

VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Board of Directors

AGENDA

Meeting Location

“Smart Space” Office Center
450 South Melrose Drive
Vista, CA 92081



(Rescheduled) Regular Meeting

Wednesday, April 17, 2024

1:00 P.M.

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Board Clerk 760-688-7588. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the district staff to make reasonable arrangements to assure accessibility to the meeting.

Rules for Addressing Board of Directors: Members of the audience who wish to address the Board of Directors are requested to complete a form near the entrance of the meeting room and submit it to the Board Clerk. Any person may address the Board on any item of Board business or Board concern. The Board cannot act on any matter presented during Public Comment but can refer it to staff for review and discussion at a future meeting. As permitted by State Law, the Board may act on matters of an urgent nature, or which require immediate attention.

Agendas: Agenda packets are available for public inspection 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings posted on the District’s website www.vistafireprotectiondistrict.org or by contacting the Clerk of the Board at krannals@vistafpd.org

BUSINESS SESSION – REGULAR AGENDA

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
2. ROLL CALL
3. OPEN DISCUSSION WITH THE BOARD (Public Comment)
The Board invites District residents and others in attendance to address the Board on any matter of public concern related to the District’s business.

All items listed on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion without discussion unless Board Members, Staff, or the public requests removal of an item for separate discussion and action. The Board of Directors has the option of considering items removed from the Consent Calendar immediately or under Continuing Business.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Board of Directors Minutes
 - i) **Approve** the Board of Directors minutes of March 13, 2024
- b. Payroll Register

Approve Payroll paid on April 5, 2024	\$6,483.34
Approve Payroll Taxes paid on April 5, 2024	<u>\$495.98</u>
	<u>\$6,979.32</u>
- c. Accounts Payable

Approve Accounts Payable Check 4176 thru 4185 to be paid April 17, 2024	\$126,934.74
Auto withdrawal(s) paid on March 10 – April 9, 2024	<u>\$976.95</u>
	<u>\$127,911.69</u>

d. Receive and File – Information

- i) Fire Department Reports
 - (1) *Fire Chief*
 - (2) *Fire Marshal*
 - (3) *District Inspector*
- ii) Administrative Manager’s Report
- iii) Correspondence
 - (1) Support Request – H.R. 7525 Special District Grant Accessibility Act – Scott Peters, US House of Representatives
 - (2) Support Request – H.R. 7525 Special District Grant Accessibility Act – Mike Levin, US House of Representatives

5. CONTINUING BUSINESS

a. Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Legal Services

To provide an on the progress of the RFQ and determine the next step for interview and/or selection.
Action Requested: **Direction and/or appoint an ad hoc committee for review of submissions.**

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Board Policy 5306 – Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

To discuss and/or approve Policy 5306 – Workplace Violence Prevention Policy required by State of California Senate Bill 553. [Staff Report 24-07](#)

ACTION REQUESTED: **Approve**

b. Board of Directors/Staff Workshop

To discuss and/or schedule a workshop to discuss and develop a strategic plan for the District.

ACTION REQUESTED: **Schedule board workshop date. Note, this is a special meeting.**

c. Temporary Weed Abatement Assistance

To discuss and/or authorize the funding to reimburse the City of Vista for temporary employees to perform weed abatement inspections. [Staff Report 24-08](#)

ACTION REQUESTED: **Approve**

7. ORAL REPORT(s)

- a. Fire Chief
 - i) Ribbon Cutting – June 20, 2024
- b. Deputy Chief - Administration
- c. Administrative Manager
 - i) Update – Community Outreach Coordinator research
- d. Legal
- e. Fire Safe Council of Vista - Update
- f. Board of Directors

8. ADJOURNMENT



VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
Board of Directors
Regular Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, April 17, 2024 1:00 pm PT

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING

I certify that on April 11, 2024 a copy of the foregoing agenda was posted on the District's website and near the meeting place of the Board of Directors of Vista Fire Protection District, said time being at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting of the Board of Directors (Government Code Section 54954.2)

Executed at Vista, California on April 11, 2024



Karlena Rannals
Board Clerk



VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT Regular Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2024

These minutes reflect the order in which items appeared on the meeting agenda and do not necessarily reflect the order in which items were considered.

REGULAR AGENDA

President Elliott called to order the regular meeting of the Vista Fire Protection District Board of Directors at 1:00 PM at the “Smart Space” conference room located at 450 South Melrose Drive, Vista CA.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

President Elliott led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll

Directors Present: Elliott, Fougner, Gomez, Miller, Ploetz

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present: Karlena Rannals, Administrative Manager; Gerard Washington, Fire Chief (participated via Zoom); Bret Davidson, Deputy Chief; James Kozakiewicz, Fire Inspector; Fred Pfister, Legal Counsel

3. Special Presentation(s)

a. *Weed Abatement*

Inspector Kozakiewicz delivered a PowerPoint presentation outlining the 2024 Weed Abatement program that included the following:

1. The Importance of Weed Abatement: critical program in reducing the risk of wildfires by clearing combustible vegetation that can function as fuel.
2. The Timeline: the program will run from late March to mid-April with courtesy notices and “Notices to Clean Premises.” Followed by site inspections beginning in June, with follow-up inspections for non-compliant properties in July. Forced abatement processes usually start in August.
3. Visual Aids: included a map of district properties in the “high” and “medium” wildland threat areas that will require an inspection.

Staff reported that the goal this year is to inspect 100% of the properties within the District, which is estimated to be more than 5,100 parcels. Inspector Kozakiewicz also distributed sample correspondence for the board’s information which each property owner will receive. This is a notable change over previous years, as the focus in the past has been vacant parcels. Since the recent update of the District’s ordinance, the inspection staff will be able to address palm trees on parcels with structures. Staff responded to questions from the Board. At the conclusion of the discussion, staff agreed to amend the proposed notices for further clarity.

b. *Standards of Cover*

Chief Davidson delivered a PowerPoint presentation *entitled* Community Risk Assessment & Standards of Cover. His presentation included a five-year look back period of data, the demographics of the City and District, and the various threats (Fires, Earthquake/Weather Events, Hazmat, EMS, MCI, Active Shooter) that emergency personnel respond to.

