

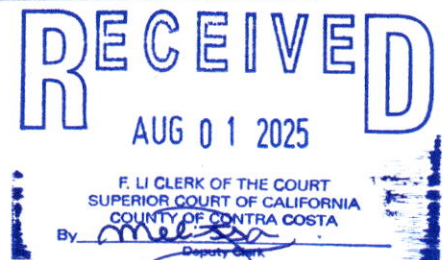


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July 31, 2025

Peter Appert, Foreperson

Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
P.O. Box 431
Martinez, CA 94553



Subject: Response to Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury Report No. 2504 – “The Good Guys on Your Side”

Dear Mr. Appert,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff of the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District, I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated May 21, 2025, and the accompanying Grand Jury Report No. 2504 entitled “*The Good Guys on Your Side*”(Report). We appreciate the time, effort, and thorough review that the Grand Jury has devoted to examining the work of our agency.

In accordance with the requirements set forth under California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, we are submitting our agency’s official response to the report. This response addresses the recommendations presented by the Grand Jury and provides details on the actions and planned initiatives that reflect our continued commitment to effective governance, transparency, and the protection of public health.

Our Board of Trustees values the Grand Jury’s input as an important part of maintaining accountability and strengthening public service. The report has offered an opportunity for constructive reflection on current practices and identification of areas where the District can continue to improve its operations.

Please find enclosed our detailed written response to the findings and recommendations outlined in Report No. 2504. As directed, a hard copy of this response is being submitted to your office, and an electronic copy has also been provided by email to ctadmin@contracosta.courts.ca.gov. The Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District Board of Trustees’ Executive Committee reviewed and discussed the Report at its June 23 meeting. Subsequently, the Board of Trustees received the Report for its review at its July 14 meeting, along with a detailed report from the Executive Committee discussion, including content of proposed response.

We sincerely appreciate the efforts of the Civil Grand Jury and thank you for your thoughtful review of our agency. Should you require any additional information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Protecting Public Health Since 1927

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Pay", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

Peter Pay

President, Board of Trustees

Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District

cc: Paula Macedo, General Manager, Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District

Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District responses to Civil Grand Jury Report No. 2504, Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control "The Good Guys on Your Side"

FINDINGS

F1. The Mosquito and Vector Control District (MVCD) uses state-of-the-art Integrative Vector Management, which includes physical, biological and chemical control of vectors, in addition to vector surveillance and public education.

Response: (1) agree

F2. The MVCD had an excess of revenues over expenditures of more than two million dollars in each of the past three fiscal years.

Response: (3) partially disagree – Over the past three fiscal years, the Contra Costa Mosquito and Vector Control District's (District) total net position has increased by an average of more than two million dollars annually. However, the majority of these funds are either restricted or designated in accordance with the District's Reserve Policy. Designated reserves include invasive species and other public health emergencies and reserves intended to pay for the ongoing rehabilitation of the District office building project without issuing debt. The District's Reserve Policy is reviewed and revised as necessary by the Board of Trustees.

F3. Awareness by residents of how to identify and report *Aedes* mosquitos can assist in *Aedes* control.

Response: (1) agree

F4. Promotion of the MVCD's residential inspection service will aide in detection of invasive *Aedes*.

Response: (1) agree

F5. Public education in how residents can eliminate *Aedes* eggs in their yards will assist in stopping the spread of invasive *Aedes*.

Response: (1) agree

F6. MVCD uniformed inspectors sometimes encounter a level of misunderstanding regarding their mission, resulting in denial or delay of entry to property.

Response: (1) agree

F7. When residents deny inspections, it delays mosquito identification and eradication efforts.

Response: (1) agree

F8. The Antioch vacancy on the MVCD Board of Trustees contributed to a delay in the MCVD presentation on *Aedes* to the Antioch City Council.

