



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: Public Health
Department No.: 041
For Agenda Of: July 5, 2011
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme: 10 minutes on 7-12-11
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Dr. Takashi Wada, MD, MPH, Director and Health Officer
Director(s) Public Health Department
Contact Info: Jennifer Bernstein, 681-4900
Director of Environmental Health Services
SUBJECT: County Service Area 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District), Resolution Relative to Septic Management Administration Charges on the Tax Roll – First Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

Consider recommendations regarding County Service Area 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District), resolution relative to Septic Management Administration Charges on the Tax Roll, First District, as follows:

- A. Receive report entitled *County of Santa Barbara Public Works Department Fixed Charges/ Assessments* report for Mission Canyon septic system management for Fiscal Year 2011-12.
- B. Approve Notice of Exemption pursuant to County California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15273 (a) (1-4).
- C. Set a public hearing on the Departmental agenda for July 12, 2011, in connection with the report entitled "*County of Santa Barbara Public Works Department Fixed Charges/Assessments*" for Mission Canyon septic system management for Fiscal Year 2011-12 filed with the Clerk of the Board July 5, 2011, which proposes the septic system management charges, with no change proposed this year, for County Service Area 12.
- D. Adopt, at the conclusion of the public hearing on July 12, 2011, the attached resolution establishing the septic system management charges for County Service Area 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District) and provide for collection on the Tax Rolls for Fiscal Year 2011-12

Summary Text:

The Public Health Department's Environmental Health Services manages septic tank system performance for inhabitants in Mission Canyon pursuant to County Code Section 22A. The attached resolution proposes no change to the existing rate of \$24 per year per septic system and further requests that the collection of the assessments be placed on the tax roll.

Background:

Prior to 1984, wastewater disposal on developed parcels in the Mission Canyon area was handled entirely by on-site septic systems. However, due to development density, steep terrain, soil conditions and geology, septic system performance was poor in many cases. The Mission Canyon Sewer District (County Service Area 12) was formed to establish a sewer collection system for the lower areas of the canyon that were most affected by poorly performing septic systems. These parcels were connected to the public sewer system which flows to the city of Santa Barbara's El Estero wastewater treatment plant for treatment and disposal and are assessed a sewer service charge. The public sewer system is managed by the Public Works Department.

In addition to providing sewage collection, a separate function of County Service Area (CSA) 12 was established to monitor remaining septic systems deemed functional but limited by the constraints listed above. A joint powers agreement with the City of Santa Barbara (JPA 12,554 dated October 2, 1984) addresses agency responsibilities including the receipt of septage from septic systems located in Mission Canyon. Parcels that remain on septic systems are assessed a septic maintenance charge for periodic inspections, monitoring or other management functions. The septic maintenance functions are managed by the Public Health Department's Environmental Health Services. The septic system monitoring program was established when CSA 12 was created by Resolution No 84-72 on February 21, 1984 in order to track the performance of private wastewater disposal systems that did not hook up to the public sewer system, as addressed in Ordinance 3574 (Chapter 22A of the County Code) adopted by the Board on June 23, 1986.

This service is mandated by Resolution 84-72 of the Board of Supervisors which established the septic tank maintenance area in Mission Canyon to provide improved septic system maintenance.

Prior to 1999 this service consisted of a biennial survey by Environmental Health Services personnel to review operation of systems with homeowners and check for signs of surface failures.

In 1999, the Board established the Voluntary Maintenance program in which qualified septic tank pumpers conduct an inspection of all tanks when they are pumped and provide a written report to the homeowner and Environmental Health Services.

Based on the success of this program in improving the operation of septic systems throughout the county, Environmental Health Services worked with the Mission Canyon Association to shift the focus of maintenance oversight in Mission Canyon from field surveys by County staff to a financial incentive for homeowners to provide routine maintenance of their systems. This revised approach to maintenance oversight provides a financial incentive to encourage regular pumping and inspection of septic tanks by licensed septic tank pumpers. Since July 2006, property owners in the septic tank maintenance area have been eligible for an \$85.00 "rebate" once every four years to partially offset the cost of pumping

and inspection of their septic tanks. Additionally, by using private sector septic tank pumpers, there is no longer a need for County staff to coordinate with homeowners and conduct onsite surveys of private property.

The annual fee will be used to educate home owners to properly maintain their septic systems, keep them updated on changing legislation, and to process and encourage the use of the rebate program. The septic systems in the district will be reviewed for service maintenance by monitoring the voluntary maintenance reporting systems records. To increase the number of rebate requests, the incentive to pump rebate will be raised to \$135.00 with eligibility once every five years.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Acceptance of this action does not affect mandates or service levels

Fiscal Analysis:

Adoption of the attached resolution, providing for the collection of \$24 per septic system on the tax rolls, is expected to generate \$5,808 in revenue, annually, for 242 septic systems within the Mission Canyon Sewer District. Funds are designated for maintenance notification to property owners and information about eligibility for the \$135 rebate once every five years to partially offset the cost of having their septic tanks pumped and inspected. There is no projected use of General Fund dollars by adopting this action. The revenue is included in the Public Health Department's Fiscal Year 2011-12 recommended budget within the Environmental Health Services Division.

Staffing Impacts: The approval of this recommendation will neither decrease nor increase current Environmental Health Services staff levels. **Special Instructions:**

A. Request Clerk of the Board to publish notice of this hearing, per the attached Public Notice, in the Daily Sound, as provided in Section 6066 of the Government Code. Section 6066 states that:

“Publication of notice to this section shall be once a week for two successive weeks. Two publications in a newspaper published once a week or oftener, with at least five days intervening between the respective publication dates not counting such publication dates, are sufficient. The period of notice commences upon the first day of publication and terminates at the end of the fourteenth day, including therein the first day.”

Recommended publication dates are June 21 and June 28, 2011.

- B. Clerk of the Board shall please post the Notice of Exemption and forward one (1) stamped copy to Resource Recovery and Waste Management Division of the Public Works Department, attn: Joddi Leipner and one (1) stamped copy to Environmental Health Services, attn: David Brummond.
- C. Return one (1) certified minute order of the action and one (1) signed and dated copy of the resolution to PHD Contracts Unit, 300 N. San Antonio Road, Bldg. 8, Santa Barbara, Attn: Rose Davis
- D. Return one (1) certified minute order of the action and one (1) signed and dated copy of the resolution to the Laguna Sanitary District of the Public Works Department, Attn: Robyn Smith.

Attachments:

Public Notice
Resolution to Establish Charges

Subject: County Service Area 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District), Resolution Relative to Septic Management
Administration Charges on the Tax Roll – First Supervisorial District
Agenda Date: Set Hearing: July 5, 2011; Departmental Hearing: July 12, 2011
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CEQA Notice of Exemption
County of Santa Barbara Public Works Department Fixed Charges / Assessments

Authored by:

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