

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY INSPECTIONS OF PLACES OF PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

REASON FOR THE INVESTIGATION

The Nevada County Civil Grand Jury has the authority to initiate an investigation. The safety of a place of public assembly was questioned, and an investigation was initiated. Subsequently the safety of other public buildings came into question.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWED

Letters were written to 10 Fire Departments within Nevada County requesting certain information concerning their inspection programs for "Places of Public Assembly", as defined in the California Fire Code (formerly The Uniform Fire Code). The information requested included the location of all places of public assembly, the date of the last inspection, and any violations noted during the last inspection.

FINDINGS

1. There is a lack of continuity in the frequency of inspections among those Departments surveyed. Many Departments have an annual inspection program. Other Departments only inspect as a result of a complaint or a building permit check. Some Departments have little or no program at all.
2. The Grand Jury learned of plans to pool the resources of their inspection programs between some Departments. The goal of this move is to improve the frequency and professional quality of the inspections within these districts.
3. For simplicity, each Department contacted has been given a letter grade by the Grand Jury.
 - A- All places of public assembly inspected within the last year.
 - B- Most places of public assembly inspected within the last year.
 - C- Some places of public assembly inspected within the last year.
 - D- Few or no places of public assembly inspected within the last year.
 - F- Failed to respond to the Grand Jury questionnaire.

A- Ophir Hill Fire Department
A- Grass Valley Fire Department
A- Higgins Fire Department
A- Nevada County Consolidated Fire Department
A- Rough and Ready Fire Department
A- 49er Fire Department

B- No Department met this criteria

C- Nevada City Fire Department

D- Donner Summit Fire Department

D- Penn Valley Fire Department

D- Truckee Fire Department

F- Peardale-Chicago Park Fire Department

4. Some of the violations noted by the various Fire Departments were: blocked exits, lack of required exits, lack of emergency lighting, burned out light bulbs in emergency lighting, improper storage of flammable materials, lack of "panic hardware", and locked doors on emergency exits.
5. These violations and lack of documented follow up inspections clearing such violations places the physical well being of visitors to places of public assembly in serious risk.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The citizens of Nevada County are entitled to a reasonable degree of safety when attending an event in a place of public assembly. Lack of annual fire and safety inspections may deprive the public of this important entitlement.
2. Some of the Fire Departments have not conducted annual fire and safety inspections in places of public assembly.
3. A single fire in a place of public assembly could adversely affect tourism within Nevada County for years to come. Annual inspections and documented follow-up inspections may reduce this risk.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Grand Jury encourages those Departments not currently conducting annual inspections of the places of public assembly within their districts to begin such a program.
2. Everyone in authority within a Fire Department in Nevada County should reference the National Fire Protection Handbook as published by the National Fire Protection Association. (Section 10-C) "*Places of public assembly have long been recognized as a special concern for the fire department because of the life hazard involved.*"

REQUIRED RESPONSES

All responses due by September 30, 2000

Donner Summit Fire Department Board of Directors

Nevada City City Council

Nevada City City Manager

Peardale-Chicago Park Fire Department Board of Directors

Penn Valley Fire Department Board of Directors

Truckee Town Council

Truckee Town Manager

Ophir Hill Fire Department Board of Directors

Grass Valley City Council

Grass Valley City Manager

Higgins Fire Department Board of Directors

Nevada County Consolidated Fire Department Board of Directors

Rough and Ready Fire Department

49er Fire Department Board of Directors



Nevada City
A Bicentennial
Community

CITY OF NEVADA CITY CALIFORNIA

September 7, 2000

Re: City of Nevada City's Response
to the Nevada County Grand Jury Report

The City of Nevada City has recently taken several steps to improve fire service to the public. First of all, the City has hired the Fire Marshall for the 49'er Fire District to act as the City's Fire Marshall to replace Terry McMahan who acted as the City's Fire Marshall for many years and who went to work for the Consolidated Fire Department. It took a number of months to replace him, while the City explored whether it was appropriate to hire another Fire Marshall as an employee or simply contract with another agency. Secondly, the City has recently hired two additional fire department employees. In determining how many new employees to hire, the City awaited to see the results of the tax measure.

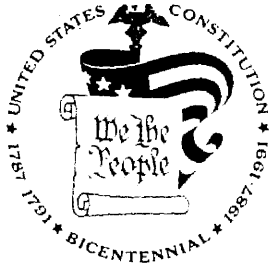
The Council strongly believes that with the hiring of David Ray, of the 49'er Fire District and the hiring of two additional fire department employees, that the City will be able to provide much better service to the public. One of the primary jobs of David Ray will be to make annual inspections of all places of public assembly and follow-up those inspections to make sure that all needed changes are made.

