 100%	6 100%	0	0	0	0	0

⁶⁷ Central County Fire Department inspected 22 schools in 2015 and 2016 and 23 in 2017 and 2018. Because of the Department’s computer system, the Department could not extract data for 2015.

⁶⁸ Colma Fire District was unaware of the requirement to inspect public spaces in condominiums but has now included them on their list of required inspections. Written correspondence and Grand Jury interviews.

⁶⁹ According to Menlo Park Fire Protection District staff, the total number of buildings inspected changes annually. This is due to changes in day care facilities which are included in its list of mandated school inspections. The district also allows one inspection form for a property or complex instead of multiple forms for one site which may account for some of the differences in inspection totals noted in the table.

⁷⁰ North County Fire Authority noted changes in the number of schools reported annually because of construction, closures, preschools (which are inspected), and corrections in their database.

⁷¹ This number only includes apartment buildings. Redwood City Fire Department does not inspect condominiums. Written correspondence. The Grand Jury notes that all other departments included condominiums as part of their mandated inspections.

⁷² Redwood City Fire Department operates by Fiscal Year. The data for 2018 is based on FY 2018-2019, July 1, 2018- June 30, 2019. The Department provided data as of March 2019 and expects to complete all inspections by June 30th. There are 28 hotels and motels in Redwood City and San Carlos and the Department had inspected 22 or 79% but expects to complete all inspections by June 30th. Written Communication

⁷³ The Grand Jury could not extract the desired statistics on annual inspections for the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department from 2015 - 2017 due to the quality of the data submitted. The Department did not have an accurate count of the inventory in the district until July 2018 when inspection data from the three cities was migrated to one system. Therefore, 2018 calendar year represents the first year with complete data records.

4. Conclusions

Inspections

As the data in Table 1 documents only three fire departments in the county, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, North County Fire Authority, and Woodside Fire Protection District, have consistently inspected at least 90 percent of their mandated annual inspections of schools, hotels, motels, and condominiums within their jurisdictions from 2015 through 2018. Redwood City Fire Department was non-compliant from 2015 – 2017, completing only 2 percent of schools and 48 percent of hotels, motels, and condominiums in 2016. However, the data indicates that the Department appears to be on track to complete their mandated inspections by the end of their fiscal year (June 30, 2019). Other departments have also shown improvement. In 2018, Coastside Fire Protection District completed more than 90 percent of school inspections (up from 36 percent the previous year). Central County Fire Department completed more than 90 percent of inspections of apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels in 2017 and 2018 (up from 61 percent in 2016). San Bruno Fire Department completed 100 percent of school inspections in 2018 (up from 86 percent the previous years).

Record Keeping and Data Retrieval

A number of departments are enhancing their database systems. However, as Woodside Fire Protection District demonstrates, smaller departments can complete and document inspections without costly investments in a database system.

Inspection Process

Table 2 summarizes information regarding inspection programs across the ten fire departments. A number of departments recently implemented the use of iPads or tablets to document inspections and others plan to do so. This should eliminate problems associated with paper files and such tools, as previously noted, allow departments to document deficiencies by attaching photographs.

Written Policies and Procedures

The first submissions of Annual Reports on mandated inspections will be for 2019. As previously noted, SB 1205 does not specify what information must be in those reports. Even the most comprehensive policies and procedures submitted to the Grand Jury did not specify what information departments will submit to their administering authorities.

Table 2: Summary of Inspection Programs

Name	Written policies and procedures in place for mandated inspection program?	Master List of Bldgs. to Inspect?	Records	Electronic Database in Use?	At Least 90% of All Inspections Completed from 2015 - 2018
Central County Fire Dept.	For School Inspections ⁷⁴	Yes	Paper field inspection forms used, though iPads to be implemented in 2019	Yes	No
Coastside Fire Protection Dist.	No	Yes	Paper field inspection forms used	No	No
Colma Fire Dist.	No	Yes	Paper field inspection forms used	No	No
Menlo Park Fire Protection Dist.	Yes	Yes	iPads used for field inspection reports	Yes	Yes
North County Fire Auth.	Yes (for apts, hotels, motels, condos)	Yes	Paper field inspection forms used, though iPads to be implemented in 2019	Yes	Yes
Redwood City Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes	Paper field inspection forms used but iPads to be used with new database system when implemented	Yes, and department will be implementing a new system	Yes, for FY 2018-2019
San Bruno Fire Dept.	No	Yes	Tablets to be used beginning in 2019	Implementing a system in 2019.	Yes, for Schools
San Mateo Consolidated Fire Dept.	No	Yes	iPads used for field inspection reports	Yes (as of July 2018)	No
South San Francisco Fire Dept.	Yes	Yes (and in process of updating)	Paper field inspection forms used	Yes	No
Woodside Fire Protection Dist.	Yes	Yes	Paper field inspection forms used, but department is considering digitizing paper reports	No	Yes

⁷⁴As previously noted, the policy on engine company inspections is in draft form and has not been approved through the department's process.

FINDINGS

Inspections

- F1. California Health & Safety Code Sections 13146.2, 13146.3 and 17921(b) and regulations require fire departments to conduct annual inspections of all public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging houses, and apartments in their jurisdictions (mandated annual inspections).
- F2. From 2015 through 2018, the following three fire departments conducted inspections of over 90 percent of the mandated buildings in their jurisdictions, as shown in Table 1:
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
 - North County Fire Authority
 - Woodside Fire Protection District
- F3. The disorganization and incompleteness of the data submitted by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department for 2015 through 2017 (which it inherited from its predecessor fire departments) was such that it could not be analyzed by the Grand Jury. However, data submitted by SMCFD for 2018 was well organized and showed 100 percent of schools and 82 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction were inspected that year.
- F4. Each of the fire departments is developing more robust inspection programs by, for example:
- implementing database management systems.
 - adding prevention staff.
 - using iPads or tablets to document inspections.
- F5. SB 1205 does not specify what the content of Annual Reports to fire departments' administrative authorities should be regarding mandated annual inspections

School Inspections:

- F6. In 2015, 2016, and 2018 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within its jurisdiction although it completed 96 percent of school inspections in 2017 as shown on Table 1.
- F7. From 2015 through 2017 the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within their jurisdiction, though all showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:
- Coastside Fire District increased inspections from 36 percent in 2017 to 91 percent in 2018.
 - Redwood City Fire Department increased from 15 percent in 2017 to 85 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all schools by the end of its fiscal year.

- San Bruno Fire Department increased inspections from 86 percent in 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.
- South San Francisco increased inspections from 50 percent in 2016 and 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.

F8. From 2015 through 2018 Colma Fire District completed 100 percent of school inspections.

Apartment/Condominium/Hotel/Motel Inspections:

F9. From 2015 through 2018, the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within their jurisdiction. as shown on Table 1:

- Coastside Fire Protection District;
- Colma Fire District;
- San Bruno Fire Department; and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

F10. From 2015 through 2017 Redwood City Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction, though the department showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Redwood City Fire Department improved from a low of 48 percent in 2016 to 77 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all inspections by the end of its fiscal year.

F11: In 2016 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction. The department inspected over 90 percent of these structures in 2017 and 2018. The Department could not provide data for 2015.

Record-Keeping & Data Retrieval

F12: The following five fire departments currently have data management systems that allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Central County Fire Department,
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District,
- North County Fire Authority,
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District.