He explained that the Standards of Coverage looks at effective response force for each risk factor. He reviewed various data pieces that included:

1. travel times and the total response times, which includes the 9-1-1 call processing, turn out time and travel time;
2. Call volume by stations and time of day, including peak times for calls;
3. Response times for structure fires;
4. Response times for medical responses;
5. Responses to the most frequented addresses;
6. Wildland fire risk;
7. Permitted Hazardous Material facilities;
8. Fire station distribution.

He summarized his presentation as to how this data will impact the next 5-year strategic plan with the Community Risk Assessment that identifies risks to the community; the Standards of Cover will assist in providing performance recommendations, and the VFPD Strategic Plan will assist in establishing measurable goals for the future. Staff responded to questions from the board.

At the conclusion of both *Special Presentation(s)*, President Elliott on behalf of the Board of Directors conveyed their appreciation to the staff for the presentations and the detailed information provided.

10-minute recess

4. Open Discussion with the Board (Public Comment)

No one requested to speak to the Board.

5. Consent Calendar

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUIGNER, CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 1 ABSTAIN (*Fouigner*) to approve the minutes included on the consent calendar as submitted:

a. *Board of Directors Minutes*

- i) Board of Directors minutes of February 14, 2024

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FOUIGNER, CARRIED 5 AYES; 0 NOES; 0 ABSENT; 0 ABSTAIN to approve the minutes included on the consent calendar as submitted:

b. *Payroll Register*

• Payroll paid on March 7, 2024	\$6,024.28
• Payroll taxes paid on March 7, 2024	\$ 460.86
Total	<u>\$6,485.14</u>

b. *Accounts Payable*

• Accounts Payable Check 4169 thru 4175 paid March 13, 2024	\$311,651.23
• Auto withdrawal(s) paid on February 10 – March 9, 2024	965.88
Total	<u>\$312,617.11</u>

- c. *Receive and File*
 - i) Fire Department Reports
 - (1) *Fire Chief*
 - (2) *Fire Marshal*
 - (3) *District Inspector*
 - ii) Administrative Manager's Report
 - iii) Correspondence
 - (1) None

6. Continuing Business

- a. None

Director Gomez departed the meeting at 2:55 pm

7. New Business

- a. *Request for Records Destruction*

Ms. Rannals submitted a staff report requesting authorization to destroy records pursuant to the adopted records retention schedule.

MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FUGNER, and CARRIED 4 AYES; 0 NOES; 1 ABSENT (*Gomez*); 0 ABSTAIN to authorize the destruction of records pursuant to the records retention schedule and authorize the President to sign the document showing approval for the destruction of records and authorize any costs associated with the destruction.

- b. *Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Legal Services*

President Elliott summarized his reasons for seeking the distribution of the RFQ. He reiterated that he is not unhappy with the District's current legal counsel, however, he believes that as the District improves processes and the relationship with the contractor (City of Vista) there is a need to have a firm that has special district experience. Mr. Pfister informed the board members that he is not offended by the discussion or distribution of an RFQ. He understands the board's goal and is certainly happy to assist in finding a suitable replacement.

The board members discussed the necessity of a formal RFQ and discussed the possibility of holding off and consider simplifying the process. Cost and having a local presence are all factors that should be taken into consideration. Ms. Rannals reminded the Board that the purpose is for transparency and the staff's request was only to distribute the RFQ to seek interested firms. This matter will continue as an agenda item as the next steps are taken. At the conclusion of the discussion, MOTION BY DIRECTOR PLOETZ, SECOND BY DIRECTOR FUGNER, and CARRIED 3 AYES; 1 NOES (*Miller*); 1 ABSENT (*Gomez*); 0 ABSTAIN to authorize the distribution of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Legal Services. Ms. Rannals agreed to provide a verbal update at the next meeting since the response due date is April 16.

c. *FY25 Budget Direction*

Director Ploetz led the discussion on the possibility of creating a “Community Outreach Coordinator” position. He believes that there is a real need to create a position in which an employee or contractor could submit for grants that could seek the removal of non-native species in areas of the district such as Buena Creek or Gopher Canyon, serve as a dedicated individual for community outreach such as assist the Fire Safe Council of Vista. The board members discussed the pros and cons, and Chief Washington reminded the board that there are other factors that must be evaluated and considered, such as: 1) to whom does this person report? 2) Are they “uniformed” personnel? 3) Where are they housed? 4) Will a vehicle be provided?

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Board of Directors directed staff to research costs for such a position, create a draft position description, including salary ranges, and agendize further discussion at a future board meeting for inclusion in the FY25 budget.

8. Oral Report(s)

1) *Fire Chief* – Chief Washington in addition to his report:

- The Navigation Center is up and running. If any board member is interested in a tour of the facility, please let Ms. Rannals know for arrangements.
- The City has funded the \$1.3 million GPS Opticom project. This will hopefully improve 114 intersections within the City.
- He plans to speak to the City Attorney regarding the current contract language between VFPD and the City of Vista to seek clarity.

Chief Washington departed the meeting at 4:11 pm

2) Deputy Chief - Administration

- The San Diego County Wildland Drill is scheduled for April 30, May 1-2. If any board member is interested in observing, please let Ms. Rannals know for scheduling. Also, personnel are participating in the Wildland Extended Attack Academy April 23-24, with multiple agencies participating in this academy.

3) *Administrative Manager – Ms. Rannals*: In addition to her report, she reported on the following:

- She transferred \$3 million from the County of San Diego to California CLASS as the interest rate was higher.
- A reminder that the April board meeting date changed from April 10 to April 17.
- She will be away from the office from March 21-28.

4) *Legal – Mr. Pfister – No report.*

5) *Fire Safe Council of Vista – Update*: Director Gomez prior to his departure reported that there is a general membership meeting planned for March 16. The council is discussing the annual budget along with their annual goals. They have established a bank account thru the San Diego Regional Fire Safe Council, and they are still awaiting approval of the CWPP, which is expected early April.

