



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: CEO  
Department No.: 012  
For Agenda Of: 9/1/20  
Placement: Administrative  
Estimated Tme:  
Continued Item:  
If Yes, date from:  
Vote Required: Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer  
Director(s) Bernard Melekian, Assistant County Executive Officer  
Contact Info: Kelly Hubbard, Director of the Office of Emergency Management  
**SUBJECT:** Response to 2019-2020 Grand Jury Report: Public Alerts for Public Safety Power Shutoffs and Emergencies

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form:

**Other Concurrence:** N/A

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form:

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Consider and adopt the responses set forth in Attachment A as the Board of Supervisors' response to the 2019-20 Grand Jury report entitled "Public Alerts for Public Safety Power Shutoffs and Emergencies," Attachment B;
- b) Authorize the Chair to sign the letter included in Attachment A and forward the letter and responses to the Presiding Judge of Santa Barbara County Superior Court; and
- c) Determine pursuant to CEQA Guidelines 15378(b)(5) that the above actions are not a project subject to CEQA review, because they are government administrative activities that does not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

**Summary Text:**

On June 10, 2020, the Santa Barbara County Grand Jury published a report entitled "Public Alerts for Public Safety Power Shutoffs and Emergencies." Today, the Board will consider the County's proposed response to the report, adopt their preferred response and authorize the Board Chair to sign the response letter. The Board is required to respond in writing to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court by September 10, 2020.

**Background:**

“The 2019-20 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury investigated the methods and effectiveness of County public communications providing actionable information and alerts for Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) and emergencies.” The Grand Jury interviewed staff within the Board of Supervisors, the County Executive Office, Office of Emergency Management, Sheriff’s Office, Public Health and Fire Department, in addition to receiving presentations from both Southern California Edison (SCE) and Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E).

As part of their investigation, the Grand Jury reviewed information regarding the authorities of the utilities, and various response and communication plans for PSPS events. The report also noted how these events differ from fires, floods and other more traditional emergencies. The report notes, “For both PSPS and emergencies, public communications provide action advice as well as information. The advice must reach the people who need it and be acted on promptly.”

At the time of the Grand Jury’s research and report writing, the County was in the middle of its second year of potential PSPS events, with several having already occurred within the county for that season. The County was actively working with both utilities, community members and the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to improve community knowledge, coordination between responding agencies, community notifications, and mitigation of impacts from such events on local government and our community.

The County Board of Supervisors is required to respond to all Findings and Recommendations within this report, including Findings 1a, 1b, 2, 3, 4, 5 and Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Staff anticipates no fiscal or facilities impacts as a result of the Board’s action on this matter.

**Special Instructions**

1. As per Recommended Action b), above, please forward the original signed letter and responses to the Presiding Judge of Santa Barbara County Superior Court.
2. Please send a copy of the signed letter and a copy of the minute order to Richard Morgantini, Fiscal & Policy Analyst, CEO’s office.

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Board of Supervisors Response

Attachment B: FY 2019-20 Grand Jury Report

**Authored by:** Kelly Hubbard, Director, Office of Emergency Management