F13: The following two departments plan to implement database systems that will allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- San Bruno Fire Department and
- Redwood City Fire Department.

F14: The following three fire departments need to assess their data management systems to allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District, and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

Inspection Process & Staffing

F15. The following three fire departments reported the need for additional prevention staff to complete all of their mandated annual inspections:

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Departments.

F16. Coastside Fire Protection District and South San Francisco Fire Department reported they need to assess the sufficiency of their prevention staffing.

Written Policies & Procedures

F17. The following four fire departments reported they do not have written policies and procedures in place governing their mandated annual inspection programs:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

F18. None of the ten departments' policies and procedures specified how they will report to their administering authorities under SB 1205 (2018).

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the county should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdiction for which annual inspections required under Sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health & Safety Code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting on all mandated annual inspections.

R2. By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administering authority setting forth the content of the annual report as required under Section 13146.4 of the California Health & Safety Code (former SB 1205) (the "Annual Report"), which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire department’s jurisdiction in each category of building (referred to as a “occupancy type”) subject to mandated annual inspections that year.
- The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for two or more consecutive years.

R3. By no later than January 31, 2020, the administering authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the Annual Report submitted by its fire chief and provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of the Annual Report.

R4. By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the fire chief to publish the fire department’s Annual Report on the fire department’s public website.

REQUEST FOR RESPONSES

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933.05, the Grand Jury requests that each of the following respond to the foregoing Findings and Recommendations referring in each instance to the number thereof:

- Central County Fire Department Board of Directors
- Coastside Fire Protection District Board of Directors
- Colma Fire District Board of Directors
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District Board of Directors
- North County Fire Authority Board of Directors
- The City Council of Redwood City.
- The City Council of San Bruno
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Board of Directors
- The City Council of South San Francisco
- Woodside Fire Protection District Board of Directors

In responding to the foregoing Findings and Recommendations, each of the respondents should respond only as to that part of the Finding or Recommendation that expressly applies to it. No respondent should respond as to any other respondent.

Each respondent should be aware that its comments or responses must be conducted subject to the notice, agenda, and open meeting requirements of the Brown Act.

METHODOLOGY

The Grand Jury reviewed relevant provisions of the California Health and Safety Code governing required annual inspections, SB 1205, the legislative history for SB 1205 regarding fire inspections and compliance reporting; and local news articles relating to fire safety inspections.

The Grand Jury reviewed annual inspection data provided by each of the ten fire departments in San Mateo County for the years 2015 through 2018, conducted interviews with personnel from each fire department, reviewed their written policies and procedures governing safety inspections (to the extent they existed) and reviewed each fire department's website information.

Documents

- The Grand Jury reviewed inspection data from the 10 fire departments in San Mateo County.
- Documents in the Bibliography

Interviews

- The Grand Jury interviewed personnel from each of the ten fire departments in San Mateo County.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Thomas Peele, "Burned Out How overwhelmed fire inspectors fail to protect us", *The Mercury News/East Bay Times*, June 1, 2018
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Issued: July 22, 2019



September 18, 2019

Hon. Donald J. Ayooob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Ayooob:

The Central County Fire Department Board has reviewed the 2019 Grand Jury report entitled "*Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery.*" The Department Board, after reviewing the report and allowing for public comment at its regular Board meeting on September 18, 2019, offers the following responses:

Responses to Findings

Inspections

Finding F1. California Health & Safety Code Sections 13146.2, 13146.3 and 17921(b) and regulations require fire departments to conduct annual inspections of all public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging houses, and apartments in their jurisdictions (mandated annual inspections).

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding F2. From 2015 through 2018, the following three fire departments conducted inspections of over 90 percent of the mandated buildings in their jurisdictions, as shown in Table 1:

- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- North County Fire Authority
- Woodside Fire Protection District

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F3. The disorganization and incompleteness of the data submitted by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department for 2015 through 2017 (which it inherited from its predecessor fire departments) was such that it could not be analyzed by the Grand Jury. However, data submitted by SMCFD for

2018 was well organized and showed 100 percent of schools and 82 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction were inspected that year.

Response: Not applicable.

- Finding F4.** Each of the fire departments is developing more robust inspection programs by, for example:
- implementing database management systems.
 - adding prevention staff.
 - using iPads or tablets to document inspections.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Central County Fire Department.

- Finding F5.** SB 1205 does not specify what the content of Annual Reports to fire departments' administrative authorities should be regarding mandated annual inspections

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

School Inspections

- Finding F6.** In 2015, 2016, and 2018 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within its jurisdiction although it completed 96 percent of school inspections in 2017 as shown on Table 1.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

- Finding F7.** From 2015 through 2017 the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within their jurisdiction, though all showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Coastside Fire District increased inspections from 36 percent in 2017 to 91 percent in 2018.
- Redwood City Fire Department increased from 15 percent in 2017 to 85 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all schools by the end of its fiscal year.
- San Bruno Fire Department increased inspections from 86 percent in 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.

- South San Francisco increased inspections from 50 percent in 2016 and 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F8. From 2015 through 2018 Colma Fire District completed 100 percent of school inspections.

Response: Not applicable.

Apartment/Condominium/Hotel/Motel Inspections

Finding F9. From 2015 through 2018, the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within their jurisdiction. as shown on Table 1:

- Coastside Fire Protection District;
- Colma Fire District;
- San Bruno Fire Department; and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F10. From 2015 through 2017 Redwood City Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction, though the department showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Redwood City Fire Department improved from a low of 48 percent in 2016 to 77 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all inspections by the end of its fiscal year.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F11. In 2016 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction. The department inspected over 90 percent of these structures in 2017 and 2018. The Department could not provide data for 2015.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Record-Keeping & Data Retrieval

Finding F12. The following five fire departments currently have data management systems that allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Central County Fire Department,
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District,
- North County Fire Authority,
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Central County Fire Department.

Finding F13. The following two departments plan to implement database systems that will allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- San Bruno Fire Department and
- Redwood City Fire Department.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F14. The following three fire departments need to assess their data management systems to allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District, and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

Response: Not applicable.

Inspection Process & Staffing

Finding F15. The following three fire departments reported the need for additional prevention staff to complete all of their mandated annual inspections:

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Departments.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F16. Coastside Fire Protection District and South San Francisco Fire Department

reported they need to assess the sufficiency of their prevention staffing.

Response: Not applicable.

Written Policies & Procedures

Finding F17. The following four fire departments reported they do not have written policies and procedures in place governing their mandated annual inspection programs:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F18. None of the ten departments' policies and procedures specified how they will report to their administering authorities under SB 1205 (2018).

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Central County Fire Department.

Response to Recommendations

R1. By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the county should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdiction for which annual inspections required under Sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health & Safety Code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting on all mandated annual inspections.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented. All inspection-related policies are currently under review and will be revised and expected to be approved within the stated time frame of January 31, 2020.

R2. By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administering authority setting forth the content of the annual report as required under Section 13146.4 of the California Health & Safety Code (former SB 1205) (the "Annual Report"), which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire department's jurisdiction in each

category of building (referred to as a "occupancy type") subject to mandated annual inspections that year.

- The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for two or more consecutive years.

Response: The recommendation will be implemented. Each year, Central County Fire Department will submit with the annual report and budget the total number and occupancy type of all mandated inspections. This report will include any occupancy types mandated for inspection that have not taken place.

