



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## AGENDA ITEM



JIM DESMOND  
Fifth District



10

**DATE:** August 30, 2022

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

### SUBJECT

**RESPONSE TO 2021-22 GRAND JURY REPORTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)**

### OVERVIEW

The 2021-2022 San Diego County Grand Jury recently completed its term and filed three reports with recommendations requiring a response from the County.

California Penal Code Section 933(c) requires that (A) the governing body of agencies that are the subject of Grand Jury reports respond in writing to the Findings and Recommendations addressed to such agencies and (B) elected officials such as the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk and Sheriff respond on behalf of their respective agencies.

Therefore, this is a request for your Board to review and approve the draft Finding and Recommendation responses prepared by the Chief Administrative Officer and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to transmit the responses to the Grand Jury via the Superior Court Presiding Judge. The proposed responses address the recommendations and findings contained in the following three reports and note the recommendations to which the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk and Sheriff will respond separately:

- Reducing Elder Abuse: Public Awareness & The Role of Community Based Senior Centers
- Community Facilities Districts – The Misunderstood and Sometimes Hidden Use of Mello-Roos Taxes Across San Diego County
- Water Report for San Diego County – Reclaimed Water for a Sustainable Future

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. Approve the proposed responses and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to transmit the responses to the Grand Jury via the Superior Court Presiding Judge.
2. Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to submit a copy of the Past Grand Jurors Association Implementation Review Committee's 2023 Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors, no later than December 31, 2023, which provides updates to the County's responses to the 2021-22 Grand Jury report recommendations.

**SUBJECT:** RESPONSE TO 2021-22 GRAND JURY REPORTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

**EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

The grand jury is a body of 19 citizens selected by the Superior Court of California, County of San Diego under the supervision of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court. Members of the grand jury are charged and sworn to investigate county matters of civil concern and may examine any aspect of county government and city government, including special legislative districts and joint powers agencies, to ensure that the best interests of San Diego County residents are being served. Today's actions to approve the proposed responses and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to transmit the responses to the grand jury continues the County's commitment to transparency, open government, and collaboration across agencies, ensuring that the County continues to function in the best interest of the public it serves.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with these recommendations. There will be no change in net General Fund costs and no additional staff years.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

The 2021-2022 San Diego County Grand Jury recently completed its term and filed two reports, each of which includes recommendations requiring a response from the County.

California Penal Code Section 933(c) requires that (A) the governing body of agencies that are the subject of Grand Jury reports respond in writing to the Findings and Recommendations addressed to such agencies and (B) elected officials such as the Sheriff and District Attorney respond on behalf of their respective agencies. Copies of all Grand Jury reports and the subject agencies' responses to them are posted on the Grand Jury website.

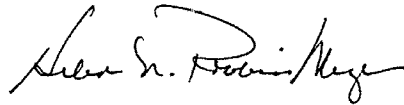
This is a request for your Board to review and approve the draft Finding and Recommendation responses prepared by the Chief Administrative Officer and authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to transmit the responses to the Grand Jury via the Superior Court Presiding Judge. The proposed responses address the recommendations and findings contained in the five Grand Jury reports and note the recommendations to which the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk and Sheriff will respond separately.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Grand Jury reports listed above and the County's corresponding responses address matters associated with all of the County of San Diego's 2022-2027 Strategic Initiatives of Sustainability, Equity, Empower, Community and Justice.

**SUBJECT:** RESPONSE TO 2021-22 GRAND JURY REPORTS (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen N. Robbins-Meyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER  
Chief Administrative Officer

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

2021-22 County of San Diego Grand Jury Responses



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSES  
TO  
2021-2022 GRAND JURY REPORTS

Reducing Elder Abuse: Public Awareness & The Role of Community Based Senior Centers	Page 1
Community Facilities Districts –The Misunderstood and Sometimes Hidden Use Of Mello-Roos Taxes Across San Diego County	Page 7
Water Report for San Diego County – Reclaimed Water for a Sustainable Future	Page 10

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COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2021-22 GRAND JURY REPORT  
“Reducing Elder Abuse: Public Awareness & The Role of Community Based Senior Centers”  
Filed June 23, 2022

(The District Attorney will respond separately to the findings and recommendations in this report.)