Dated: September 12, 2000


MAYOR

Dated: September 12, 2000


CITY MANAGER



Nevada City
A Bicentennial
Community

CITY OF NEVADA CITY

CALIFORNIA

EMERGENCY

NOV 17 2000

November 8, 2000

The Honorable Carl F. Bryan
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
201 Church Street, Suite 5
Nevada City, CA 95959

Re: Response to Grand Jury Report

Dear Judge Bryan:

The City of Nevada City hereby responds to the Grand Jury Findings and Recommendations regarding fire and life safety inspections of places of public assembly as follows:

1. As to Finding No. 1, the City Council agrees generally with the Finding and further states for clarification that the Nevada City Fire Department does have an annual inspection program, but because of the loss of the City's Fire Marshall for a number of months, the Fire Department was not able to conduct as many as inspections as it would have liked.
2. As to Finding No. 2, the City Council agrees with this Finding and, again, for clarification the City has been in negotiations with the 49'er Fire Department for some time and has recently hired the Fire Marshall from the 49'er Fire Department.
3. As to Finding No. 3, the City Council agrees with this Finding for the reasons stated above.
4. As to Finding No. 4, while the City is not aware of violations reported by other Fire Departments, the City Council does agree that the problems set forth in Finding No. 4 are typical of the types of problems discovered when inspections are done.
5. As to Finding No. 5, the City Council agrees with Finding No. 5.

Peardale-Chicago Park
Fire Protection District
PO Box 697
Chicago Park CA 95712


Sept 13,2000

Hon Carl Bryan, II
Presiding Judge
Nevada County Superior Court
Nevada City, CA 95949

Dear Judge Bryan,

Please accept this letter as our response to the 1999-2000 Civil Grand Jury Report. In this report the Peardale-Chicago Park Fire Protection District received and "F" for failing to report on the status of inspections on places of public assembly. This was a simple oversight in that the Fire District has no buildings within the district that qualify as public assembly and so no report was submitted. Please be assured that in the future any request for information by the grand jury will be given prompt attention.

Sincerely,


Benedict Barretta
Board Chairman

**PEARDALE-CHICAGO PARK
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
PO BOX 697
CHICAGO PARK CA 95712
530-273-2503**

10/18/00

Mr David Janison
Nevada County Grand Jury
950 Maidu Ave
Nevada City CA 95959

Dear Mr Janison,

The following is the response of the Peardale-Chicago Park Fire Protection District to the 1999-2000 Civil Grand Jury Report as concerns Fire and Life Safety Inspections of Places of Public Assembly.

Findings:

1. There is lack of continuity in the frequency of inspections among those departments surveyed. Many departments have an annual inspection program. Other departments only inspect as a result of a complaint or a building permit check. Some departments have little or no program at all.

Response:

We agree with the finding that we have no inspection program for places of public assembly for the reason that we have no places of public assembly in our Fire District.

2. The Grand Jury learned of plans to pool the resources of their inspection programs between some departments. The goal of this move is to improve the frequency and professional quality of the inspections within these districts.

Response:

We agree with the finding. Any effort to improve the quality and frequency of inspections would receive our full support.

3. For simplicity each department contacted has been given a letter grade by the Grand Jury. F- Failed to respond to the Grand Jury questionnaire.

Response:

We agree with the finding. The failure to respond to the initial questionnaire was an oversight on our part owing to the fact that we have no places of public assembly in our Fire District.

4. Some of the violations noted by the various Fire Departments were: blocked exits, lack of required exits, lack of emergency lighting, burned out light bulbs in emergency lighting, improper storage of flammable materials, lack of "panic hardware", and locked doors on emergency exits.

Response:

We agree with the finding but have no first hand knowledge.

5. These violations and lack of documented follow up inspections clearing such violations places the physical well being of visitors to places of public assembly in serious risk.

Response:

We agree. Violations should be followed up to ensure compliance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Grand Jury encourages those departments not currently conducting annual inspections of the places of public assembly within their fire districts to begin such a program.

Response:

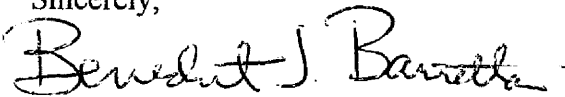
We will not implement the recommendation because we have no places of Public assembly in our Fire District.

2. Everyone in authority within the Fire Department in Nevada County should reference the National Fire Protection handbook as published by the National Fire Protection Association (Section 10-C)"Places of public assembly have long been recognized as a special concern for the fire department because of the life hazard involved.

Response:

We will not implement the recommendation because we do not have any places of public assembly in our Fire District. We do however reference it for other life safety issues in our community.