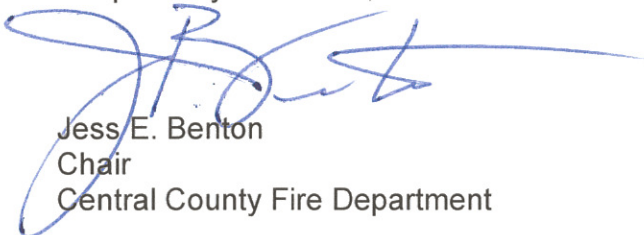
- R3.** By no later than January 31, 2020, the administering authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the Annual Report submitted by its fire chief and provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of the Annual Report.

Response: The recommendation will be implemented. Central County Fire Department will present its Fire Board with a written summary establishing the criteria of inspection content to be set forth in the annual report.

- R4.** By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the fire chief to publish the fire department's Annual Report on the fire department's public website.

Response: The recommendation will be implemented and included with the annual report and budget information approved by the Fire Board in April of each year.

Respectfully submitted,



Jess E. Benton
Chair
Central County Fire Department

Cc: grandjury@sanmateocourt.org

RESOLUTION NO. 19-21

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CENTRAL COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONDING TO THE SAN MATEO COUNTY 2019 GRAND JURY REPORT ENTITLED FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAMS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

RESOLVED, by the Board of Directors of the Central County Fire Department, County of San Mateo, State of California that,

WHEREAS, the San Mateo County Grand Jury has issued a report entitled Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery; and

WHEREAS, the Grand Jury has requested a response to the report's Findings and Recommendations be submitted no later than October 21, 2019; and

WHEREAS, staff has prepared a response for the Board's review and approval; and

WHEREAS, the Board has now received the proposed response and approved its content.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the Central County Fire Department does hereby approve the attached response to the 2019 San Mateo County Grand Jury Report entitled Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery, and directs the Board Chair to sign and submit this response on or before October 21, 2019.

Approved at a regular meeting of the Board of Directors at Hillsborough Town Hall this 18th day of September 2019.

Signed: _____


Jess E. Benton, Chair

Attest: _____


Rubina Ellam, Secretary

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution 19-21 adopted by the Board of Directors of the Central County Fire Department, San Mateo County, California, at its regular meeting held on the 18th day of September 2019, by the following vote of the members thereof:

AYES:	Board Members:	<u>Benton, Brownrigg, Chuang, Ortiz</u>
NOES:	Board Members:	_____
ABSENT:	Board Members:	_____
ABSTAIN:	Board Members:	_____



COASTSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

1191 MAIN STREET ■ HALF MOON BAY, CA 94019

TELEPHONE (650) 726-5213

FAX (650) 726-0132

October 18, 2019

Hon. Donald J. Ayoob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Judge Ayoob:

The Coastside Fire Protection District Board has had an opportunity to review the 2019 Grand Jury report entitled "*Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery.*" The District Board after reviewing the report and allowing for public comment at its regular Board meeting on August 28, 2019 offers the following responses:

Responses to Findings

Inspections

Finding F1. California Health & Safety Code Sections 13146.2, 13146.3 and 17921(b) and regulations require fire departments to conduct annual inspections of all public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging houses, and apartments in their jurisdictions (mandated annual inspections).

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

Finding F2. From 2015 through 2018, the following three fire departments conducted inspections of over 90 percent of the mandated buildings in their jurisdictions, as shown in Table 1:

- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- North County Fire Authority
- Woodside Fire Protection District

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F3. The disorganization and incompleteness of the data submitted by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department for 2015 through 2017 (which it inherited from its predecessor fire departments) was such that it could not be analyzed by the Grand Jury. However, data submitted by SMCFD for 2018 was well organized and showed 100 percent of schools and 82 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction were inspected that year.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F4. Each of the fire departments is developing more robust inspection programs by, for example:

- implementing database management systems.
- adding prevention staff.
- using iPads or tablets to document inspections.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Coastside Fire Protection District.

Finding F5. SB 1205 does not specify what the content of Annual Reports to fire departments' administrative authorities should be regarding mandated annual inspections

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding.

School Inspections

Finding F6. In 2015, 2016, and 2018 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within its jurisdiction although it completed 96 percent of school inspections in 2017 as shown on Table 1.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F7. From 2015 through 2017 the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within their jurisdiction, though all showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Coastside Fire District increased inspections from 36 percent in 2017 to 91 percent in 2018.
- Redwood City Fire Department increased from 15 percent in 2017 to 85 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all schools by the end of its fiscal year.
- San Bruno Fire Department increased inspections from 86 percent in 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.
- South San Francisco increased inspections from 50 percent in 2016 and 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Coastside Fire Protection District.

Finding F8. From 2015 through 2018 Colma Fire District completed 100 percent of school inspections.

Response: Not applicable.

Apartment/Condominium/Hotel/Motel Inspections

Finding F9. From 2015 through 2018, the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within their jurisdiction. as shown on Table 1:

- Coastside Fire Protection District;
- Colma Fire District;
- San Bruno Fire Department; and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Coastside Fire Protection District.

Finding F10. From 2015 through 2017 Redwood City Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction, though the department showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Redwood City Fire Department improved from a low of 48 percent in 2016 to 77 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all inspections by the end of its fiscal year.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F11. In 2016 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction. The department inspected over 90 percent of these structures in 2017 and 2018. The Department could not provide data for 2015.

Response: Not applicable.

Record-Keeping & Data Retrieval

Finding F12. The following five fire departments currently have data management systems that allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Central County Fire Department,
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District,
- North County Fire Authority,
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F13. The following two departments plan to implement database systems that will allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- San Bruno Fire Department and
- Redwood City Fire Department.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F14. The following three fire departments need to assess their data management systems to allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District, and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Coastside Fire Protection District.

Inspection Process & Staffing

Finding F15. The following three fire departments reported the need for additional prevention staff to complete all of their mandated annual inspections:

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Departments.

Response: Not applicable.

Finding F16. Coastside Fire Protection District and South San Francisco Fire Department reported they need to assess the sufficiency of their prevention staffing.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Coastside Fire Protection District.

Written Policies & Procedures

Finding F17. The following four fire departments reported they do not have written policies and procedures in place governing their mandated annual inspection programs:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Coastside Fire Protection District.

Finding F18. None of the ten departments' policies and procedures specified how they will report to their administering authorities under SB 1205 (2018).

Response: The respondent agrees with the finding as it applies to Coastside Fire Protection District.

Response to Recommendations

R1. By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the county should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdiction for which annual inspections required under Sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health & Safety Code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting on all mandated annual inspections.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by January 31, 2020.

R2. By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administering authority setting forth the content of the annual report as required under Section 13146.4 of the California Health & Safety Code (former SB 1205) (the "Annual Report"), which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire department's jurisdiction in each category of building (referred to as a "occupancy type") subject to mandated annual inspections that year.
- The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for two or more consecutive years.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by January 31, 2020.

- R3.** By no later than January 31, 2020, the administering authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the Annual Report submitted by its fire chief and provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of the Annual Report.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented January 31, 2020.

- R4.** By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the fire chief to publish the fire department's Annual Report on the fire department's public website.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented by February 28, 2020.