Response: (3) partially disagree - Having a Trustee represent each city within the District is critically important. Collectively, the Board of Trustees is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the District, developing policies, overseeing budgets, and ensuring that designated reserves are in place for circumstances such as public health emergencies. Individually, each Trustee serves as a representative of their respective city, bringing forward its unique interests and priorities and ensuring these are met. As residents of the cities they represent, Trustees often have a deeper understanding of local concerns and are well-positioned to engage with municipal officials effectively. From the District's perspective, we work proactively to maintain strong relationships with each city. We regularly provide outreach materials, offer annual presentations, and extend invitations for city officials to visit the District and learn more about our programs and services. While we make every effort to build those connections, Trustees—as appointed officials—often have more direct access to their city's leadership. This can be especially valuable during urgent or emerging situations, such as the presence of invasive mosquitoes. Trustees may also facilitate broader support for the District by leveraging existing relationships to help schedule presentations, disseminate educational materials, and advocate for public health initiatives. In cases where city-specific challenges arise—such as the invasive mosquito concerns in Antioch—a Trustee can be a key ally in raising awareness and encouraging prompt local action. That said, city councils also have a responsibility to remain open and responsive to communications from other public agencies, particularly when those messages concern public health risks affecting their residents. While having a Trustee from Antioch would certainly strengthen that connection, the Antioch City Council should remain receptive to the District's outreach efforts regardless of the vacancy at the time. Although there may have been a delay in securing a presentation to the Antioch City Council in 2024, there was no delay in actions performed by the District to fight the invasive mosquitoes in the area to protect public health.

F9. The MVCD website does not explain what activities should be reported to the Animal Services Department as opposed to the MVCD.

Response: (1) agree

F10. The MVCD website does not have a link to the Animal Services Department.

Response: (1) agree

F11. There are no prominent, direct links for reporting mosquitos on the home page of the MVCD website or the Animal Services Department website.

Response: (3) partially disagree – Previously, residents submitted mosquito-related concerns by navigating through the “I Want To” tab and selecting “Request Service.” To improve clarity and ease of access, the District recently added a direct “Report Mosquitoes” link under the “I Want To” tab, streamlining the process for users.

F12. The MVCD does not currently leave their educational “Invasive Mosquito Species of California” identification brochure during home inspections for other vectors.

Response: (3) partially disagree – The District leaves the brochure about invasive mosquitoes when providing services for other vectors, if they are in the area where the District has found *Aedes aegypti*, i.e. Martinez and Antioch, but currently does not provide that in other areas.

F13. There are no current marketing partnership agreements with other counties to explore cost effective public education and awareness.

Response: (3) partially disagree – Although there is no formal agreement specifically designated for marketing partnerships, the District participates in a mutual aid agreement with the Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District, San Mateo County Mosquito & Vector Control District, and Marin/Sonoma Mosquito and Vector Control District. Additionally, District staff actively engage with public health agencies across multiple counties through regular meetings and collaborative efforts. These interactions serve as a platform for sharing expertise, ideas, and communication materials as needed. For instance, our Public Affairs Director maintains ongoing collaboration with counterparts from Alameda, San Mateo, Marin/Sonoma, Sacramento-Yolo, Tulare, Orange, Merced, and Los Angeles agencies, routinely exchanging resources, offering assistance, and coordinating on joint projects. Through the Mosquito and Vector Control Association of California (MVCAC), District staff also work directly with colleagues from other vector control districts statewide on a wide range of initiatives, further enhancing interagency cooperation and knowledge-sharing.

F14. The MVCD does not currently distribute their existing *Aedes* information through relevant retail establishments and other public agencies unless requested.

Response: (3) partially disagree – The District frequently provides information and brochures about invasive mosquitoes to other public agencies. With the 2024 discovery of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes in Antioch, the District reached out to various public agencies and retail establishments to provide information. As a result, information was provided to the Antioch City Council, City Hall, the Antioch Department of Recreation, Antioch Libraries, Tri-Delta Transit, the Chamber of Commerce, the Lone Tree Golf and Event Center, Antioch Starbucks restaurants, and all 22 Antioch public schools. In addition, staff regularly reach out and leave materials with garden stores and home improvement stores establishments to make available to customers.

F15. As of May 2025, the MVCD social media presence is limited to Facebook (60 followers), Instagram (232 followers), Nextdoor, and 1,432 followers on X.

Response: (3) partially disagree – The District also has a YouTube account (<https://www.youtube.com/@ccmvcd>), with 343 subscribers, and 52 videos published. The District’s choice of social media platforms is based on data from a survey of county residents, which is done every 3-5 years.

