

- I. 2000-2001 Grand Jury report on INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICTS
- II. Published May 22, 2001
- III. As a follow up to past Grand Jury reports on special districts within Santa Barbara County, the 2000-2001 Grand Jury requested that the County Auditor-Controller analyze each district's financial condition to see if it was under or over funded. As a result of this analysis, two special districts were selected for further evaluation. These districts were the Los Alamos Community Services District and the Carpinteria-Summerland Fire Protection District.
- IV. Key Grand Jury Recommendations where there is disagreement or need for follow up:

Recommendation I: The District should seriously consider: (1) seeking additional sources of revenue such as putting a special fire tax on the ballot, (2) seeking legislative solutions to improve tax revenues, or (3) consolidating with another fire protection district.

Response of the Carpinteria – Summerland Fire Protection District: (1) The viability of a special fire tax is presently under analysis by staff. Presenting a special tax to the voters requires an engineering study to support the tax, and a community outreach program to educate the affected groups. The District must ensure a high probability of success before undertaking a ballot measure. (2) The District has been actively seeking legislative solutions to the tax shift problem since ERAF was imposed. A bill presently under consideration and supported by the District is AB 92 (Torlakson) which would prohibit the continued application of the ERAF transfer provisions to fire districts. (3) The District Fire Chiefs have cooperated with the other county Fire Chief's for over eight years to plan the functional consolidation of a number of aspects of fire protection services. The District participates with the other fire agencies in several money-saving combined efforts including joint hiring, joint arson investigation team, joint haz-mat team, and joint purchasing, The District continues to investigate additional ways to improve service and increase efficiency through joint powers agreements and other combined efforts.

2001-2002 Grand Jury comment: This response did not include a timeframe for the matters to be presented to the relevant decision maker as required by California Penal Code Section 933 (b) (3). The maximum time allowed by law for this process is 6 months from the report publication date.

V. Synopsis:

Number of responses to recommendations required – 1

Number of responses to recommendations in which the respondent agreed with or implemented the recommendation – 0

Number of responses to recommendations in which the respondent disagreed with the recommendation – 0

Number of responses to recommendations in which the respondent requires analysis or study to finalize position – 1