Sincerely,



Benedict Barretta
Board Chairman

PEARDALE-CHICAGO PARK
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
PO Box 697
Chicago Park, CA 95712

December 21, 2000

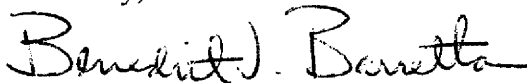
Mr. David Janison, Foreman
Nevada County Grand Jury
950 Maidu Ave
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Mr. Janison,

We received your letter of December 5, 2000 in which you state that "Chicago Park School, 15725 Mt Olive Rd is within your Fire District." As a point of clarification and as stated in our initial response, the Chicago Park School is in fact outside of the Fire District boundary (see attached map).

The school does however lie within the Fire District Sphere of influence and in the interest of Fire and Life safety, the Peardale-Chicago Park Fire District will be conducting annual inspections to ensure compliance with the applicable codes regarding Places of Public Assembly.

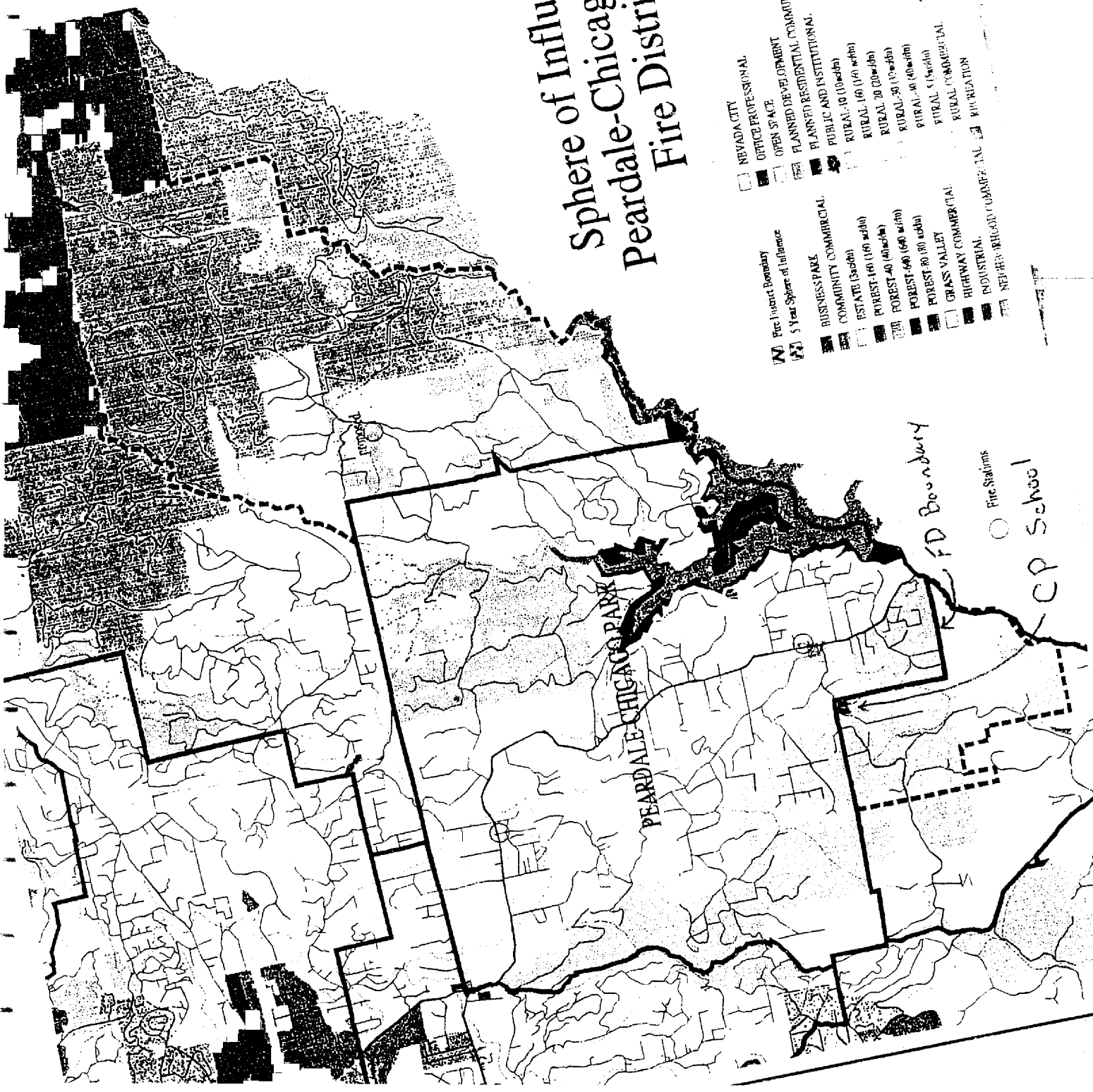
Sincerely,



Benedict A Barretta
Board Chairman



Sphere of Influence Peardale-Chicago Park Fire District



- RESIDENTIAL (1.5 ac/dk)
- SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT AREA
- SERVICE COMMERCIAL
- TRUCK DEP.
- URBAN HIGH DENSITY (2.5 ac/dk)
- URBAN MEDIUM DENSITY (3.5 ac/dk)
- URBAN SINGLE FAMILY (4.5 ac/dk)
- Water
- NEVADA CITY
- OFFICE PROFESSIONAL
- OPEN SPACE
- PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
- PLANNED RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY
- PLANNED RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL
- RURAL-10 (10 ac/dk)
- RURAL-16 (16 ac/dk)
- RURAL-20 (20 ac/dk)
- RURAL-30 (30 ac/dk)
- RURAL-40 (40 ac/dk)
- RURAL-5 (5 ac/dk)
- RURAL COMMERCIAL
- RURAL CORRELATION
- INDUSTRIAL
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- RECREATION
- BUSINESS PARK
- COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL
- ESTATE (3 ac/dk)
- FOREST-16 (16 ac/dk)
- FOREST-40 (40 ac/dk)
- FOREST-60 (60 ac/dk)
- FOREST-80 (80 ac/dk)
- GRASS VALLEY
- HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL



Scale: 1 inch = 1000 feet

Map prepared by: [illegible]
Date: [illegible]

FD Boundary

Fire Stations

CP School

PENN VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

P.O. Box 180
Penn Valley, CA 95946
(530) 432-2630

August 7, 2000

Honorable Judge Carl F. Bryan, II
Nevada County Superior Court
201 Church Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

Subject: Grand Jury Response

Dear Judge Bryan,

The Penn Valley Fire Protection District has recently completed inspecting all of its "Areas of Public Occupancy", as defined by the Uniform Fire Code (Exhibit A). In order that you may better understand our Occupancy Inspection Program and the corrective actions we have taken to ensure program accountability, our response is broken down into three areas; Occupancy Inspection Program, Program Deficiency, and Corrective Action.