**FINDINGS**

**Public Awareness Finding 01:** While it is recognized that presentations by AIS and the San Diego County District Attorney’s Elder Abuse Unit have included an overview of all types of elder abuse, the majority of the recent focus has been on elder scams and financial abuse.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagrees with this finding.** In Fiscal Year 2021-22, Aging & Independence Services (AIS) reached nearly ten times as many people with a general overview presentation on elder abuse than with a presentation that focused specifically on financial abuse and scams. While in-person opportunities were still limited during this time and organizations made fewer training requests, AIS provided 31 elder abuse overview presentations that reached 1,007 individuals (692 mandated reporters and 315 older adults/caregivers) while 10 presentations were focused on scam prevention and reached 118 people.

**Public Awareness Finding 02:** Presentations to small select groups do not achieve the expanding of public awareness of the signs of elder abuse and how to report suspected elder abuse to the extent as outlined in the “Aging Roadmap.”

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagrees partially with this finding.** Aging & Independence Services’ (AIS) strategy is to focus on reaching mandated reporters and others who, through their professional roles, have the ability to recognize and report abuse in broader populations and to share elder abuse prevention messaging with larger audiences. However, AIS agrees that an opportunity exists to reach wider audiences through increased use of social media and other outreach means.

**Public Awareness Finding 03:** Forms of media such as billboard signage, social media, and TV and radio public service announcements would provide opportunities for expanding public awareness of signs of elder abuse and how to report suspected elder abuse.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) has engaged in media campaigns

in the past that focus on elder abuse and utilizes social media and other types of messaging. In recent years, communications strategies surrounding elder abuse have changed. The National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA), in conjunction with the Framework Institute, encourages a reimagined dialog surrounding elder abuse that effectively engages audiences by focusing on prevention and community building strategies and avoids unproductive messaging. AIS looks forward to incorporating more of this new guidance into our communication strategies.

**Public Awareness Finding 04:** Multiple phone numbers for reporting suspected elder abuse could cause confusion and frustration for the public and subsequently cause failure to report.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagrees with this finding.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) promotes a “no wrong door” approach to reporting elder abuse. This means that mechanisms are in place for a caller’s elder abuse report to make it to Adult Protective Services (APS) even if they call a local law enforcement number or a statewide elder abuse reporting number rather than the AIS Call Center (e.g., a report would be made by a law enforcement entity, or a caller to the statewide number would be directly connected to the AIS Call Center). The primary phone number for the AIS Call Center (800 339 4661) is advertised widely and this is the only number publicized for reporting elder abuse. The number referenced as the District Attorney’s number in this Grand Jury report (800-510-2020) refers to the California Department of Aging (CDA) statewide elder abuse reporting number. If a local resident were to call 800-510-2020 it would route the caller to the AIS Call Center.

It is always appropriate for a caller to call 9-1-1 if there is an active crime or emergency involving an elder. In addition, if a caller were to reach out to the San Diego Police Department or another law enforcement entity, officers would file an elder abuse report. While not advertised as the number to call to report elder abuse, community and social services clearinghouse 2-1-1 San Diego also can assist callers with making an elder abuse report and is another example of the “no wrong door” approach to reporting abuse.

**Community-Based Senior Centers Finding 01:** The EPC engages an extensive list of stakeholders in routine collaboration to address the issue of elder abuse in San Diego County; however, the County’s commitment to coordinating a response to elder abuse has not extended to include CBSC managements’ attendance at scheduled meetings of both EPC and AIS.

**Response: The County of San Diego District Attorney’s Office will respond separately to this finding.** The Elder Protection Council (EPC) is coordinated by the District Attorney’s office; however, Adult Protective Services staff attend meetings, provide expertise, and make presentations as requested.

**Community-Based Senior Centers Finding 02:** Regardless of whether CBSC staff qualify as mandated reporters, since the staff of CBSCs interact on a regular basis with their senior clientele, receiving mandated reporter training would be beneficial for them to recognize signs of elder abuse and how to report suspected elder abuse.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) welcomes CBSC staff to pursue mandated reporter training. Organizations, including CBSCs, may request mandated

reporter trainings for their staff. The AIS website offers information on how organizations can request a no-cost presentation for their group. In addition, the site provides links to web-based mandated reporter training offered by the California Department of Social Services. In addition, AIS has begun adding elder abuse reporting requirements into some contracts, as appropriate.

**Community-Based Senior Centers Finding 03:** Since CBSCs are regularly used by seniors, there exists an opportunity for educating their clientele and the local community about the types of elder abuse and how to report suspected elder abuse.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) agrees that CBSCs and other organizations that serve older adults play an important role in sharing information about elder abuse, including prevention and reporting. As elder abuse prevention efforts that involve strengthening community supports for older adults and encouraging social engagement are among the most effective, AIS believes there is a particularly strong opportunity for CBSCs to address elder abuse through the community building lens.