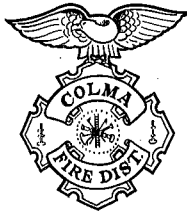
Respectfully submitted,



Gary Burke
President, Coastside Fire Protection District

Cc: grandjury@sanmateocourt.org

Board of Fire
Commissioners
Maryanne Hazard
Gina Sheridan
Peter Dabai



COLMA FIRE DISTRICT

50 REINER STREET
COLMA, CALIFORNIA 94014
Phone (650) Plaza 5-5666
Fax (650) 755-5691



Fire Chief
Geoffrey C. Balton

15 October 2019

Honorable Donald J. Ayooob
Judge of the Superior Court
C/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Subject: District response Grand Jury Report: Fire Safety Inspection Programs on The Road to Recovery.

Dear Honorable Judge Ayooob,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the above mentioned Grand Jury report. On behalf of the Colma Fire District and the Board of Directors, thank you for the information related to this topic.

The Grand Jury report and our response was on the agenda for our October 2019 meeting. We will continue this topic to future meetings.

FINDINGS:

- F1: We agree with this finding.
- F2: We agree with this finding.
- F3: We agree with this finding.
- F4: We agree with this finding.
- F5: We agree with this finding.
- F6: Does not apply to us.
- F7: Does not apply to us.
- F8: We agree with this finding.
- F9: We agree with this finding.
- F10: Does not apply to us.
- F11: Does not apply to us.
- F12: Does not apply to us.
- F13: Does not apply to us

Serving the Unincorporated Areas of:
Broadmoor Village, Garden Village, Sterling Park and the Incorporated Town of Colma
Organized June 8, 1925

F14: We agree with this finding.

F15: Does not apply to us.

F16: Does not apply to us.

F17: We agree with this finding.

F18: We agree with this finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

R1: We accept this recommendation and intend to comply prior to the January 31, 2020 deadline to put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings in our jurisdiction that require annual inspections under the California health and safety code, for keeping such a list and completing and reporting on all inspections.

R2: We accept this recommendation and will by no later than November 30th, 2019, submit a proposal to our Elected Board of Directors that sets forth the content of our annual report as required by the California health and Safety Code section 13146.

R3: We accept this recommendation and will comply by January 31, 2020

R4: We accept this recommendation and will comply by the date specified by the Grand jury.

We want to thank you again for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury.

Sincerely,



for

Peter Dabai
Chairman, Board of Directors



Geoffrey Balton
Fire Chief



Menlo Park Fire Protection District

Fire Chief
Harold Schapelhouman

170 Middlefield Road • Menlo Park, CA 94025 • Tel: 650.688.8400 • Fax: 650.323.9129

Website: www.menlofire.org • Email: mpfd@menlofire.org

Board of Directors
Virginia Chang Kiraly
Robert Jones
Robert J. Silano
Chuck Bernstein
Jim McLaughlin

October 3, 2019

Honorable Donald J. Ayoob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA. 94063-1655

Re: Grand Jury Report “Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery”

Dear Honorable Judge Ayoob:

The following response was considered and approved by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District Board of Directors at their regular meeting held on August 20, 2019.

The Fire District agrees with Findings F1 – F18.

R1. By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the County should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdiction for which annual inspections required under sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health and Safety Code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting on all mandated annual inspections.

RESPONSE TO R1:

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented by January 31, 2020.

Fire Chief – Modify and/or add internal agency policies

Fire Board - Modify and/or add Board policies

R2. By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administrating authority setting forth the content of the annual report as required under section 13146.4 of the California Health and Safety Code (former SB 1205) (the “annual report”) which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire department’s jurisdiction in each category of building (referred to as an occupancy type) subject to mandated annual inspections that year.

“Excellence In Service”

- The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for two or more consecutive years.

RESPONSE TO R2:

The recommendation has been implemented.

The Fire Chief and Fire Marshal shall submit to the Fire Board by no later than November 30, 2019, a list of the CA State mandated annual inspections. This list at minimum shall include, total number of buildings within the jurisdiction subject to mandated inspections, the number of each type inspected annually, the number not inspected annually and the reason it did not take place, and the number of inspections not completed for two or more consecutive years.

R3. By no later than January 31, 2020, the administering authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the annual report submitted by its Fire Chief and provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of the annual report.

RESPONSE TO R3:

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented by January 31, 2020.

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District Fire Board shall review the above R2 proposal and provide written instruction for required content and due date for submission.

Fire Board - Modify and/or add Board policies

R4. By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the Fire Chief to publish the fire districts annual report on the fire districts web-site.

RESPONSE TO R4:

The recommendation has not been implemented, but will be implemented by February 28, 2020.

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District already publishes the Fire District's Annual Report on the Fire District website, and will continue to do so.

Respectfully,



Harold Schapelhouman
Fire Chief

Cc: Fire Board, staff and Counsel



North County Fire Authority

Serving the Cities of Brisbane, Daly City, Pacifica

Ron D. Myers
Fire Chief

10 Wembley Drive
Daly City, California 94015-4314

Administration
Phone 650-991-8138
Fax 650-991-8090

September 26, 2019

Honorable Donald J. Ayooob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd floor
Redwood City, Ca. 94063-1665

Re: Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery.

Hon. Judge Ayooob

We are in receipt of the Grand Jury's final report "Fire Safety Inspection Programs on The Road to Recovery". Pursuant to your July 22nd, 2019 request for response, The North County Fire Authority JPA Board of Directors held a public meeting on September 26, 2019 and adopted this response. The North County Fire Authority JPA Board of Directors responds to the Grand Jury's findings, conclusions and recommendations as follows:

Findings:

F1. Fire Departments are required to conduct annual inspections of all public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging houses and apartments in their jurisdiction.

Response: NCFA agrees with this finding.

F2. From 2015 through 2018 North County Fire Authority conducted inspections over 90% of the mandated buildings in our jurisdiction.

Response: NCFA agrees with this finding.

F4. Each of the fire departments is developing more robust inspection programs by, for example:

- implementing database management systems.
- adding prevention staff.
- Using iPads or tablets to document inspections.

Response: NCFA agrees with this finding

F5. SB1205 does not specify what the content of Annual Reports to the fire departments' administrative authorities should be regarding mandated annual inspections.

Response: NCFA agrees with this finding.

F12. The following five fire departments currently have data management systems that allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Central County Fire Department,
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District,
- North County Fire Authority,
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District.

Response: NCFA agrees with this finding.

F18. None of the ten departments' policies and procedures specified how they will report to their administering authorities under SB 1205 (2018).

Response: NCFA agrees with this finding.

Recommendations:

R1. By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the county should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdiction for which annual inspections required under Sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health and Safety Code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting all mandated inspections.

Response: The recommendation has **not** yet been fully implemented but will be by the set deadline.

R2. By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administering authority setting forth content of the annual report as required under Section 13146.4 of the California Health and Safety Code(former SB 1205) (the "Annual Report"), which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire departments' jurisdiction in each category of building referred to as a "occupancy type") subject to mandated annual inspections that year.
- The number of occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for two or more consecutive years.

Response: This recommendation has **not** yet been fully implemented however; it will be by the recommended deadline.

R.3 By no later than January 31st, 2020, the administration authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the Annual Report submitted by its fire chief and provide written instruction regarding the By no later required content and due date for submission of the Annual Report.