Occupancy Inspection Program

The Penn Valley Fire Protection District utilizes its career fire staff at the Lake Wildwood Fire Station to conduct occupancy/business inspections. The knowledge gained through the inspection process is then applied in developing "Pre-Plans" on the various occupancies throughout the District. These "Pre-Plans" are then carried on every engine throughout the District, and provide information on the occupancy in the event of an emergency.

When an inspection is performed a Fire Safety Inspection Form (Exhibit B) is generated as a record of the visit. If violations are observed a corrective period of 30 days is allowed, and a re-inspection is scheduled. Potentially life-threatening violations are corrected immediately. A list of occupancies is maintained at the Lake Wildwood Fire Station. The list is updated through several means. The most common of which is the "Pre-Plan" process, Tenant Improvement applications submitted to the District office, and visual observation of a business change or addition.

The inspection program is scheduled to occur annually. The exception to this is observed violations by staff in their daily interactions within the community, or by a complaint. In either event an inspection is conducted and a form generated documenting the visit.

Program Deficiency

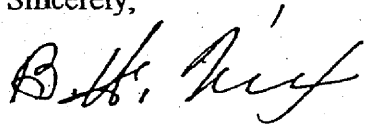
It was due to your inquiry that we discovered a breakdown in our inspection program. Although direction had been given to conduct these inspections by District Administration and individuals assigned the responsibility of the program, the District Administration lacked knowledge that inspections were not being completed. The major failing of the program was a lack of positive verification that inspections were occurring.

Corrective Action

A "positive" verification system has been initiated to ensure that all occupancy inspections are being done. In essence all occupancies – areas of assembly, businesses, day care centers, and residential home care are to be inspected annually with a completion date of all occupancies of 60 days. A Fire Safety Inspection Form is to be generated on all inspections and a copy forwarded to the Battalion Chief, then to the Unit Chief for compliance with this policy. A master list of all occupancies within the District is maintained by the Battalion Chief to ensure all occupancies are inspected annually. A report will be generated to the District Board of Directors quarterly.

In closing I wish to thank the Grand Jury for bringing this matter to our attention. I can assure you that the staff of the Penn Valley Fire District, the Board of Directors, and I are very concerned about public safety. We welcome any future inquiries you may have about our District operations.

