



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 7, 2015 Set Hearing  
**Placement:** Set Hearing on July 7, 2015 for A item on July 21, 2015  
**Estimated Tme:**  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Dr. Takashi Wada, MD, MPH, Director  
Director(s) Public Health Department  
Contact Info: Lawrence D. Fay, Jr. 346-8463  
Director, Environmental Health Services  
**SUBJECT:** County Service Area No. 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District), Resolution Relative to Septic Management Administration Charges on the Tax Roll – First Supervisorial District

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** Treasurer / Tax Collector

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors consider recommendations regarding a County Service Area (CSA) No. 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District) resolution relative to Septic Management Administration Charges on the Tax Roll, First District, as follows:

- a) Receive and file a report entitled County of Santa Barbara Public Works Department Fixed Charges/ Assessments for Mission Canyon Septic System Management for Fiscal Year 2015-2016; and
- b) Set a hearing on the Administrative Agenda of July 21, 2015, 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 2015-2016 filed with the Clerk of the Board on July 7, 2015, which proposes the septic system management charges, with no change proposed this year, for CSA No. 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District) and consider recommendations, as follows:
  - i. Determine that the proposed action is for the establishment of rates for services provided by Public Health Department Environmental Health Services; that no expansion of

services or facilities will result, and that the revenues will be used for field surveys of the Mission Canyon Septic Maintenance district area, offering financial incentives for homeowners to provide routine maintenance of their systems, and educational programs;

- ii. Find that the proposed action is for the establishment of solid waste handling, disposal and collection fees and rates by the County which are for the purpose of meeting operating expenses and financial reserves; that no expansion of services or facilities will result; that the proposed action is therefore exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to 14 CCR 15273(a)(1)(2)(3) and (4); and approve the filing of a Notice of Exemption on that basis; and
- iii. Adopt the Resolution establishing the septic system management charges for CSA No. 12 (Mission Canyon Sewer District) and provide for collection on the Tax Rolls for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda to adopt a Resolution to establish charges for County Service Area No. 12 for collection on the tax roll. The Public Health Department Environmental Health Services (EHS) manages septic tank system performance for inhabitants in County Service Area No. 12 (Mission Canyon) pursuant to County Code Chapter 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 (CSA No. 12) was formed to establish a sewer collection system for the lower areas of the canyon. These parcels were most affected by poorly performing septic systems and 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. They 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 CSA No. 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 EHS. The septic system monitoring program was established when CSA No. 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 of Supervisors 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 EHS personnel to review operation of systems with homeowners and check for signs of surface failures. In 1999, the Board of Supervisors

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 EHS.

Based on the success of this program in improving the operation of septic systems throughout the county, EHS worked with the Mission Canyon Association to focus on field surveys along with offering financial incentives for homeowners to provide routine maintenance of their systems. This revised approach encouraged 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 rebate once every four years to partially offset the cost of pumping and inspecting their septic tanks. To increase the number of rebate requests, the incentive was raised to \$135 in July 2011, with eligibility once every five years.

Services include staff surveys of the Mission Canyon Septic Maintenance district area, educating home owners on properly maintaining their septic systems, keeping them updated on changing legislation, and processing and encouraging 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.

**Performance Measure:**

N/A

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

Acceptance of this action does not affect mandates or service levels.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

Adoption of the resolution providing for the collection of \$24 per septic system, per year, on the tax rolls is expected to generate \$5,640 in revenue annually from the 235 septic systems within the 234 parcels in the Mission Canyon Sewer District. Funds are designated for field surveys, maintenance notification to property owners and information about rebate eligibility, and 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 and expenditures are included in the Public Health Department’s Fiscal Year 2015-16 adopted EHS program budget and covers all associated departmental and county indirect costs.

**Key Contract Risks:**

N/A

**Staffing Impacts:**

**Legal Positions:**  
0

**FTEs:**  
0

The approval of this recommendation will neither decrease nor increase current EHS staff levels.

**Special Instructions:**

- A. Request Clerk of the Board to finalize the published notice of this hearing, per the attached Public Notice, previously provided to the Clerk of Board on July 7, 2015 in a newspaper of general circulation in Santa Barbara County, 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 more often, 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.”

- B. Clerk of the Board shall 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. Please email [phdcu@sbcphd.org](mailto:phdcu@sbcphd.org) when available for pickup.
- 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:**

- 1. Public Notice
- 2. Resolution to Establish Charges
- 3. CEQA Notice of Exemption
- 4. County of Santa Barbara Public Works Department Fixed Charges / Assessments

**Authored by:**

David Brummond, Supervising Environmental Health, 681-7348