Response: This recommendation has **not** yet been fully implemented however; it will be by the recommended deadline.

- R4. By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the fire chief to publish the fire department's Annual Report on the fire department's public website.

Response: This recommendation has **not** yet been fully implemented however; it will be by the recommended deadline.

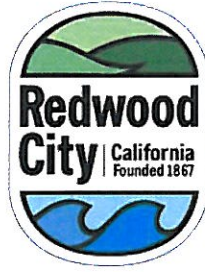
Sincerely,



Ron D. Myers
Fire Chief

Mayor Ian Bain
Vice Mayor Diane Howard

Council Members
Alicia C. Aguirre
Janet Borgens
Giselle Hale
Shelly Masur
Diana Reddy



1017 MIDDLEFIELD ROAD
Redwood City, CA 94063
Telephone (650) 780-7220
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September 24, 2019

Honorable Donald J. Ayooob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

RE: Grand Jury Report "FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION PROGRAMS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY"

Dear Judge Ayooob:

On behalf of the City Council of the City of Redwood City, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury Report released July 22, 2019, entitled "Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery."

The following response to the Grand Jury Report was reviewed and approved by the City Council at its meeting on September 23, 2019.

Pursuant to Penal Code 933.05, the Grand Jury requested a response from the City of Redwood City on Findings 1 through 18 and Recommendations 1 through 4. The Findings and Recommendations and the City's response are detailed as follows:

Grand Jury Findings:

Finding 1: California Health & Safety Code Sections 13146.2, 13146.3 and 17921(b) and regulations require fire departments to conduct annual inspections of all public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging houses, and apartments in their jurisdictions (mandated annual inspections).

City Response - The City agrees with the finding.

Finding 2: From 2015 through 2018, the following three fire departments conducted inspections of over 90 percent of the mandated buildings in their jurisdictions, as shown

in Table 1:

- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- North County Fire Authority
- Woodside Fire Protection District

City Response - No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the "Request for Responses" section.

Finding 3: The disorganization and incompleteness of the data submitted by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department for 2015 through 2017 (which it inherited from its predecessor fire departments) was such that it could not be analyzed by the Grand Jury. However, data submitted by SMCFD for 2018 was well organized and showed 100 percent of schools and 82 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction were inspected that year.

City Response - No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the "Request for Responses" section.

Finding 4: Each of the fire departments is developing more robust inspection programs by, for example:

- Implementing database management systems.
- Adding prevention staff.
- Using iPads or tablets to document inspections.

City Response – The City agrees with the finding.

Finding 5: SB 1205 does not specify what the content of Annual Reports to fire departments' administrative authorities should be regarding mandated annual inspections.

City Response - The City agrees with the finding.

Finding 6: In 2015, 2016, and 2018 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within its jurisdiction although it completed 96 percent of school inspections in 2017 as shown on Table 1.

City Response - No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the "Request for Responses" section.

Finding 7: From 2015 through 2017 the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within their jurisdiction, though all showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table I:

- Coastside Fire District increased inspections from 36 percent in 2017 to 91 percent in 2018.
- Redwood City Fire Department increased from 15 percent in 2017 to 85 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all schools by the end of its fiscal year.
- San Bruno Fire Department increased inspections from 86 percent in 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.
- South San Francisco increased inspections from 50 percent in 2016 and 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.

City Response - The City agrees with the data in the finding as it applies to Redwood City and the Redwood City Fire Department did complete 100% of the inspections for all schools within its jurisdiction by the end of Fiscal Year 2018/2019.

Finding 8: From 2015 through 2018 Colma Fire District completed 100 percent of school inspections.

City Response – No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the “Request for Responses” section.

Finding 9: From 2015 through 2018, the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within their jurisdiction as shown on Table 1:

- Coastside Fire Protection District
- Colma Fire District
- San Bruno Fire Department; and
- South San Francisco Fire Department

City Response – No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the “Request for Responses” section.

Finding 10: From 2015 through 2017 Redwood City Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction, though the department showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Redwood City Fire Department improved from a low of 48 percent in 2016 to 77 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all inspections by the end of its fiscal year

City Response – The City agrees with the finding and the Redwood City Fire Department did complete 100% of the inspections for apartments, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction by the end of Fiscal Year 2018/2019.

Finding 11: In 2016 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction. The department inspected over 90 percent of these structures in 2017 and 2018. The Department could not provide data for 2015.

City Response – No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the “Request for Responses” section.

Finding 12: The following five fire departments currently have data management systems that allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Central County Fire Department
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- North County Fire Authority
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department; and
- Woodside Fire Protection District

City Response – No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the “Request for Responses” section.

Finding 13: The following two departments plan to implement database systems that will allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- San Bruno Fire Department; and
- Redwood City Fire Department

City Response – The City agrees with the finding. Process to purchase a new database record management system almost complete.

Finding 14: The following three fire departments need to assess their data management

systems to allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Coastside Fire Protection District
- Colma Fire District; and
- South San Francisco Fire Department

City Response - No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the "Request for Responses" section.

Finding 15: The following three fire departments reported the need for additional prevention staff to complete all of their mandated annual inspections:

- Redwood City Fire Department
- San Bruno Fire Department; and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department

City Response – The City agrees with the finding as it relates to Redwood City. The City is currently using consulting firms to ensure completion of the mandated inspections.

Finding 16: Coastside Fire Protection District and South San Francisco Fire Department reported they need to assess the sufficiency of their prevention staffing.

City Response – No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the "Request for Responses" section.

Finding 17: The following four fire departments reported they do not have written policies and procedures in place governing their mandated annual inspection programs:

- Coastside Fire Protection District
- Colma Fire District
- San Bruno Fire Department
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department

City Response – No response per Grand Jury instructions found in the "Request for Responses" section.

Finding 18: None of the ten departments' policies and procedures specified how they will report to their administering authorities under SB 1205 (2018).

City Response – The City agrees with the finding as it relates to Redwood City.

City Recommendations

Recommendation 1: By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the county should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdiction for which annual inspections required under Sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health & Safety Code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting on all mandated annual inspections.

City Response – The City agrees with the recommendation and will comply by January 31, 2020.

Recommendation 2: By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administering authority setting forth the content of the annual report as required under Section 13146.4 of the California Health & Safety Code (former SB 1205) (the “Annual Report”), which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire department’s jurisdiction in each category of building (referred to as a “occupancy type”) subject to mandated annual inspections that year.
- The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for two or more consecutive years.

City Response – The City agrees with the recommendation and will comply by November 30, 2019.

Recommendation 3: By no later than January 31, 2020, the administering authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the Annual Report submitted by its fire chief and provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of the Annual Report.

City Response – The City agrees with the recommendation and will comply by January 31, 2020.

Recommendation 4: By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the fire chief to publish the fire department’s Annual Report on the fire department’s public website.

City Response – The City agrees with the recommendation. However, the annual inspection cycle is based on the City’s fiscal year calendar which is from July 1 through June 30. Assuming the February 28 deadline is based on two months after a calendar year inspection cycle, the Redwood City Annual Report will be published on the City’s public website no later than September 30 of each year.