Sincerely,



B.H. Nix,
Chairman of the Board

Cc: Board of Directors
Chief Marchio
Chief Clarabut
Chief Paulus
Nevada County Civil Grand Jury

PENN VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

P. O. Box 180
Penn Valley, CA 95946
(530) 432-2630

Nevada County Civil Grand Jury
Eric Rood Administrative Center
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

August 7, 2000

Attn: Special Districts

Dear Grand Jury,

The Penn Valley Fire Protection District has recently completed inspecting all of its "Areas of Public Occupancy", as defined by the Uniform Fire Code (Exhibit A). In order that you may better understand our Occupancy Inspection Program and the corrective actions we have taken to ensure program accountability, our response is broken down into three areas; Occupancy Inspection Program, Program Deficiency, and Corrective Action.

Occupancy Inspection Program

The Penn Valley Fire Protection District utilizes its career fire staff at the Lake Wildwood Fire Station to conduct occupancy/business inspections. The knowledge gained through the inspection process is then applied in developing "Pre-Plans" on the various occupancies throughout the District. These "Pre-Plans" are then carried on every engine throughout the District, and provide information on the occupancy in the event of an emergency.

When an inspection is performed a Fire Safety Inspection Form (Exhibit B) is generated as a record of the visit. If violations are observed a corrective period of 30 days is allowed, and a re-inspection is scheduled. Potentially life-threatening violations are corrected immediately. A list of occupancies is maintained at the Lake Wildwood Fire Station. The list is updated through several means. The most common of which is the "Pre-Plan" process, Tenant Improvement applications submitted to the District office, and visual observation of a business change or addition.

The inspection program is scheduled to occur annually. The exception to this is observed violations by staff in their daily interactions within the community, or by a complaint. In either event an inspection is conducted and a form generated documenting the visit.

Program Deficiency

It was due to your inquiry that we discovered a breakdown in our inspection program. Although direction had been given to conduct these inspections by District Administration and individuals assigned the responsibility of the program, the District Administration lacked knowledge that inspections were not being completed. The major failing of the program was a lack of positive verification that inspections were occurring.

Corrective Action

A "positive" verification system has been initiated to ensure that all occupancy inspections are being done. In essence all occupancies – areas of assembly, businesses, day care centers, and residential home care are to be inspected annually with a completion date of all occupancies of 60 days. A Fire Safety Inspection Form is to be generated on all inspections and a copy forwarded to the Battalion Chief, then to the Unit Chief for compliance with this policy. A master list of all occupancies within the District is maintained by the Battalion Chief to ensure all occupancies are inspected annually. A report will be generated to the District Board of Directors quarterly.

In closing I wish to thank the Grand Jury for bringing this matter to our attention. I can assure you that the staff of the Penn Valley Fire District, the Board of Directors, and I are very concerned about public safety. We welcome any future inquiries you may have about our District operations.

Sincerely,



B.H. Nix,
Chairman of the Board

Cc: Board of Directors
Chief Marchio
Chief Clarabut
Chief Paulus



Truckee Fire Protection District Of Nevada County

Fire Chief
Michael S. Terwilliger

Fire Marshal
Robert W. Bena

Board of Directors
Donald W. Callahan
Lloyd P. Everett
K. Jerry Goulding
Joseph E. Straub, Jr.
Gary W. Waters

July 11, 2000

Nevada County Grand Jury
Eric Rood Administrative Center
P.O. Box 6100
Nevada City, Calif. 95959
Attn: David Janison

**RE: Grand Jury Report
Inspection of Places of Public Assembly
Response**

Dear Mr. Janison,

The Grand Jury report indicated two recommendations for the findings concerning this subject. I will address them as follows:

1. The Grand Jury encourages those Departments not currently conducting annual inspections of the places of public assembly within their districts to begin such a program.

The Truckee Fire Protection District agrees with this philosophy. We also find value in inspecting all places of business within the Fire District. As mentioned in our response, this district services the Town of Truckee, Nevada County and Placer County. We have over 550 commercial businesses, and multiple R-1 structures which we consider a potential threat to public safety as well. Our commercial inspection program encompasses all these facilities during an ongoing inspection process. Isolating one particular type of business or occupancy is a rather myopic view concerning risk management.

Being an independent special district, the Truckee Fire Protection District is not part of the administration of either County or the Town of Truckee. Therefore, we should be listed as a Fire District in your report. This report was not sent to our Board of Directors or to this organization. It would appear the assumption is we are a department within another entity. This is not so. The Building Department of each County and the Town are responsible for the initial construction inspections and designations of places of assembly and the occupancy rating. We have a close working relationship with each department concerning all aspects of construction concerning areas of public risk and implementing appropriate safety measures. We have an excellent record of safety and implementation of safety measures in all aspects of this issue.