**Community-Based Senior Centers Finding 04:** Since CBSCs are routinely used by seniors, an opportunity exists to create on-site hubs of technology access along with training for those needing assistance to access support for safe, healthy, and independent living.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagrees partially with this finding.** While it makes sense for CBSCs to serve as on-site hubs of technology access and training, Aging & Independence Services (AIS) does not have oversight of CBSCs. However, AIS routinely works with CBSCs and other organizations to provide programming that supports safe, healthy, and independent living. For instance, CBSCs are often host sites for programming such as the Feeling Fit Club, chronic disease self-management programs, Tai Chi, and CalFresh Healthy Living workshops. In addition, AIS will soon be working with CBSCs and other nutrition sites to offer the Connections, Health, Aging, & Technology (CHAT) program to help bridge the digital divide and mitigate social isolation among seniors.

**Community-Based Senior Centers Finding 05:** CBSC's budgetary constraints hinder hiring adequate qualified staff, developing relevant programs, and creating dedicated space with computer workstations for senior clientele access.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagrees partially with this finding.** While Aging & Independence Services (AIS) does not have in-depth knowledge regarding CBSC budgets and staffing, AIS believes that CBSCs benefit from collaborative efforts to leverage high-quality, no-cost programming using County or County contracted staff. AIS currently offers programming, such as the Feeling Fit Club, at a variety of CBSCs. In addition, the AIS Outreach and Education team is available to give presentations to senior center clientele. AIS does not have oversight of CBSCs but is always open to exploring opportunities for collaboration. In addition, AIS encourages CBSCs and other

organizations to submit proposals for contract-based services, including those that increase access to technology and training.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**The 2021/2022 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that County of San Diego's Aging & Independence Services:**

**22-1:** Focus presentations on all areas of elder abuse, not just the recent focus on elder scams and financial abuse.

**Response: The recommendation has been implemented.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) reached 1,007 individuals through Mandated Reporting of Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse presentations that cover all aspects of elder abuse and 118 people through "Don't Get Hooked": Preventing Financial Abuse, Scams, and Fraud presentations focused on financial abuse and scam prevention. AIS will continue to conduct presentations on all areas of elder abuse, focusing on reaching mandated reporters and aging services professionals who can spread information and materials to their clients and the other individuals they serve.

**22-2:** Provide information regarding signs of elder abuse and how to report suspected elder abuse on a wider scale to the public rather than to a limited audience.

**Response: The recommendation has been implemented.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) has regularly engaged in elder abuse outreach to the general public through a variety of means, including presentations, articles, social media, and through the distribution of outreach materials at health fairs. In response to this report and to increase our reach further, AIS is now conducting regularly scheduled social media outreach to the general public using HHS and County social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). In addition, AIS will continue to regularly purchase social media ads that discuss elder abuse and how to report it. AIS has arranged for monthly ads to appear in the print and online editions of the San Diego-Union Tribune, as well as for a full-page elder abuse awareness ad in the San Diego Union-Tribune's Winter 2022 Eldercare Directory. AIS is also exploring outreach opportunities with local publications and providing information in a variety of languages.

**22-3:** Expand public awareness of signs of elder abuse and how to report suspected elder abuse through routine use of social media and no-cost public service announcements on TV and radio.

**Response: The recommendation requires further analysis.** While Aging & Independence Services (AIS) has implemented the social media portion of the recommendation, staff are currently exploring options for other broad-scale media outreach efforts. While PSAs may be an option depending on availability and cost-effectiveness, staff are looking at other available resources and will explore the feasibility of initiating a media buy/media campaign prior to December 31, 2022, as well as funding opportunities to support these efforts.



## ATTACHMENT

**22-4:** Seek additional funding (for example, grants and reallocating a portion of funds from Health & Human Services Agency's annual budget) to finance billboard signage to expand public awareness of signs of elder abuse and how to report suspected elder abuse.

**Response:** **The recommendation requires further analysis.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) staff are working to determine the costs of engaging in a billboard campaign and exploring the possibility of engaging with a marketing consultant. The cost-analysis will be completed by December 31, 2022. AIS is always on alert for potential grant and funding opportunities that may be appropriate for our initiatives, including elder abuse awareness and prevention, and shares that information with partners as applicable.

**22-5:** Recognize World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (June 15) as an annual opportunity to call attention to the scope of elder abuse in San Diego County.

