

May 15, 2001

Honorable Rodney S. Melville
Presiding Judge, Santa Barbara Superior Court
312-C East Cook Street
Santa Maria, CA 93456-5369

Honorable Rodney S. Melville,

Thank you for forwarding a copy of the April 18, 2001 Grand Jury Report *Emergency Power* to the Carpinteria Summerland Fire Protection District (“Fire District”) for response. The Fire District wishes to recognize the efforts of the volunteers who serve on the Grand Jury and their effort to investigate local government.

The Fire District is, however, deeply disappointed in the unnecessarily punitive tone of certain comments made relative to the operations of the Fire District. The Fire District also believes that comments regarding potential violations of the various technical codes may exceed the expertise, power and purpose of the Grand Jury as specified in Penal Code sections 925 et. seq.

Nevertheless, the Fire District Chief and its Board of Directors have thoroughly reviewed and considered the findings and recommendations contained in the April 18, 2001 Grand Jury Report. The Fire District has the following responses to the report.

Finding 1: “The Summerland Fire Station is in marginal condition at best.”

Response: Although this finding does not appear to be relevant to the issue of *Emergency Power*, the District agrees that the Fire Station needs upgrading. Directors have visited the Station and have recognized that portions of the station are over 50 years old. Proposals for relocation or remodel of Station Two have been included in long-range planning since 1988. A series of revenue cuts, including ERAF shifts, have caused those plans to be delayed.

Recommendation 1: “Consider demolishing the station and rebuilding it on the same or another location.”

Response: This recommendation requires further analysis. Considerations for remodeling or relocating Station 2 will be included in strategic planning efforts. A number of factors need to be weighed into the assessment, including the availability of sufficient projected revenue for the project, the acquisition of a suitable alternate location, and the outcome of litigation on the part of the District against Nextel, a leaseholder on the fire station property.

Finding 2: “An illegal extension cord supplies emergency power to station lights.”

Response: The electrical violation was confirmed.

Recommendation 2: “Correct the electrical code violation.”

Response: The recommendation was implemented. The Assistant Chief hired electrical contractor Powell Electric as soon as the violation was noted. A new sub-panel was installed, new circuits established, and the wiring was enclosed in conduit.

Finding 3: “There is equipment stored in front of electrical panels that violates the 3-foot rule, which requires clearance in front of all electrical equipment.”

Response: Violation of the 3-foot violation was confirmed.

Recommendation 3: “Correct the 3-foot violation.”

The equipment has been removed. The floor is marked at 3 feet.

This concludes our responses to the Grand Jury Report *Emergency Power*.

Sincerely,

Rick Bury
Fire Chief

cc: Grand Jury Foreperson
1100 Anacapa Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101