Minutes

Vista Fire Protection District Board of Directors

March 13, 2024

Page 5 of 5

6) *Board of Directors*

- Miller: expressed his concern with the Chief speaking about updating the current contract language between the City and District. He requested that this matter be considered as an agenda item on the next agenda.

9. Adjournment

President Elliott adjourned the meeting at 4:28 pm.


Karlana Rannals
Board Clerk

James F. Elliott
President

VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
PAYROLL REGISTER - December (Paid 4/05/24)

Payment No.	Name	Gross
Direct		
Deposit	Elliott, James (Jan - Mar 2024)	\$ 400.00
Direct		
Deposit	Fougner, Robert (Jan - Mar 2024)	\$ 300.00
Direct		
Deposit	Gomez, Daniel (Jan - Mar 2024)	\$ 400.00
Direct		
Deposit	Miller, Read (Jan - Mar 2024)	\$ 400.00
Direct		
Deposit	Ploetz, John (Jan - Mar 2024)	\$ 400.00
Direct		
Deposit	Rannals, Karlana	<u>\$ 4,583.34</u>
		\$ 6,483.34
	Employer Payroll Taxes	
	Federal (Social Security/Medicare)	\$ 495.98
	State	<u>\$ -</u>
		<u><u>\$ 6,979.32</u></u>

VISTA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
April 17, 2024

Check #	PAYEE & ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Auto Withdrawal	SmartSpace Vista (c/o SVN Vanguard) 4455 Murphy Canyon Road, Ste 200 San Diego, CA 92123	Space Rent - April 2024 <i>Paid on 4-1-2024</i>	\$877.95
Auto Withdrawal	ADP, Inc.	March Payroll Fee <i>Paid on 4-8-2024</i>	\$99.00
		Accounts Payable (Auto withdrawal)	\$976.95
4177	AZTEC LANDSCAPING 7980 Lemon Grove Way Lemon Grove, Ca 91945	Emergency Access Roads, Invoice # L4230, March 2024	\$2,187.50
4178	CITY OF VISTA 200 Civic Center Drive Vista, CA 92084	Fire/EMS - TA#8 Fire Inspector - March 2024	\$109,506.19 \$7,386.13
4179	LITTLE YELLOW BUDDIES 13615 Fairlane Road Valley Center, CA 92082	Inv #294 - Serviced Hydrants - Qty 203 Inv #295 - Hydrants Supplies Mar 24	\$5,481.00 \$1,038.60
4180	RANNALS, Karlena	Out of Pocket Expenses (Mar 1 - 31, 2024)	\$183.24
4181	RGM CONSULTING 815 Sierra Verde Dr. Vista, CA 92084	Monthly Maintenance (Apr 2024) Inv # 7242	\$150.00
4182	San Diego County Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk Attn: Assessor Administration - Andrew Espiritu/Axel Cortex 1600 Pacific Highway, Room 103 San Diego, CA 92101	Public Notice Mailing List - Updated	\$125.00
4183	SAN DIEGO CTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSN Heidi Slabaugh % Heartland Fire Training 1301 N. Marshall Ave El Cajon, CA 92020	County Chiefs Installation Luncheon 6-Jun-24	\$35.00
4184	STREAMLINE P.O. Box 207561 Dallas, TX 75320-7561	Monthly Billing for Webhosting Invoice # 67009CA4-0041	\$84.00
4185	WHITE AND BRIGHT 970 Canterbury Place Escondido, CA 92025	Legal Fees - District Business Invoice #12463 (Mar 2024)	758.08
		Accounts Payable (Checks)	\$126,934.74
	PAYROLL:		
	See Payroll Register	Employee & Directors	\$6,483.34
	U.S. TREASURY (PAYROLL TAX)	FEDERAL FORM 941-EFT VIA EFTPS-DEPOSIT	\$495.98
		March Payroll Total	\$6,979.32
		Total District Expenses - March 2024	\$134,891.01
	CHECK VOID		
	Director		17-Apr-24
			
	Administrative Manager		4-Apr-24

**Accounts Payable
Certification**

Vista Fire Protection District
450 S. Melrose Dr., Ste 105
Vista, CA 92081

CERTIFICATION FOR PAYMENT NO. 26017

CONSULTANT/VENDOR:
City of Vista

BILLING PERIOD:

ADDRESS: 200 Civic Center Drive, Vista, CA 92084

ACCOUNT No.:

DESCRIPTION: Tax Apportionment #8

STATEMENT OF PAYMENT

				Apportionment of Fee	FEE PAYABLE
Gross Tax Apportionment	100%	\$	126,137.37	0%	\$ -
Less Interest Allocation	100%	\$	4,463.83	0%	\$ <u>4,463.83</u>
Tax Apportionment (Net)	100%	\$	121,673.54	90%	\$ <u>109,506.19</u>
Invoice Billed #:					\$ 109,506.19
Discrepancy					\$ <u>(0.00)</u>



Certified by: Karlene Rannals, Administrative Manager

31-Mar

Date



TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: GERARD WASHINGTON, FIRE CHIEF
SUBJECT: MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT – FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT
DATE: April 3, 2024



Monthly Activity Summary (March 6, 2024, to April 3, 2024)

The following highlights the work activities for the reporting period:

1. Two new fire inspectors are currently undergoing orientation and training.
2. BLS 116 is no longer in service, and BLS 125 and BLS 126 are in service.
3. BLS 116 will transition to M 110 out of Station 1 in Fallbrook in May 2024.
4. Carlsbad placed BLS 105 in service at Carlsbad Station 5 for the next month.
5. RA 126 will resume service before May 1, 2024, as new hires are starting shift work after April 18, 2024.
6. The district has entered into a contract with FireStats for the strategic plan, and they have been in contact with the consultant to arrange meetings and provide requested data.
7. The final standards of cover document and Station 7 impact study are being finalized.
8. Department physicals and cancer screenings are nearly complete for all safety and fire prevention personnel.
9. Weed abatement letters are being distributed to all residents this month in high and medium wildland threat areas in the City and District, totaling an estimated 7,132 letters to be sent out.
10. Fire Prevention has been engaged in training and streamlining inspections for fuel reduction efforts this year.
11. Response Time Report – Update: Division Chief Wecklich reports that the fire department is moving to an automatic report produced by FireStats using the measurables outlined in the contract between the City and FireStats. There s a calendar date in April to frame out the report.