Sincerely,



Ian Bain, Mayor
City of Redwood City

Cc: City Council, Redwood City
Melissa Stevenson Diaz, City Manager
Dan Mulholland, Chief of Police



Rico E. Medina
Mayor

October 8, 2019

Honorable Donald J. Ayoob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Center; 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Re: Response of the City of San Bruno to the Grand Jury Report "Fire Safety Inspection Program on the Road to Recovery."

Dear Judge Ayoob:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Grand Jury report titled "Fire Safety Inspection Program on the Road to Recovery."

The City of San Bruno's ("City") response to the eighteen listed findings and the four recommendations applicable to the City are listed below. The City Council approved this response at its regular meeting on October 8, 2019.

FINDINGS

F1: California Health & Safety Code Sections 13146.2, 131463 and 17921(b) and regulations require fire departments to conduct annual inspections of all public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging houses, and apartments in their jurisdictions (mandated annual inspections).

The City agrees with this finding.

F2: From 2015 through 2018, the following three fire departments conducted inspections of over 90 percent of the mandated buildings in their jurisdictions, as shown in Table 1:

- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- North County Fire Authority
- Woodside Fire Protection District

The City has no information to agree or disagree with this finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

F3: The disorganization and incompleteness of the data submitted by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department for 2015 through 2017 (which it inherited from its predecessor fire departments) was such that it could not be analyzed by the Grand Jury. However, data submitted by SMCFD for 2018 was well organized and showed 100 percent of schools and 82 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction were inspected that year.

The City has no information to agree or disagree with this finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

- F4: Each of the fire departments is developing more robust inspection programs by, for example:**
- implementing database management systems.
 - adding prevention staff.
 - using iPads or tablets to document inspections.

The City agrees with the finding as it relates to San Bruno implementing a database management system, increased prevention staffing and the use of tablets to document inspections.

- F5: SB 1205 does not specify what the content of Annual Reports to fire departments' administrative authorities should be regarding mandated annual inspections.**

The City agrees with this finding.

- F6: In 2015, 2016, and 2018 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within its jurisdiction although it completed 96 percent of school inspections in 2017 as shown on Table 1.**

The City has no information to agree or disagree with this finding as it does not relate to San Bruno

- F7: From 2015 through 2017 the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the schools within their jurisdiction, though all showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table I:**
- Coastside Fire District increased inspections from 36 percent in 2017 to 91 percent in 2018.
 - Redwood City Fire Department increased from 15 percent in 2017 to 85 percent in 2018
 - San Bruno Fire Department increased inspections from 86 percent in 2017 to 100 percent in 2018.
 - South San Francisco increased inspections from 50 percent in 2016 and 2017 to 100 in 2018.

The City agrees with the finding as it relates to inspections performed in San Bruno.

- F8: From 2015 through 2018 Colma Fire District completed 100 percent of school inspections.**

The City has no information to agree or disagree with this finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

- F9: From 2015 through 2018, the following four fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within their jurisdiction. as shown on Table I: ***
- Coastside Fire Protection District;
 - Colma Fire District;
 - San Bruno Fire Department; and
 - South San Francisco Fire Department.

The City agrees with the finding as it relates to inspections performed in San Bruno.

F10: From 2015 through 2017 Redwood City Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, hotels, and motels within its jurisdiction, though the department showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Redwood City Fire Department improved from a low of 48 percent in 2016 to 77 percent in 2018 and is on track to complete all inspections by the end of its fiscal

The City has no information to agree or disagree with this finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

F11: In 2016 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90 percent of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction. The department inspected over 90 percent of these structures in 2017 and 2018. The Department could not provide data for 2015.

The City has no information to agree or disagree with the finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

F12: The following five fire departments currently have data management systems that allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Central County Fire Department,
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District,
- North County Fire Authority,
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department,
- Woodside Fire Protection District.

The City does not have any information to agree or disagree with the finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

F13: The following two departments plan to implement data base systems that will allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- San Bruno Fire Department and
- Redwood City Fire Department.

The City agrees with this finding as it relates to San Bruno. The Department is in the process of implementing a new Records Management System that was approved by the San Bruno City Council on January 22, 2019.

F14: The following three fire departments need to assess their data management systems to allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District, and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

The City does not have any information to agree or disagree with the finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

F15: The following three fire departments reported the need for additional prevention staff to complete all of their mandated annual inspections:

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Departments.

The City agrees with this finding as it relates to San Bruno. The Department added a full-time employee to the Prevention Bureau in the 2018/19 Budget.

F16. Coastside Fire Protection District and South San Francisco Fire Department reported they need to assess the sufficiency of their prevention staffing.

The City does not have any information to agree or disagree with the finding as it does not relate to San Bruno.

F17. The following four fire departments reported they do not have written policies and procedures in place governing their mandated annual inspection programs:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

The City agrees with this finding as it relates to San Bruno.

F18. None of the ten departments' policies and procedures specified how they will report to their administering authorities under SB 1205 (2018).

The City agrees with this finding as it relates to San Bruno.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1: By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the county should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdiction for which annual inspections required under Sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California Health & Safety Code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting on all mandated annual inspections.

The City will comply with this recommendation. The Department has prepared a draft policy that is going through the approval process which will be completed prior to January 31, 2020.

R2. By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administering authority setting forth the content of the annual report as required under Section 13146.4 of the California Health & Safety Code (former SB 1205) (the "Annual Report"), which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire department's jurisdiction in each category of building (referred to as a "occupancy type") subject to mandated annual inspections that year.
- The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for two or more consecutive years.

The City will comply with this recommendation.

R3. By no later than January 31, 2020, the administering authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the Annual Report submitted by its fire chief and provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of the Annual Report.

The City will comply with this recommendation.

R4. By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the fire chief to publish the fire department's Annual Report on the fire department's public website.

The City will comply with this recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rico E. Medina". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R'.

Rico E. Medina
Mayor



October 9, 2019

Hon. Donald J Ayoob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Charlene Kresevich
Hall of Justice
400 County Ctr.; 2nd floor
Redwood City, CA 94063 – 1655

Honorable Judge Ayoob,

This Letter serves as the response to the findings and recommendations of the San Mateo County grand jury report “Fire Safety Inspection Programs On The Road To Recovery”.

This response was approved by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Board of Directors on October 8, 2019.

Response to findings

Inspections

F1. California Health and Safety Code sections 13146.2, 13146.3, and 17 921 (B) and regulations require fire departments to conduct annual inspections of all public and private schools, hotels, motels, lodging houses, and apartments in their jurisdictions (mandated annual inspections).

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department agrees with the finding.

F2. From 2015 through 2018, the following 3 fire departments conducted inspections of over 90% of the mandated buildings and their jurisdictions, as shown in Table 1:

- Menlo Park Fire Protection District
- North County Fire Authority
- Woodside Fire Protection District

Response: Finding number 2 does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

F3. The disorganization and incompleteness of the data submitted by the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department for 2015 through 2017 (which it inherited from its predecessor fire departments) was such that it could not be analyzed by the grand jury. However, data submitted by SMC FD 4 2018 was well-organized and showed 100% of schools and 82% of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction were inspected that year.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department agrees with the finding.

F4. Each of the fire departments is developing more robust inspection programs by, for example:

- Implementing database management systems.
- Adding prevention staff.
- Using iPads or tablets to document inspections.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department agrees with the finding.