2. Everyone in authority within a Fire Department in Nevada County should reference the National Fire Protection Handbook as published by the National Fire Protection

Association, (Section 10-C) "Places of public assembly have long been recognized as a special concern for the fire department because of the life hazard involved".

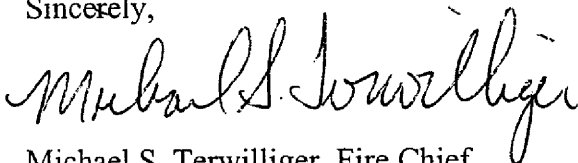
The Truckee Fire Protection District utilizes the NFPA publications on a daily basis as intended, a guideline. We are familiar with the multiple recommendations listed by the NFPA concerning life threat in all types of assemblies. One of these potential threats and the area resulting in the highest life loss for civilians and fire fighters in the United States is single family dwellings. In the case of this fire district, we have implemented a free home smoke detector program. To this date we have given over 1000 free smoke detectors out for single family dwellings. We have had multiple structural fire responses initiated by an early alarm resulting in zero life lost since inception of this program.

We have also strengthened the process outlined in the Uniform Fire Code concerning fire sprinklers in R-1 assemblies as well as areas of assembly. In the last two years we have had five structure fires in these types of assemblies that were extinguished by sprinklers resulting in minimal property loss and no injuries to civilians or fire fighters.

In closing, I am somewhat dismayed by this report. The totality of the information gathered for this report is a one page letter. There was never any follow up to determine what the Fire District is doing concerning the risk to the public. The result was conclusions derived from my response, not a total fire suppression and prevention system. Although I agree with the philosophy of the Grand Jury, it is singular in approach and the method used to gather the information is not consistent with the good standing of the organization. Ultimately poor investigations result in a poor report which spreads misinformation to the public. This in itself is much more capable of a negative affect on tourism in an area for years to come than an actual or perceived fire event.

As I mentioned in my previous correspondence, please feel free to contact me at 530-582-7850 if you have any questions about any programs within the Truckee Fire Protection District.

Sincerely,

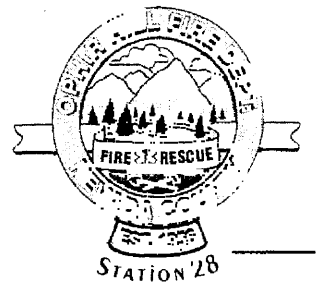


Michael S. Terwilliger, Fire Chief
Truckee Fire Protection District

cc- Steve Wright, Truckee Town Manager

Ophir Hill Fire Protection District

Jeff Wagner, Fire Chief



P.O. Box 940 ♦ 12668 Colfax Hwy., Cedar Ridge, CA 95924
(530) 273-8351 ♦ FAX (530) 273-0453

June 27, 2000

David Janison, Foreman
Nevada County Grand Jury
950 Maidu Ave.
Nevada City, CA. 95959

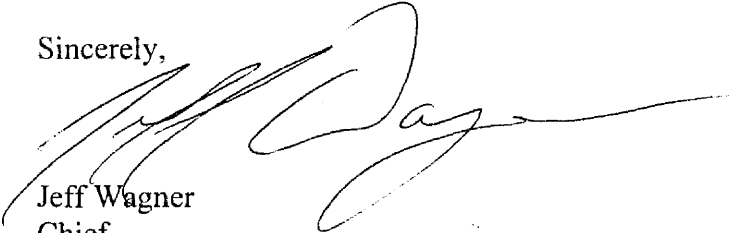
Dear Foreman Janison:

I have received the Grand Jury Final Report for 1999-2000 and reviewed the section regarding Fire and Life Safety Inspections in Places of Public Assemblies.

The Ophir Hill Fire Protection District received a letter grade of "A" from the Grand Jury, indicating all places of public assembly were inspected within the last year.

In response to your recommendation No. 2, I am fully aware of the NFPA guidelines on inspections of public assemblies.

Sincerely,


Jeff Wagner
Chief

City of Grass Valley

A CENTENNIAL CITY

July 12, 2000

Honorable Carl Bryan II
Presiding Judge of the Nevada County Courts
201 Church Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

CITY COUNCIL
BILL HULLENDER, MAYOR
LINDA STEVENS, VICE MAYOR
PATTI INGRAM
GERARD TASSONE
JOHN A. TAYLOR

GENE HAROLDSSEN
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

125 EAST MAIN STREET
GRASS VALLEY, CA 95945
(530) 274-4310 FAX: 274-4399

RE: Response to the 1999-2000 Grand Jury Report

Your Honor,

This letter is a joint response to the 1999-2000 Grand Jury Report from the Grass Valley City Council and City Administrator. The Grand Jury's interest in fire and life safety inspections of places of public assembly is warranted and appreciated.