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: MARK VIEROW, FIRE MARSHAL
SUBJECT: MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT – FIRE MARSHAL
DATE: April 3, 2024



Monthly Activity Summary (March 1-31, 2024)

The following highlights the work activities for the reporting period:

1. Projects:
The Havens, Gopher Canyon Rd
10 production units have had their final fire inspections.
2. Plan checks and construction inspections continue.
13 plan checks
15 construction inspections
3. Attended the County Fire Marshal meeting.
Fire mitigation fees will go up July 1, 2024, to \$0.92 from \$0.80 per square foot.
4. Two new fire inspectors are in training and have started to do inspections.

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: James Kozakiewicz, Fire Inspector
SUBJECT: MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT – FIRE
DATE: April 3, 2024



Monthly Activity Summary (March 1, 2024 – April 3, 2024)

The following highlights the work activities for the reporting period:

1. Inspector Kozakiewicz evaluated all emergency access roads. The emergency access roads at Par Valley and Fabry need to be abated, and inspector Kozakiewicz will notify Aztec Landscaping.
2. 2126 Warmlands has moved to forced abatement. Approval of abatement from the City Attorney's office is pending.
3. Inspector Kozakiewicz attended Plan Examiner 1C training.
4. Inspector Kozakiewicz and staff are continuing work on the weed abatement program for the 2024 season.
5. There was a fire located at 2376 Mira Sol Drive on March 7, 2024. One injury occurred, and the patient was taken to a burn center. The cause of the fire is undetermined.
6. There was a fire located at 2286 Primrose Ave on March 28, 2024. There were no injuries, and the cause of the fire was determined to be a bathroom exhaust fan malfunction.
7. Inspector Kozakiewicz attended the Fire Safe Council meeting at the County office. The presentation's focus was on defensible space inspections.

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: KARLENA RANNALS, ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER
SUBJECT: MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT - ADMINISTRATION
DATE: APRIL 12, 2024



Activity Summary (March 1 – 31, 2024)

The following highlights my work activities for the reporting period:

1. Prepared agenda items and supporting reports, and distribution for March 13 Board of Directors meeting.
2. Attended (via Zoom) March 5 VFPD Staff Meeting with Chiefs' Washington & Davidson.
3. Met (in person) March 12 with President Elliott
4. Attended March 13 Board of Directors meeting.
5. Attended (in person) Administrative Fire Services Section Southern Division Quarterly Meeting
6. Met (in person) March 19 with Chief Washington
7. Met (via phone) March 26 with Michael Despain, Consultant for Strategic Plan
8. Confirmed all Form 700 were completed before the deadline, April 2, 2024
9. Transferred \$3 million from County of San Diego to CA CLASS, settlement date March 11.
10. Distributed RFQ for legal services, sent directly via email, posted on District website, and CSDA RFP/RFQ Clearinghouse
11. Started the VFIS (Commercial Insurance) renewal process. The plan year will coincide with the fiscal year July 1 – June 30
12. Prepared agenda items for April 17 Board of Directors meeting
13. Out of office – March 21 - 28

The highlights do not include emails, phone calls, and other requests for review/comments on district topics.

Note: Attending the California Fire Chiefs Association Administrative Fire Services Section Annual Training April 10-12, 2024, in Reno, NV.

Future Activity

1. Board Policies
2. Website Refresh
3. Continue reorganization of files



VISTA Fire Protection District

Board of Directors

James F. Elliott

President

John Ploetz

Vice President

Robert Fougner

Director

Daniel Gomez

Director

Read Miller

Director

Karlana Rannals

Clerk, Board of

Directors/Admin. Mgr.

Gerard Washington

Fire Chief

March 20, 2024

The Honorable Scott Peters
U.S. House of Representatives
1201 Longworth Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support Request – H.R. 7525 Special District Grant Accessibility Act

Dear Representative Peters:

On behalf of the Vista Fire Protection District, we respectfully request that you support the Special District Grant Accessibility Act (H.R. 7525). This important bipartisan legislation was overwhelmingly approved by the House Oversight and Accountability Committee on March 7 and is now awaiting action by the full House. We urge you to work with congressional leadership to ensure that the legislation is considered in a timely fashion.

The Vista Fire Protection District located in the unincorporated area within North San Diego County, comprised of 19 square miles and serves approximately 20,000 residents. The mission of the district is to protect life and property with fire and medical emergency services through effective prevention, response, and education.

H.R. 7525 would require the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to issue guidance to federal agencies requiring special districts to be recognized as local governments for the purpose of federal financial assistance determinations. The bill also would codify in federal law a long-overdue, formal definition of “special district.”

Special districts are local governments created by the people of a community to deliver specialized services essential to their health, safety, economy, and well-being. In the State of California, there are over 2,000 special districts providing a broad range of essential services and infrastructure.

Despite the significance of special districts throughout the United States, federal law lacks a consistent definition of these special purpose units of local government. As a result, some communities served by special districts face challenges in accessing federal funding opportunities as their local service providers are commonly omitted from the definition of eligible units of local government in legislative proposals that authorize federal programs and funding. Moreover, special districts lack official population figures and are therefore not recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau as “geographic units of government.” As a result, special districts are unable to gain access to certain formula-driven grants and resources.

Again, we urge you to support the Special District Grant Accessibility Act and to work with your House colleagues to prioritize passage of this critically important bill. Thank you for considering this request.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James F. Elliott", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

James F. Elliott
President, Board of Directors

cc: California Special Districts Association [via email: advocacy@csgda.net]



VISTA Fire Protection District

Board of Directors

James F. Elliott
President
John Ploetz
Vice President
Robert Fougner
Director
Daniel Gomez
Director
Read Miller
Director

Karlana Rannals
*Clerk, Board of
Directors/Admin. Mgr.*
Gerard Washington
Fire Chief

March 20, 2024

The Honorable Mike Levin
U.S. House of Representatives
2352 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support Request – H.R. 7525 Special District Grant Accessibility Act

Dear Representative Levin:

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Again, we urge you to support the Special District Grant Accessibility Act and to work with your House colleagues to prioritize passage of this critically important bill. Thank you for considering this request.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James F. Elliott", is written over a blue ink stamp or watermark that is partially visible in the background.