School Inspections:

F6. In 2015, 2016, and 2018 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90% of the schools within its jurisdiction although it completed 96% of school inspections in 2017 as shown on Table 1.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

F7. From 2015 through 2017 the following 4 fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90% of the schools within their jurisdiction, though all showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on Table 1:

- Coastside Fire District increased inspections from 36% in 2017 to 91% in 2018.
- Redwood City Fire Department increased from 15% in 2017 to 85% in 2018 and is on track to complete all schools by the end of its fiscal year.
- San Bruno Fire Department increased inspections from 86% in 2017 to 100% in 2018.
- South San Francisco increased inspections from 50% in 2016 and 2017 to 100% in 2018.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

F8. From 2015 through 2018 Colma Fire District completed 100% of school inspections.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

Apartment/Condominium/Hotel/Motel Inspections:

F9. From 2015 through 2018, the following 4 fire departments failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90% of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within their jurisdiction, as shown on table 1:

- Coastside Fire Protection District;
- Colma Fire District;
- San Bruno Fire Department; and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

F10. From 2015 through 2017 Redwood City Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90% of the apartments, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction, though the department showed substantial improvement in 2018 as shown on table 1:

- Redwood City Fire Department improved from a low of 48% in 2016 to 77% in 2018 and is on track to complete all inspections by the end of its fiscal year.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

F11: in 2016 Central County Fire Department failed to perform annual inspections of at least 90% of the apartments, condominiums, hotels and motels within its jurisdiction. The department inspected over 90% of these structures and 2017 and 2018. The department cannot provide data for 2015.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

Record-Keeping and Data Retrieval:

F12: the following 5 fire departments currently have data management systems that allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Central County Fire Department,
- Menlo Park Fire Protection District,
- North County Fire Authority,
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, and
- Woodside Fire Protection District.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department agrees with this finding as it pertains to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

F13: The following 2 departments plan to implement database systems that will allow them to readily track and report on the completion of the mandated annual inspections:

- San Bruno Fire Department and
- Redwood City Fire Department.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

F14: The following 3 fire departments need to assess their data management systems to allow them to readily track and report on the completion of their mandated annual inspections:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District, and
- South San Francisco Fire Department.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

Inspection Process and Staffing

F15. The following 3 fire departments reported the need for additional prevention staff to complete all of their mandated annual inspections:

- Redwood City Fire Department,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Departments.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department agrees with this finding. The department hired 2 additional full-time inspectors since last meeting with the grand jury, but is continuing to assess the need for additional inspectors to complete the mandated inspections as required by law.

F16. Coastside Fire Protection District and South San Francisco Fire Department reported they need to assess the sufficiency of their prevention staffing.

Response: This finding does not pertain to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department so no response is warranted.

Policies and Procedures

F17. The following 4 fire departments reported they do not have written policies and procedures in place governing their mandated annual inspection programs:

- Coastside Fire Protection District,
- Colma Fire District,
- San Bruno Fire Department, and
- San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department agrees with the finding.

F18. None of the 10 departments' policies and procedures specified how they will report to their administering authorities under SB 1205 (2018).

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

R1. By no later than January 31, 2020, each fire department within the County should put in place a written policy that sets forth the process for (1) maintaining a comprehensive list of all buildings within its jurisdictions for which annual inspections required under sections 13146.2 and 13146.3 of the California health and safety code are to be performed, (2) keeping such a list updated on an annual basis, and (3) completing and reporting on all mandated annual inspections.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department will put a written policy into place that will require the maintenance of a comprehensive list of all buildings within our jurisdiction subject to the state mandates, that the list will be updated on an annual basis, and will complete those inspections annually. Additionally the policy will specify that a report will be provided to the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Board Of Directors on the status of the inspections with regard to mandates.

R2. By no later than November 30, 2019, each fire department should submit a proposal to its administering authorities setting forth the content of the annual report as required under section 13 146.4 of the California Health and Safety Code (former SB 1205) (the "Annual Report"), which at a minimum should propose the inclusion of the following information in the Annual Report:

- The total number of buildings within the fire department's jurisdiction in each category of building (referred to as a "occupancy type") subject to mandated annual inspections that year.
- The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year;
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place, and
- The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for 2 or more consecutive years.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department has already begun the process of formulating a report that will be submitted to the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The Department will discuss these reports with the Board of Directors to ensure that they approve the content of the "Annual Report". The content of the report will match the recommendations of the grand jury, but will also indicate the other tasks completed by the Fire Prevention Bureau during the reporting period. The 1st report of the new year will indicate how the department measured up against the state mandates for the previous calendar year.

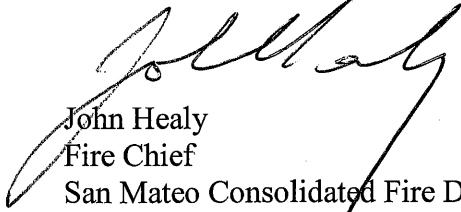
R3. By no later than January 31, 2020, the administering authority for each fire department should review the proposal for the content of the annual report submitted by its Fire Chief and provide written instructions regarding the required content and due date for submission of the annual report.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Board of Directors will have reviewed the proposal for the content of the annual report and will provide written instructions as directed by the recommendation by January 31, 2020.

R4. By no later than February 28, 2020 (and annually thereafter), the administering authority for each fire department should instruct the Fire Chief to publish the fire department's Annual Report on the fire department's public website.

Response: The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department Board of Directors will instruct the Fire Chief to publish the annual report on the public website as recommended by the Grand Jury.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Healy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

John Healy
Fire Chief
San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department

cc: Ray Iverson, Deputy Fire Chief, Community Risk Reduction
Robert Marshall, Fire Marshal

ARTICLE K: COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION

SECTION 21: MANDATED INSPECTIONS TRACKING POLICY

POLICY

It is the policy of the Fire Department that all mandated inspections as directed by State Law be tracked, and occupancies inspected, and inspection status reported.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish that inspections mandated by the California Health and Safety Code are conducted within the appropriate timelines. Part of this requires that occupancies are identified and tracked. The following procedure should be followed to ensure all state mandates are met. State law also requires notification of the elected board of the status of inspections, and this policy sets out the standards under which those notifications will be provided.

PROCEDURE

The following outlines the process for identifying, tracking, and reporting “Mandated Inspections” of occupancies within the jurisdiction.

21.1 Inspections

- a) Inspections of the following occupancies are mandated by State Law and shall be accomplished in accordance with the timelines established.
 - i) Residential Occupancies
 - (1) All R-1, R-2, R-2.1, and R-4 occupancies shall be inspected annually (Health and Safety Code §13146.2)
 - (2) Annually applies to the initial inspection. The inspection shall be scheduled based on the last initial inspection date, and not on reinspection dates.
 - (3) Inspections shall be assigned to either fire companies or fire inspectors
 - ii) Highrise Occupancies
 - (1) Highrise buildings shall be inspected annually (Health and Safety Code §13217)
 - (2) Annually applies to the initial inspection. The inspection shall be scheduled based on the last initial inspection date, and not on reinspection dates.
 - (3) Inspections shall be assigned to fire inspectors
 - iii) School Occupancies
 - (1) School occupancies shall be inspected annually (Health and Safety Code §13146.3)
 - (a) Schools within the mandate include K – 12 public and private schools
 - (b) Daycare Centers and pre-schools are not subject to the mandate unless the daycare or pre-school is located on the campus of an active public or private school subject to mandated inspections.