We note that in Section 3 of the Grand Jury findings, the Grass Valley Fire Department inspected all places of public assembly within the last year and was given an "A" grade. We concur with the recommendations of this report as it relates to the City and continue to support the Grass Valley Fire Department's annual fire and life safety inspection program of all places of public assembly within our jurisdiction.

Finally, the management of the Grass Valley Fire Department is familiar with Section 10-C of the National Fire Protection Handbook as published by the National Fire Protection Association which addresses places of public assembly. This response was reviewed and approved by City Council at its July 11, 2000 meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact us. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bill Hullender
Mayor



Gene Haroldsen
City Administrator

cc: City Council
Claude Biddle, City Attorney
Hank Weston, Fire Chief
Kyle Kollar, Community Development Director

City of Grass Valley

A CENTENNIAL CITY

October 20, 2000

David Janison, Foreman
Nevada County Grand Jury
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

CITY COUNCIL
BILL HULLENDER, MAYOR
LINDA STEVENS, VICE MAYOR
PATTI INGRAM
GERARD TASSONE
JOHN A. TAYLOR

GENE HAROLDSSEN
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

125 EAST MAIN STREET
GRASS VALLEY, CA 95945
(530) 274-4310 FAX: 274-4399

RE: Follow up Response to the Grand Jury Report

Dear Foreman Janison,

We received your letter dated October 3, 2000 regarding the City's response to the Grand Jury Report. Though we believe our response complied with Penal Code Section 933.05, this letter is to respond to the items that you identified.

As to the findings listed under the Fire and Life Safety Inspections of Places of Public Assembly (pp. 27-28) in the 1999-2000 Nevada County Grand Jury Final Report:

1. The City Council and City Administrator agree with this finding.
2. The City Council and City Administrator agree with this finding.
3. The City Council and City Administrator agree with this finding. We note that the Grass Valley Fire Department received an "A" grade and inspected all places of public assembly within the last year.
4. The City Council and City Administrator agree with this finding.
5. The City Council and City Administrator agree with this finding.

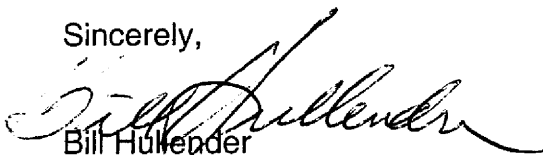
Please be aware that we do not have any independent knowledge about the Grand Jury's investigation or an opinion as to the evaluation of any other Fire Department other than what we have read in this report.

Regarding the recommendations listed under the Fire and Life Safety Inspections of Places of Public Assembly (p. 28) in Grand Jury Final Report:

1. The recommendation has been implemented. The Grass Valley Fire Department will continue to conduct annual fire and life safety inspections on all places of public assembly within the City's jurisdiction.
2. The recommendation has been implemented. The management of the Grass Valley Fire Department is familiar with Section 10-C of the National Fire Protection Handbook as published by the National Fire Protection Association which addresses places of public assembly.

Please note that we cannot find any requirement in California Penal Code 933.05 that mandates a responding agency quote each finding and recommendation of the Grand Jury Report in its response. Hopefully, this letter addresses your issues.

Sincerely,


Bill Hullender
Mayor


Gene Haroldsen
City Administrator

cc: City Council
Honorable Carl Bryan II, Presiding Judge of the Nevada County Courts
Claude Biddle, City Attorney
Hank Weston, Fire Chief
Kyle Kollar, Community Development Director



HIGGINS AREA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

of Nevada County

10106 Combie Road, Auburn, CA 95602
Phone (530) 269-2488 • 268-0844 • Fax (530) 268-7737

August 16, 2000

Honorable Carl F. Bryan, II
Presiding Judge
Nevada County Superior Court
Nevada City, CA 95959

David Janison, Foreman
Grand Jury
County of Nevada
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Judge Bryan and Foreman Janison:

The following is the response of the Board of Directors of the Higgins Area Fire Protection District to the 1999-2000 Grand Jury report on Fire and Life Safety Inspection of Places of Public Assembly.