James F. Elliott
President, Board of Directors

cc: California Special Districts Association [via email: advocacy@csga.net]

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
FROM: KARLENA RANNALS, ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER
SUBJECT: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY
DATE: APRIL 12, 2024



RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Policy No. 5306: Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

BACKGROUND

Gov. Gavin Newson signed Senate Bill 553, which includes specific requirements regarding workplace violence prevention plans. The bill takes effect July 1, 2024, and will be enforced by the Division of Occupational Safety and Health within the Department of Industrial Relations.

The following summarizes Senate Bill 553

- Establish, implement, and maintain, always in all work areas, an effective written workplace violence prevention plan as a separate document or as a stand-alone section of the employer's Injury and Illness Prevention Plan.
- Provide effective training to employees.
- Create and maintain a number of workplace records surrounding their workplace violence prevention plan.
- Workplace violence is defined, under the bill, as any act of violence or threat of violence that occurs in a place of employment, including the threat or use of physical force, with or without firearms or other dangerous weapons, against an employee that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, psychological trauma or stress. This is true regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury. It also includes a number of specific workplace violence types:
 - Violence committed by a person who has no legitimate business at the worksite, including violent acts by anyone who enters the workplace or approaches workers with the intent to commit a crime.
 - Violence directed at employees by customers, clients, patients, students, inmates, or visitors.
 - Violence against an employee by a present or former employee, supervisor, or manager.
 - Violence committed in the workplace by a person who does not work there but has or is known to have had a personal relationship with an employee.

Senate Bill 553 applies to all employers, employees, and places of employment except:

- Employees telework from a location of the employee's choice that is not under the control of the employer.
- Employment locations with less than 10 employees working at any given time and that are not accessible to the public. *Note: while the District does have fewer than 10 employees, the District office is accessible to the public. Therefore, the District would not be exempt from this section.*
- Employers covered under the violence in health care section of the California Code of Regulations.
- Facilities operated by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and law enforcement agencies.

CURRENT SITUATION

The policy was developed from templates solicited through the California Special Districts Association forum.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Policy 5306
2. [Senate Bill 553](#) – *Due to the size and length of the Senate Bill, a link is provided to the bill in its entirety.*

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY TITLE	Workplace Violence Prevention Policy
POLICY No.	5306
ADOPTED	
REVISED	

5306 Workplace Violence Prevention Policy/Plan

5306.1 POLICY

The Vista Fire Protection District (VFPD) is committed to providing a work environment that is free of disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior involving any employee, appointed or elected official, volunteer, contractor, client, and/or visitor. Our policy is to establish, implement, and maintain an effective plan as required by SB 533. The regulation requires us to establish, implement, and maintain, at all times in all our facilities, a workplace violence prevention plan for the purposes of protecting employees and other personnel from aggressive and violent behavior at the workplace.

5306.2 PROHIBITED ACTS:

VFPD will not ignore, condone, or tolerate threats of violence or workplace violence by any employee, appointed or elected official, volunteer, contractor, client, or visitor.

5306.2.1 Threats of violence include both verbal and non-verbal conduct that causes a person to fear for his or her safety because there is a reasonable possibility he or she might be physically injured and that serves no legitimate work-related purpose.

5306.2.2 Workplace violence means any act of violence or threat of violence that occurs at the work site. The term workplace violence shall not include lawful acts of self-defense or defense of others. Workplace violence includes the following:

5306.2.2.1 The threat or use of physical force against an employee that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, psychological trauma, or stress, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.

5306.2.2.2 An incident involving the threat or use of a firearm or other dangerous weapon, including the use of common objects as weapons, regardless of whether the employee sustains an injury.

5306.2.3 Workplace violence can be categorized into four types:

- Type 1: Workplace violence committed by a person who has no legitimate business at the work site - includes violent acts by anyone who enters the workplace with the intent to commit a crime.
- Type 2: Workplace violence directed at employees by customers, clients, patients, students, inmates, or visitors.
- Type 3: Workplace violence against an employee by a present or former employee, supervisor, or manager
- Type 4: Workplace violence committed in the workplace by someone who does not work there but has or is known to have had a personal relationship with an employee.

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In addition, VFPD prohibits all dangerous weapons not used for fire suppression, accident and incident response, emergency medical services, the service of law enforcement, or security duties on all VFPD property. Any employee or appointed or elected official in possession of prohibited dangerous weapons on VFPD property is in violation of this policy and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any volunteer, contractor, client, or visitor in possession of prohibited dangerous weapons will be banned from the premises. Dangerous weapons include any instrument capable of inflicting death or serious bodily injury.

5306.3 RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

5306.3.1 **Workplace Violence Prevention Plan Administrator**

District Management has the authority and responsibility for developing, implementing, and maintaining this plan and conducting or overseeing any investigations of workplace violence reports.

Management shall solicit feedback and input from employees and their authorized representatives in developing and implementing the WVP plan. Active involvement of employees could include, but is not limited to, their participation in identifying, evaluating, and correcting workplace violence hazards; in designing and implementing training; and in reporting and investigating workplace violence incidents.

Management shall coordinate the implementation of the workplace violence prevention plan, when applicable, to ensure those employers and their employees understand their respective roles as provided in the plan. These other employers and their staff shall be provided with training on VFPD's WPV plan.

5306.3.2 **Management Responsibilities include:**

- Implementing the plan in their work areas;
- Providing input to the Administrator regarding the plan;
- Participating in investigations of workplace violence reports; and
- Answering employee questions concerning this plan.