F16. The MVCD does not cross-market educational or promotional YouTube videos on other social media platforms.

Response: (2) disagree – The District has posted their YouTube videos across multiple social media platforms on multiple occasions. For example, on May 14, 2025 the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSGEoIIOHdE> appeared on Instagram, Twitter (X), Facebook, and Nextdoor; on September 18, 2024 the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flwxc012Jro> appeared on Instagram, Facebook, and Nextdoor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

R1. By February 1, 2026, the MVCD Board of Trustees should consider directing the MVCD to explore additional avenues to educate residents on how to recognize and report *Aedes* mosquitos.

Response: (4) The recommendation will not be implemented – The District already educates residents on how to recognize the potential presence of invasive mosquitoes by highlighting behavioral characteristics such as daytime and ankle-biting activity. Because accurate species identification requires microscopic examination, residents are not expected to identify the mosquito themselves. Instead, the District encourages the public to report any biting mosquito activity, regardless of time of day and bite location, so that staff can investigate and determine the species as needed.

R2. By February 1, 2026, the MVCD Board of Trustees should recruit to ensure a complete Board of Trustees.

Response: (4) The recommendation will not be implemented. Pursuant to the California Health and Safety Code, appointment of Trustees to positions allocated to a county or city is a right and responsibility possessed by the appointing agency. Contra Costa County and each city within it have their own processes and procedures for recruiting and appointing representatives to other boards, including the MVCD. While the MVCD has, and will continue, to communicate regularly with the city and county clerks and other appropriate staff when vacancies arise and when Trustee terms are closing, directly recruiting candidates to fill these vacancies risks intruding on the sovereignty of the appointing agency. The appointing agencies, as noted in the response to F8 are uniquely situated to identify candidates and to appoint Trustees who can represent the interests and priorities of, and communicate effectively with, their appointing agency. District staff has, over the past several years, increased its outreach frequency with the local appointing agencies and will continue this practice in the future.

R3. By February 1, 2026, the MVCD Board of Trustees should consider directing the MVCD to work with the Animal Control Services Agency to provide a link on their websites for reporting suspected *Aedes* mosquitos to the MVCD.

Response: (1) The recommendation has been implemented – The Board has discussed the recommendation with District staff, and staff will contact Animal Services to discuss cross linking the websites.

R4. By February 1, 2026, the MVCD Board of Trustees should consider directing the MVCD to offer their existing brochure, “Invasive Mosquito Species of California” to residents during all requested home inspections for vectors.

Response: (1) The recommendation has been implemented – While the current brochure is best suited for areas where invasive mosquitoes have already been detected, the District is in the process of developing an alternative brochure to be distributed during all vector inspections. This new version will carry a slightly different message, focusing on raising public awareness about invasive mosquitoes and encouraging residents to report any suspected sightings and biting activity to the District.

R5. By February 1, 2026, the MVCD Board of Trustees should consider directing the MVCD to explore the costs of coordinating public information campaigns with neighboring counties during *Aedes* infestations.

Response: (4) The recommendation will not be implemented – as noted in the response to finding F13, the District already coordinates public information efforts with other agencies, including those in neighboring counties. When invasive mosquitos are discovered across jurisdictional boundaries, these activities will include materials specific to the invasive species.

R6. By February 1, 2026, the MVCD Board of Trustees should consider directing the MVCD to offer their existing brochure, “Invasive Mosquito Species of California” or other informational material to other public agencies and relevant retail establishments (for example garden and pool stores).

Response: (1) The recommendation has been implemented prior to the report – because it is already part of the District’s program, as noted in the response to finding F14, the District already offers the brochure to other public agencies and retail establishments. The District is, however, considering increasing these outreach efforts to these and other establishments consistent with Recommendation R6.

R7. By February 1, 2026, the MVCD Board of Trustees should consider directing the MVCD to provide an opt-in/opt-out email service to send alerts and news releases when *Aedes* infestations are discovered.

Response: (1) The recommendation has been implemented – The Board of Trustees has discussed with District staff, the existing process for email and news subscribers to receive news and other releases. To further enhance communication, the District will update the website’s subscription options to include notifications related to invasive mosquito detections.