FINDINGS

1. While the Higgins Area Fire Protection District's Board of Directors cannot comment on the inspection programs of other departments, it is our ongoing practice to annually inspect all commercial structures within our District's boundaries as part of a formal company inspection program. In addition, we conduct inspections based on building permit checks and complaints.
2. Higgins Fire District maintains a high quality, professional inspection program and the Board of Directors cannot comment on the practices of other departments and districts.
3. The Higgins Fire District Board of Directors agrees with the letter grade of "A" given to the District, as this is congruent with the quality of our inspection program.
4. The Board of Directors agrees that these are some, but not all, of the violations found during inspections of places of public assembly.
5. In this District's professional inspection program, these types of life safety violations are required to be corrected *immediately* at the time of inspection. If the violation(s) cannot be corrected during the inspection, the place of public assembly is immediately closed to usage until the violation is corrected.


All inspections and violations within the Higgins Area Fire Protection District are documented. Violations not cleared at inspection are expediently addressed in a re-inspection program.


Honorable Carl F. Bryan II
Judge of the Superior Court
Re: Response to 1999-2000 Grand Jury Report
August 16, 2000
Page 2


RECOMMENDATIONS


1. The Higgins Area Fire Protection District currently manages and conducts an annual inspection program.
2. The Higgins Area Fire Protection District maintains a resource library containing the following: California Fire Code, Uniform Building Code, local ordinances and all National Fire Protection Association standards.

Sincerely,


Art Silvera, Chair
Board of Directors


Don Luis, Vice Chair
Board of Directors


John B. Hasslinger, Treasurer
Board of Directors


Michael Bryant, Director
Board of Directors


Joe Sherron, Director
Board of Directors

Cc: DC Tony Clarabut
BC Frank Rowe
Capt. Jerry Good

//kb/jmg

Board/grand jury response 99-00

NEVADA COUNTY
CONSOLIDATED
FIRE DISTRICT

"Excellence in Emergency Service"

September 20, 2000

Nevada County Grand Jury
950 Maidu Ave
Nevada City, CA 95959

Re: Response to the Grand Jury Report

Dear Members of the Grand Jury,

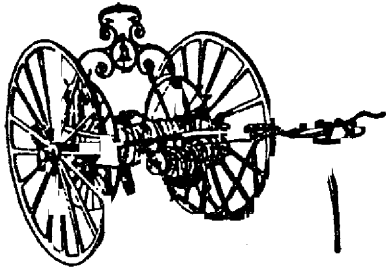
The efforts of our fire district to provide for public safety will remain a priority for this Board. Our thanks go to the efforts of the men and women of the Nevada County Consolidated Fire District for their professional commitment to ensure our mission is achieved.

Sincerely,



Ron Nulph
Chairman of the Board
NCCFD

cc: NCCFD Board of Directors



**NORTH SAN JUAN
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

Post Office Box 299
North San Juan, CA 95960
(916) 292-9159

Serving Since 1862

Nevada County Grand Jury
County Government Center
950 Maidu Ave
Nevada City, CA 95959

August 28, 2000

Subject: Grand Jury Report
Fire Prevention Inspections

Members of the Grand Jury;

Although your recent Grand Jury Report on Fire Inspections conducted by various Fire Districts within Nevada county did NOT include our Fire District I would like to insure the members that in North San Juan inspections are conducted, reports are written, files are kept in accordance with the Standards of the State of California, National Board of Fire Underwriters and the Uniform Fire Code.

As a Fire Prevention Officer for over 35 years and having established the Ophir Hill Fire Prevention Bureau, Rated "A", I can assure you that North San Juan Fire District is in full compliance with criteria the Grand Jury has established for district fire Prevention Inspections.

Our records are open for inspection and I would be more than happy to have any member visit and look at our District Occupancies and their Files.

There is nothing more important in our District than the Fire and Life Safety of our citizens and their businesses.

I hope this letter will be acceptable for your purposes of requesting responses from various Fire Districts.

Cordially;

Al Hoffmeyer
Fire Prevention Officer

Boyd Johnson
Fire Chief

cc: Board of Directors



Forty-Niner Fire District

Post Office Box 354

Nevada City, CA 95959

(530) 265-4431 • Fax (530) 265-8103

rec'd
AUG 23 2000
F M

August 10, 2000

Hon. Carl F. Bryan, II
Presiding Judge, 1999-2000 Grand Jury
Nevada County Superior Court
Nevada City, CA 95959

Dear Judge Bryan:

The Forty Niner Fire Protection District was requested to respond to the findings of the 1999-2000 Nevada County Civil Grand Jury. The Grand Jury was interested in the inspections of "Places of Public Assembly" as defined in the California Fire Code.

The District was pleased with the Grand Jury's findings that the District was inspecting all places of assembly as required by the Fire Code. It is the District's intention to continue with its program of inspections on a yearly basis. Inspections and follow-up inspection to insure compliance have been part of our fire prevention and life safety programs for many years.

Respectfully submitted,

David O. Baker

Chairman of the Board

49er Fire Protection District