5306.3.3 **Employees Responsibilities include:**

- Complying with the plan;
- Maintaining a violence-free work environment;
- Attending all training;
- Following all directives, policies, and procedures; and
- Reporting suspicious persons in the area and alerting the proper authorities when necessary.

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5306.4 COMPLIANCE

Management is responsible for ensuring the plan is clearly communicated and understood by all employees. The following techniques are used to ensure all employees understand and comply with the plan:

- Informing all employees of the plan during new employee safety orientation training and ongoing workplace violence prevention training;
- Ensuring all employees receive training on this plan;
- Providing comprehensive workplace violence prevention training to managers and supervisors concerning their roles and responsibilities for plan implementation;
- Evaluating employees to ensure their compliance with the plan;
- Disciplining employees, appointed or elected officials, and volunteers who engage in threats of violent behaviors up to and including dismissal; and
- Ensuring training of this plan is conducted on an annual basis.

5306.5 COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING:

Management is responsible for communicating with employees about workplace violence in a form readily understandable by all employees.

Employees are encouraged to inform their supervisor about any threats of violence or workplace violence. Employees may use the Workplace Violent Incident Log (Appendix A) to assist in their reporting of incidents. No employee will be disciplined for reporting any threats of violence or workplace violence.

After the employee has reported their concerns about any threats of violence or workplace violence to their supervisor, the Administrative Manager will report this information to the Board President who will designate legal counsel to investigate the incident. The Administrative Manager will then inform the employee of the results of their investigation and any corrective actions to be taken as part of the VFPD's responsibility in complying with hazard correction measures outlined in the WVP plan.

Employee training on workplace violence will include:

- This plan;
- Workplace violence risks that employees may encounter in their jobs;
- How to recognize the potential for violence and escalating behavior;
- Strategies to de-escalate behaviors and to avoid physical harm;
- VFPD alerts, alarms, or systems that are in place to warn of emergencies;
- How to report incidents to law enforcement.

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5306.6 PROCEDURES:

5306.6.1 **Responding to Actual or Potential Workplace Violence Emergencies**

In the event of an actual or potential workplace violence emergency, District Management will alert employees of the presence, location, and nature of the workplace violence through the following methods:

- Direct contact, phone call, or text message.

When any employee becomes aware of an actual or potential workplace violence emergency, they shall notify the management and colleagues through phone or text message.

Employees shall implement the run, hide, fight protocols where appropriate. Evacuation routes and sheltering locations will be communicated to affected staff. If employees are not able to evacuate or shelter in place, they are authorized to take all reasonable actions necessary to fight or subdue an active shooter or assailant.

Employees shall call 911 to report the incident and request assistance from law enforcement.

5306.6.2 **Emergencies and Reporting a Crime**

For immediate assistance in an emergency call 911.

5306.6.3 **Reporting Workplace Violence Concerns**

Employees who witness or experience threats of violence or workplace violence can report the incident through their chain of command or directly to the Administrative Manager. Employees may report anonymously and without fear of reprisal by submitting the incident in writing.

5306.6.4 **Restraining Orders**

Employees or other personnel affiliated with the VFPD who have an active restraining order issued against another person that includes the workplace are encouraged to provide a copy of the restraining order to the Administrative Manager or Board President.

5306.6.5 **Hazard Assessment**

Workplace hazard assessments will include:

- An annual review of the past year's workplace violence incidents; and
- Periodic physical security assessments.

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The Workplace Violence Prevention Environmental Hazard Assessment & Control Checklist (Appendix B) can be used to assist with the security assessment. Inspections are performed according to the following schedule:

- Once a year;
- When the plan is implemented;
- When new, previously unidentified workplace violence/security hazards are recognized; and
- When workplace violence injuries or threats of injury occur.

5306.6.6 Hazard Correction

Work practice controls will be used to correct unsafe work conditions, practices, or procedures that threaten the security of employees.

Work practice controls are defined as procedures, rules, and staffing that are used to effectively reduce workplace violence hazards. Work practice controls may include, but are not limited to:

- Appropriate staffing levels;
- Provision of dedicated safety personnel (i.e., security guards);
- Employee training on workplace violence prevention methods; and
- Employee training on procedures to follow in the event of a workplace violence incident.

Corrective actions will be implemented in a timely manner based on the severity of the hazard, documented, and dated.

5306.6.7 Post-Incident Response and Investigation

The Administrative Manager will use the Workplace Violent Incident Log (Attachment A) to assist in documenting incidents and investigations.

These procedures will occur following an incident:

- Provide immediate medical care or first aid;
- Identify all employees or contractors involved in the incident;
- Offer staff individual trauma counseling resources;
- Conduct a debriefing with all affected staff;

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- Determine if corrective measures developed under this plan were effectively implemented; solicit feedback from all personnel involved in the incident as to the cause of this incident and if injuries occurred, how injury could have been prevented; and
- Record the incident in the Workplace Violent Incident Log.

5306.6.8 Recordkeeping

- Records of workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation, and correction will be maintained for three years per the recordkeeping requirements of the VFPD's Injury and Illness Prevention Program.
- Training for each employee, including the employee's name, training dates, type of training, and training provider will be maintained for a minimum of three years.
- Records of violent incidents (Workplace Violent Incident Log) will be maintained for a minimum of five years at the District's Office.

5306.6.9 Annual Review

VFPD's Workplace Violence Prevention Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as needed considering the following criteria:

- Staffing;
- Sufficiency of security systems;
- Job, equipment, and facility design and risks;
- Modifications or additions to tasks and procedures that affect plan implementation;
- Newly identified hazards;
- Prior year incidents;
- Identified deficiencies; and
- Feedback provided by employees and their authorized representatives.

Appendix A WORKPLACE VIOLENT INCIDENT LOG

This form must be completed for every record of violence in the workplace.