**Response:** **The recommendation has been implemented.** For the past several years, Aging & Independence Services (AIS) has engaged in activities to recognize World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) on or around June 15. This past year, AIS worked with County Communications to issue a County News Center Article in recognition of WEAAD. The article describes the scope of elder abuse nationwide (1 in 10 Americans are estimated to be victims of abuse, exploitation, or neglect), lists the types of abuse, and encourages the public to issue a report if they have concerns about an elder. Social media posts were made to further promote the article. Information on WEAAD was also included in the online and print editions of the AIS monthly newsletter, which also noted the types of abuse, preventative actions community members can take, and how to make a report. Annually, the County Administration Center is illuminated in purple on June 15 in recognition of WEAAD and plans are in place for this to continue.

**22-6:** Advertise the San Diego County Adult Protective Services hotline number in all forms of media as the primary number to report non-life-threatening and/or suspected incidents of elder abuse.

**Response:** **The recommendation has been implemented.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) only advertises one phone number (800-339-4661) in its website and outreach materials for the reporting of elder and dependent adult abuse. Callers who use statewide CDA elder abuse reporting number (800-510-2020) will still be appropriately routed to the AIS Call Center for elder abuse reporting.

**22-9:** Establish and coordinate a consortium comprised of CBSC management to meet, at minimum, bi-annually as a means of open dialogue pertinent to CBSC concerns in serving their clientele and resources available through Aging & Independence Services

**Response:** **The recommendation requires further analysis.** While Aging & Independence Services (AIS) has traditionally had a strong history of involving the public and community-based organizations in planning and programming, community involvement is at the heart of the new Board of Supervisors' strategic plan and remains a top priority for the County. AIS staff will verify that all local CBSCs have the opportunity to join AIS listservs and attend AIS Advisory Council meetings. CBSC staff will also continue to receive invitations to join community

planning efforts, such as through the teams working on Aging Roadmap priorities. AIS staff will explore whether there is a need for a consortium for CBSCs or whether doing so would be duplicative. It may be more impactful to ensure that all CBSCs have up-to-date information about AIS' existing committees and workgroups and to encourage their participation. Staff will also explore other ways to engage CBSCs in AIS' work, including the possibility of having a specific breakout session for CBSCs during annual aging conferences hosted by AIS. Staff will determine which direction to take with regards to the possible creation of the consortium by October 31, 2022.

**22-10:** Advocate for mandated reporter training of CBSC staff.

**Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented.** While Aging & Independence Services (AIS) currently provides information to the public regarding mandated reporter and elder abuse training for organizations via the AIS website, AIS staff will inform CBSC management of mandated reporter training opportunities and additional resources. AIS staff is available to provide mandated training in person and virtually. Outreach to CBSC staff will occur by October 31, 2022, and staff will continue to regularly provide this information to CBSCs and other organizations.

**22-11:** Create and provide a digital presentation regarding all-inclusive areas of elder abuse for use by CBSCs in hosting informational meetings for their clientele and community.

**Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented.** While Aging & Independence Services (AIS) currently provides information to the public regarding mandated reporter and elder abuse training for organizations via the AIS website, AIS staff will gather input from CBSC management about their needs concerning resources and information related to elder abuse. AIS staff will inform CBSC staff that AIS remains available to conduct presentations for staff and clients. Outreach to CBSC staff will occur by October 31, 2022, and staff will continue to regularly provide this information to CBSCs and other organizations.

**22-12:** Work with CBSCs to secure funding for the creation of on-site hubs of technology access and training for their senior clientele.

**Response: The recommendation will not be implemented.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) dedicates resources to technology education and access. Any available funding opportunities that the County has for technology-related projects are shared with the community to cast a broad net and are posted on BuyNet. Potential contractors, including small businesses and non-profit organizations, are welcome to submit a proposal. AIS will continue to publicize all such opportunities to our networks of senior service providers.

**22-13:** Work with CBSCs to secure funding for hiring adequate, qualified staff and creating innovative services and programs.

**Response: The recommendation will not be implemented.** Aging & Independence Services (AIS) continues to make it a priority to share information with and offer innovative services and programs to CBSCs and other organizations, including evidence-based programs such as the Feeling Fit Club, Tai Chi: Moving

for Better Balance, Healthier Living, and CalFresh Healthy Living. In addition, AIS is working on a new pilot program which will provide County services at various senior centers within the region. Many funding opportunities funnel down from federal and state entities. AIS shares information about these opportunities through the AIS GovDelivery listserv and the County's BuyNet site. AIS staff will ensure that CBSC staff have the opportunity to sign up for listservs that will alert them to funding opportunities.

