

CITY OF SANTA MARIA  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
AND CITY COUNCIL

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May 30, 2008

The Honorable J. William McLafferty  
Superior Court  
1100 Anacapa Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Santa Barbara, CA 93121-1107

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

Honorable Judge McLafferty & Grand Jury Foreperson:

The 2007-08 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury recently released its report entitled *The Santa Maria Landfill – NHIS – Win-Win for Santa Maria*. The City of Santa Maria and the Santa Maria Utilities Department are named as affected agencies and required to respond to applicable findings and recommendations within 90 days of the report issuance.

The City of Santa Maria would like to recognize the efforts of the Grand Jury for their diligence in the preparation of this report, a report that both validated and vindicated the City efforts in making the NHIS Program an innovative solution and a true Win-Win for the residents of Santa Maria.

RESPONSE TO GRAND JURY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING  
*The Santa Maria Landfill – NHIS – Win-Win for Santa Maria*


**Finding 1:** The public is not adequately informed about the risks and benefits of the NHIS Program.

**City Response:** The City agrees with the finding. It should also be noted that the City has developed and has maintained a website (<http://cityofsantamarianhis.info>) describing the NHIS Program in its entirety, along with complete video on the NHIS Program shown regularly on the City's public access television channel. The City has also written guest editorials and letters to the editor describing the NHIS Program and the benefits it brings to Santa Maria.

**Recommendation 1:** A more aggressive outreach should be made to educate the public regarding the safety and benefits of the NHIS Program.

**City Response:** The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but plans are underway to implement an enhanced NHIS outreach effort over the next several months. Staff intends to provide an enhanced public outreach and informational campaign regarding the NHIS Program to include, additional program safety and cost benefit information, presentations to local service clubs and organizations, updating the City's website on the NHIS Program on a continual basis, and providing informational fliers to all utility billing customers by way of placing the fliers in each utility billing statement envelope.

The above concludes the City's response to the Grand Jury's Report on *The Santa Maria Landfill – NHIS – Win-Win for Santa Maria*. The City of Santa Maria respectfully submits this response to the Grand Jury and thanks you again for all your efforts associated with the 2007-08 Grand Jury Report.

  
**LARRY J. LAVAGNINO**  
Mayor

  
**TIM S. NESS**  
City Manager