Incident ID #*:	Date and Time of Incident:
Specific Location of Incident:	

** Do not identify employee by name, employee #, or SSI. The Incident ID must not reflect the employee's identity)*

Describe Incident (Include additional pages if needed):

Assailant information:

<input type="checkbox"/> Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Client	<input type="checkbox"/> Customer
<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friend of Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friend of Client	<input type="checkbox"/> Family or Friend of Customer
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner/Spouse of Victim	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Relative of Victim	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-Worker/Supervisor/Manager
<input type="checkbox"/> Former Partner/Spouse of Victim	<input type="checkbox"/> Animal	<input type="checkbox"/> Person In Custody
<input type="checkbox"/> Robber/Burglar	<input type="checkbox"/> Passenger	<input type="checkbox"/> Stranger
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

Circumstances at time of incident:

<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Performing Normal Duties	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Lighting	<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Rushed
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Isolated or Alone	<input type="checkbox"/> High Crime Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Low Staffing Level
<input type="checkbox"/> Unable to Get Help or Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Working in a Community Setting	<input type="checkbox"/> Unfamiliar or New Location
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		

Location of Incident:

<input type="checkbox"/> Patient or Client Room	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency or Urgent Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Hallway
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiting Room	<input type="checkbox"/> Restroom or Bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Parking Lot or Outside Building
<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Breakroom	<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:		

Type of Incident (check as many apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Robbery	<input type="checkbox"/> Grabbed	<input type="checkbox"/> Pushed
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Threat or Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> Kicked	<input type="checkbox"/> Scratched
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual Threat, Harassment, or Assault	<input type="checkbox"/> Hit with an Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Bitten
<input type="checkbox"/> Animal Attack	<input type="checkbox"/> Shot (or Attempted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Slapped
<input type="checkbox"/> Threat of Physical Force	<input type="checkbox"/> Bomb Threat	<input type="checkbox"/> Hit with Fist
<input type="checkbox"/> Threat of Use of Weapon or Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism (of Victim's Property)	<input type="checkbox"/> Knifed (or Attempted)
<input type="checkbox"/> Assault With A Weapon or Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism (of Employer's Property)	<input type="checkbox"/> Arson
<input type="checkbox"/> Robbery	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

Consequences of incident:

Medical care provided? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Law enforcement called. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Security contacted? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Did anyone aid conclude the event? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Days lost from work (if any) _____	
Actions taken by the employer to protect employees from a continuing threat. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

Completed by:

Name:	Title:	Date:
Telephone:	Email:	
Signature:	Telephone:	

Appendix B

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD ASSESSMENT & CONTROL CHECKLIST**

Assessed by:	Title:
Location(s) Assessed:	

This checklist is designed to evaluate the workplace and job tasks to help identify situations that may place employees at risk of workplace violence.

Step 1: Identify risk factors that may increase VFPD’s vulnerability to workplace violence events.

Step 2: Conduct a workplace assessment to identify physical and process vulnerabilities.

Step 3: Develop a corrective action plan with measurable goals and target dates.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY RISK FACTORS

Yes	No	Risk Factors	Comments:
		Does staff have contact with the public?	
		Does staff exchange money with the public?	
		Does staff work alone?	
		Is the workplace often understaffed?	
		Is the workplace located in an area with a high crime rate?	
		Does staff enter areas with high crime rates?	
		Does staff have mobile workplaces?	
		Does staff perform public safety functions that might put them in conflict with others?	
		Does staff perform duties that may upset people?	
		Does staff work with people known or suspected to have a history of violence?	
		Do any employees have a history of threats of violence?	

Appendix B

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD ASSESSMENT & CONTROL CHECKLIST**

STEP 2: CONDUCT ASSESSMENT

Building Interior

Yes	No	Building Interior	Comments:
		Are employee ID badges required?	
		Are employees notified of past workplace violence events?	
		Are trained security personnel or staff accessible to employees?	
		Are areas where money is exchanged visible to others?	
		Is a limited amount of cash kept on hand with appropriate signage?	
		Could someone hear an employee who called for help?	
		Do employees have a clear line of sight of visitors in waiting areas?	
		Do areas used for client or visitor interviews allow co-employees to observe problems?	
		Are clients and visitors clearly informed so they will not become frustrated?	
		Are private, locked restrooms available for employees?	
		Do employees have a secure place to store personal belonging?	

Appendix B

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD ASSESSMENT & CONTROL CHECKLIST**

Building's Exterior

Yes	No	Building Exterior	Comments:
		Do employees feel safe walking to and from the workplace?	
		Are the entrances to the building clearly visible from the street?	
		Is video surveillance provided outside the building?	
		Is there enough lighting to see clearly?	
		Are all exterior walkways visible to security personnel?	

Parking Area

Yes	No	Parking Area	Comments:
		Is there a nearby parking lot reserved for staff?	
		Is the parking lot attended and secure?	
		Is the parking lot free of blind spots and landscape trimmed to prevent hiding places?	
		Is there enough lighting on the parking lot to see clearly?	

Appendix B

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD ASSESSMENT & CONTROL CHECKLIST**

Security Measures

Yes	No	Security Measures	Comments:
		Is there a response plan for workplace violence emergencies?	
		Are there physical barriers? (between staff and clients)	
		Are there security cameras?	
		Are there alarm systems?	
		Do doors lock?	
		Are telephones with an outside line programed for 911?	
		Is there a secured entry?	

Appendix B

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION
ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARD ASSESSMENT & CONTROL CHECKLIST**

STEP 3: DEVELOP CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

(Action Plan Types: BI – Building Interior, BE – Building Exterior, PA – Parking Area, SM – Security Measure)

Type	Action Item	Person(s) Responsible	Target Date	Status	Comments

STAFF REPORT

24-08

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
FROM: BRET DAVISON, DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF
SUBJECT: TEMPORARY WEED ABATEMENT ASSISTANCE
DATE: APRIL 10, 2024



RECOMMENDATION

It is respectfully recommended that the goal of inspecting all property (vacant or occupied) be inspected according to the weed abatement ordinance. The following action is recommended for approval by the Board:

1. Approve the funds to reimburse the City for hiring four part-time weed abatement inspectors for a limited term of 90 days to assist with weed abatement compliance for a cost anticipated to be a maximum of \$72,468.30.

BACKGROUND

In the past years, the Fire Prevention Bureau viewed vacant lots as the primary focus for weed and fuel abatement. Last year, that resulted in 1,600 weed abatement inspections (400 in the City and 1,200 in the District).