- (2) Annually applies to the initial inspection. The inspection shall be scheduled based on the last initial inspection date, and not on reinspection dates.
- (3) Inspections shall be assigned to fire inspectors

iv) Jails

- (1) I-3 occupancies shall be inspected biennially as requested by the State Fire Marshal's Office (Health and Safety Code §13146.1)
- (2) Biennially applies to the initial inspection. The inspection shall be scheduled based on the last initial inspection date, and not on reinspection dates.
- (3) Inspections shall be assigned to fire inspectors

21.2 Tracking

- a) In January of each year, the Fire Marshal shall be responsible to ensure that all occupancies subject to the inspection mandates in section 21.1 are accounted for.
- b) The following methods shall be used to account for these inspections
 - i) Newly constructed occupancies (Through permitting and construction inspections)
 - ii) New Businesses in existing buildings
 - iii) State Department of Education Lists
 - iv) County Assessor's Office Rolls
 - v) State Fire Marshal's office (OSFM) list of High Rise structures (Sent in June each year by the OSFM)
 - vi) California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
 - vii) Other data sources identified as they become available
- c) Each data source will be compared against the existing database used by the Fire Department.
- d) Where practicable, data sources will be updated as new data becomes available

21.3 Reporting

- a) In January of each year, a report will be submitted annually to the Board of Directors of the Fire Department.
- b) The report will contain the following elements:
 - i) The total number of buildings within the department's jurisdiction in each occupancy type subject to mandated annual inspections that year
 - ii) The number of each occupancy type inspected during the year
 - iii) The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected that year and the reason such inspection did not take place
 - iv) The number of each occupancy type, if any, not inspected for 2 or more consecutive years
- c) By no later than March 1st each year the report elements listed in section 21.3 (b) will be compiled and reported annually to the citizens of the departmental jurisdiction in the "Annual Report", published each year.
 - i) The report will be published on the website for the Fire Department

Created: 9/4/19
FACT approved: 9/24/2019
Review: 9/2022



CITY COUNCIL 2019

KARYL MATSUMOTO, MAYOR
RICHARD A. GARBARINO, VICE MAYOR
MARK ADDIEGO, COUNCILMEMBER
MARK NAGALES, COUNCILMEMBER
BUENAFLORE NICOLAS, COUNCILMEMBER

MIKE FUTRELL, CITY MANAGER

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

October 9, 2019

Hon. Donald J. Ayob
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Neal Taniguchi
Hall of Justice and Records
400 County Center
Redwood City, CA 94063-1655

Dear Hon. Donald J. Ayob:

On October 9, 2019, the City Council of the City of South San Francisco ("City") approved the response contained in this letter to the San Mateo County Grand Jury Report "Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery," dated July 22, 2019.

Response to Findings

The City agrees that the findings included in the Grand Jury Report are factual and accurate. The City specifically agrees with findings F1, F4, F5, F7, F9, F14, F16, and F18, as they reflect the information that is included in publicly available documents.

Response to Recommendations

In response to the Grand Jury Report: "Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery," the Fire Department staff agrees with the findings. Additionally, in response to the recommendations, Fire staff provides the following:

- R1. The Fire Department has in place the recommended policies and procedures, and per SB1205 will report annually, with the first report scheduled for November, 2019.
- R2. The Fire Department will submit the annual report on mandated inspections to Council in November, 2019, which will include the information called for by the Grand Jury.
- R3. The Annual Report on mandated inspections is included in the Fire Department's Annual Report, which will be released prior to January 31, 2020.
- R4. After approval and before the February 28, 2020, deadline the Fire Department will post this information on the City's website. This process will be completed on an annual basis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sharon Ranals".

Sharon Ranals
Acting City Manager



City of South San Francisco

P.O. Box 711 (City Hall,
400 Grand Avenue)
South San Francisco, CA

City Council

Resolution: RES 134-2019

File Number: 19-851

Enactment Number: RES 134-2019

RESOLUTION APPROVING AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN A RESPONSE TO SAN MATEO COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT "FIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS PROGRAMS ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY".

WHEREAS, building safety inspections by fire departments are essential to identify potential fire hazards before they occur; and

WHEREAS, California Health and Safety Code Sections 13146.2, 13146.3, and 17921(b) mandate that fire departments conduct annual inspections of all the Public and private schools, Hotels, Motels, Apartment buildings, and Condominiums within their jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, prior to the passage of State Senate Bill 1205 in 2018, California law did not include any requirement for fire departments to report on their compliance with annual inspection obligations; and

WHEREAS, Grand Jury undertook a compliance fire departments within the County for the years 2015 through 2018 to determine whether their mandated annual inspections were conducted as required; the Grand Jury found substantial non-compliance among seven of the ten fire departments, particularly for the years prior to 2018; and

WHEREAS, most departments appear to be making substantial efforts to correct their deficiencies, the departments must address such deficiencies promptly if they are to comply with the requirements of SB 1205; and

WHEREAS, on July 22, 2019, the San Mateo County Grand Jury issued a report titled "Fire Safety Inspections Programs on the Road to Recovery"; and

WHEREAS, the City of South San Francisco is required to provide a response within 90 days of the Grand Jury report, attached hereto as Exhibit A.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of South San Francisco does hereby approve and authorize the City Manager to sign the City's response to the San Mateo County Grand Jury Report "Fire Safety Inspections Programs on the Road to Recovery" attached hereto as Exhibit A.

* * * * *

At a meeting of the City Council on 10/9/2019, a motion was made by Richard Garbarino, seconded by Mark Nagales, that this Resolution be approved. The motion passed.

Yes: 5 Mayor Matsumoto, Vice Mayor Garbarino, Councilmember Addiego, Councilmember Nagales, and Councilmember Nicolas

Attest by 

Rosa Govea Acosta

October 1, 2019

Hon. Donald J. Ayoob

Judge of the Superior Court

Hall of Justice

400 County Center, 2nd Floor

Redwood City, CA 94063-1665

Re: Woodside Fire Protection District Comments and Response to the 2018-2019 Grand Jury Report:
"Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery."

Hon. Judge Ayoob:

The Woodside Fire Protection District is pleased to respond to the Court's July 22, 2019 letter transmitting the Grand Jury's findings and recommendations on Fire Safety Inspection Programs on the Road to Recovery. This report was discussed at the August 26th, 2019 Board of Directors Meeting and was approved by the Board of Directors at the Woodside Fire Protection District Board of Directors meeting on September 30th, 2019.

1. The Fire District agrees with the findings in this report as they pertain to the Woodside Fire Protection District.

Additionally, the Fire District reports the following based on the Grand Jury recommendations:

R1. The recommendation has been implemented, as shown by the Grand Jury's findings that a policy is currently in place,

R2. The recommendation has not been implemented, but a proposal is to be submitted by the November 25, 2019 Board of Director meeting addressing the SB 1205 requirements.

R3. The recommendation has not been implemented but once a proposal is sent, the Fire District looks forward to any instructions regarding the required content the Fire Board recommends and the due date for submission of the annual report.

R4. The recommendation has not been implemented, but once the Fire Board gives final instructions and approval, the annual report will be published on the Fire District's website. (and annually thereafter).

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me at (650) 851-1594.

Sincerely,



Robert Lindner

Fire Chief