



CITY OF PINOLE

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August 18, 2020

Honorable Anita Santos
Judge of the Superior Court
Contra Costa County Civil Grand Jury
725 Court Street
P.O. Box 431 Martinez, CA 94553-0091

Re: Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 2007 "Wildfire Preparedness in Contra Costa County"

Dear Judge Santos:

Pursuant to California Penal Code Section 933.05, this letter responds to Contra Costa County Grand Jury Report No. 2007 "Wildfire Preparedness in Contra Costa County". This response was reviewed and authorized by the City Council at a duly noticed City Council meeting on August 18, 2020.

Grand Jury Findings

Finding #1: During a Red Flag Warning, fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County often deploy pre-positioned firefighting strike teams to maximize the ability to respond to wildfires.

Response: Pinole agrees with finding #1. During a Red Flag Warning, fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County often deploy pre-positioned firefighting strike teams to maximize the ability to respond to wildfires.

Finding #2: Fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County require property owners to perform weed abatement on their property to reduce the risk of fire spread.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #2. Fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County require property owners to perform weed abatement on their property to reduce the risk of fire spread.

Finding #3: Not all fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County use predetermined polygons and routing algorithms in their evacuation plans.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #3. Not all fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County use predetermined polygons and routing algorithms in their evacuation plans.

Finding #4: Fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County recommend that residents comply with law enforcement's orders to evacuate during an emergency.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #4. Fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County recommend that residents comply with law enforcement's orders to evacuate during an emergency.

Finding #5: Not all fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County use new technologies, such as ground sensors, drones, satellites, and fire spotting cameras, for early detection of fires.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #5. Not all fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County use new technologies, such as ground sensors, drones, satellites, and fire spotting cameras, for early detection of fires. It is noteworthy that some of these new technologies are still in experimental stages of development for use in the fire service.

Finding #6: The October 2019 Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events disrupted emergency response efforts and communications in Contra Costa County.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #6. The October 2019 Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events disrupted emergency response efforts and communications in Contra Costa County.

Finding #7: Fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County are not always informed by PG&E when the utility is performing non-emergency maintenance work that presents a high fire risk during a Red Flag Warning.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #7. Fire districts and fire departments in Contra Costa County are not always informed by PG&E when the utility is performing non-emergency maintenance work that presents a high fire risk during a Red Flag Warning.

Finding #8: An ordinance passed by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District, requiring PG&E to give advance notice of non-emergency maintenance work that presents a high fire risk, enables the fire district to pre-position a team at the utility worksite and recover labor and equipment costs.

Response: Pinole agrees with Finding #8, as we understand the San Ramon Valley FPD ordinance to be written.

Grand Jury Recommendations

Recommendation #5: The City Councils of El Cerrito, Pinole, and Richmond should consider directing their Fire Chief to update wildfire evacuation plans and incorporate pre-determined polygons and advanced routing technology, by June 30, 2021.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but plans are underway to implement by June 30, 2021.

The Contra Costa County Fire Chiefs Association was approved for grant funding in the amount of \$300,000 for a software program which will provide a uniform evacuation planning platform for fire agencies within the county. The funds are expected to be available in late 2020, and implementation is expected for mid-2021.

Recommendation #6: The City Councils of El Cerrito, Pinole, and Richmond should consider identifying funds to adopt or expand the use of new technologies, such as ground sensors, drones, satellites, and fire spotting cameras, to help detect fires in high-risk areas, by June 30, 2021.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.

As a municipal fire agency contracted with the Contra Costa Regional Fire Communications Center (CCRFCC) for dispatch services, Pinole Fire Department has access to real-time satellite detection of fires as provided by PG&E. CCRFCC (which is operated by Contra Costa County Fire Protection District) can use this information for early detection to dispatch fire resources to a given area, often in remote locations, and use this information to support or confirm a fire. PG&E fire spotting cameras in the areas surrounding Pinole include those located at Cummings Skyway, Briones Tabletop, and Briones Rancho De La Rosa. The City of Pinole will consider identifying funds to expand the use of such technologies by June 30, 2021.

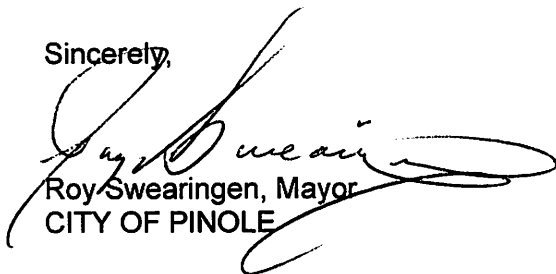
Recommendation #7: The City Councils of El Cerrito, Pinole, and Richmond should review and consider mechanisms, such as the ordinance passed by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District, that would enable their fire department to recover labor and equipment costs from PG&E for overseeing electrical utility work that presents a high fire risk, by June 30, 2021.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.

While it is unclear whether a local agency can regulate PG&E activities by way of an ordinance like that which was passed by SRVFPD, the City of Pinole will review and consider such mechanisms as recommended in this report by June 30, 2021.

The City appreciates the time and effort spent by Her Honor and the Grand Jury in consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,



Roy Swearingen, Mayor
CITY OF PINOLE