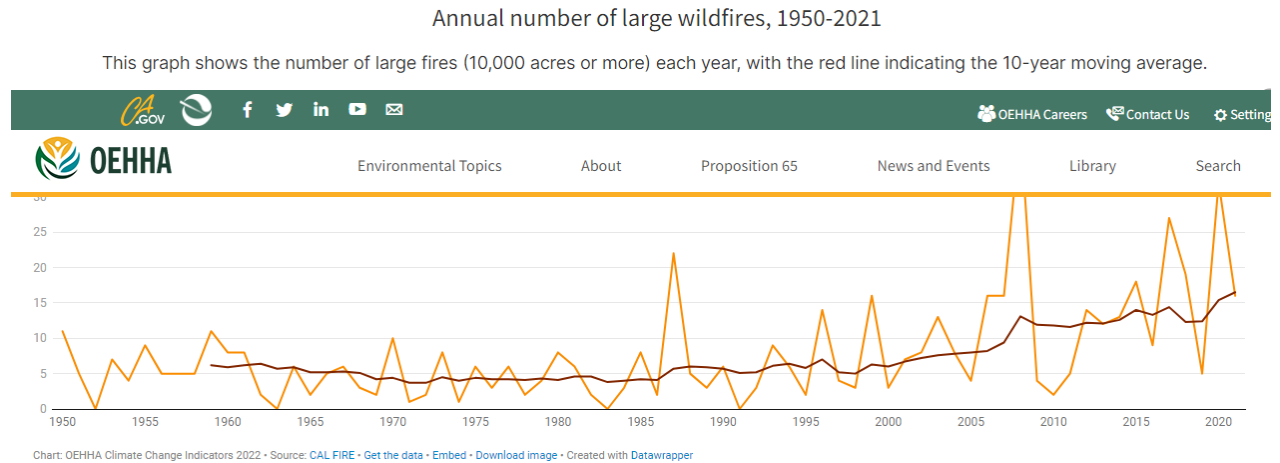
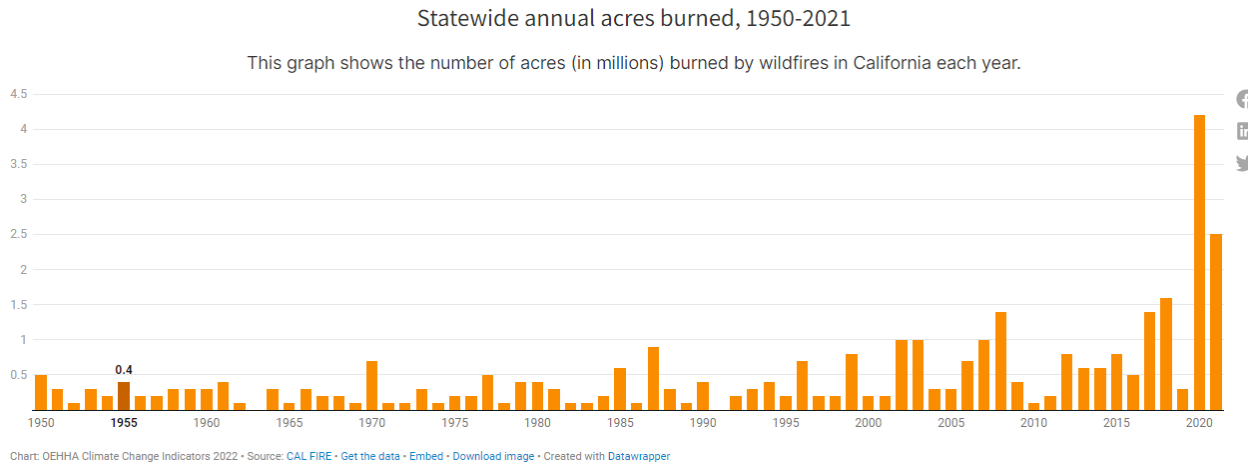
With the constant threat of wildfire, and the danger that wildfire poses to the community, staff is recommending all lots, vacant and occupied, be inspected for compliance with the weed abatement ordinance annually. To understand the scope of this, we conducted a study that overlaid the wildfire threat map over the parcel maps. This study indicated that there are 7,024 parcels to be inspected annually (1,923 in the City and 5,101 in the District). This is approximately 3 times the workload of annual weed abatement on vacant lots.

The goal of accomplishing all initial inspections within 30 days and gaining compliance with the weed abatement ordinance prior to fire season is an ambitious task. With the current staff of four inspectors, if weed abatement was conducted full time for one month (23 business days), each inspector would need to complete 1,756 inspections. If we required each inspector to get an average of 30 inspections a day at an average of 10 minutes per inspection, that equals 47 business days (two months for the first violation notice). Requiring 40 inspections a day, this brings it to 35 business days. If we add four part-time inspectors, the required initial inspections drop to 1,404 inspections to 878 inspections and averaging 40 inspections a day brings the inspection days for first violation notices to 22 working days (one month). The following chart assists visualizing the information:

7,024 Total Inspections	City 1,923 / District 5,101		
5 Inspectors	1,404 inspections each	40 inspections a day	35 business days
8 Inspectors	878 inspections each	40 inspections a day	22 business days

The employees work a 10-hour day. This plan allows 10 minutes per inspection and will account for 6 hours a day for inspections, and 4 hours of drive time and processing violation notices for the out-of-compliance inspections.

The following graphs taken from the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment show the increase in danger due to climate change. A devastating wildfire to our community is only a matter of time. As a public agency, we need to do as much as we can to reduce the risk to our community.



FISCAL IMPACT

The allocation would be for three part-time employees, 30 hours per week, plus one part-time employee, 20 hours per week. The cost to reimburse the City for the additional temporary work force, including pay and benefits for 90 days, is anticipated to be a maximum of \$72,468.30.

SUMMARY

In the past, the Vista Fire Protection District has sought to expand the scope of inspections from vacant lots to all structures and vacant land within the high-threat and medium-threat areas to be inspected on an annual basis.