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**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2021-22 GRAND JURY REPORT**  
**“Community Facilities Districts – The Misunderstood and Sometimes Hidden Use of Mello-  
Roos Taxes Across San Diego County”**

**Filed June 23, 2022**

**(The Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk will respond separately to the findings and  
recommendations in this report.)**

- The County of San Diego's response is related to only those CFDs administered by County departments, and not those administered by other agencies.
- The County does not have access or control of disclosures related to CFDs administered by other jurisdictions, which will have their own goals and policies.

**FINDINGS**

**Finding 01:** Transparency in the CFD process for the homeowner is available but not in a meaningful or helpful way.

**Response: The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagrees partially with this finding.** The County monitors disclosures related to the Community Facilities Districts that are administered by County departments and within its jurisdiction (a “County CFD”), and ensures that these disclosures are made in accordance with the requirements of law. Feedback on what would be useful to a homebuyer has not been solicited, nor has it been confirmed that homebuyers generally find the disclosures to be meaningful or helpful.

For the unincorporated area under the County's land use jurisdiction and for County CFDs administered by the County departments, the County of San Diego's Board Policy I-136, Comprehensive Goals and Policies for Community Facilities Districts (Board Policy I-136), which applies to all County-administered CFDs, requires specific disclosure related to a CFD be provided to a home buyer, and that this disclosure is signed by home buyers and a copy of the signed disclosure be provided to the County. These disclosures occur at the initial sale of a home following the formation of a CFD.

This disclosure is required to provide information on:

- the CFD
- the amount of special taxes to be levied
- terms and conditions of any bonds secured by special taxes of the CFD

Information regarding the County's CFDs is updated annually and provided as follows:

- County website
  - Mello-Roos Information (<https://arcc.sdcounty.ca.gov/pages/mello-roos-information.aspx>)
    - Search for CFDs (and other special taxes, assessments and fees) by parcel
    - Link for active CFDs and related contact information
    - CFD Background and facts
  - Annual Auditor and Controller Report on CFDs, (<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/auditor/pdf/cfd.pdf>)
  - Annual Confirmation of Tax Levies for CFDs Letter to the Board of Supervisors (<https://bosagenda.sandiegocounty.gov/cob/cosd/cob/doc?id=0901127e80d4e419>), which has attached an Administration Report for each County CFD

In addition to the above resources, annual property tax bills sent out by the County of San Diego Treasurer Tax Collector include a detail of special taxes applicable to the subject parcel. A phone number is included on the property tax bill for property owners to inquire about the special tax. The phone is staffed by the CFD Administrator, a County consultant with a knowledgeable team that can answer questions about the special tax and fulfill requests for information, including providing annual reports, information about services provided by the CFD, and other information that may be requested by a homeowner.

County Board Policy I-136 is meant to ensure County CFDs comply with the State Mello-Roos Act (Act). The Act requires full disclosure of all special taxes, assessments, or other liens on individual parcels at the time a County CFD is being formed and requires that there is disclosure of special taxes, assessment, and other liens to all purchasers of property within a County CFD.

The County does not have access or control of disclosures related to CFDs administered by other jurisdictions, which will have their own goals and policies.

Also, the County does not have visibility or access to documents and disclosures related to subsequent changes of ownership for homes within a County CFD, however, there are statutory disclosure requirements that property sellers must provide to buyers, as well as title documents which will include CFD information.

**Finding 02:** Education for the buyer or homeowner does exist but only if they seek out information.

**Response:** The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding. The County's provision of education and information on County CFDs is responsive in nature. This includes: (1) providing information as noted above on the County website for interested parties to access and review, and (2) the third-party CFD Administrator providing customer service-oriented and timely responses to any inquiries through the phone number on the tax bill.

**Finding 03:** Oversight of the CFD process is the critical missing ingredient to a comprehensive understanding of individual CFDs. Annual reports that are available are not meaningful to the average homeowner.

**Response:** The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagrees partially with this finding. Information on an individual County CFD is available via the County's website, and specifically by contacting the CFD Administrator, a County consultant with the expertise to answer questions about the special tax and fulfill requests for information.

While County departments have made efforts to provide information to homeowners within a County-administered CFD, feedback on what would be meaningful to the average homeowner has not been solicited.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**The 2021/2022 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the County of San Diego, City of San Diego, City Manager for the City of Encinitas, the City Manager for the City of Lemon Grove, the City Manager for the City of San Marcos, and the City Manager for the City of Santee:**

(The County of San Diego can only respond for the CFD's administered by County departments and not for those administered by other jurisdictions. Please note that the County does not administer, have authority to develop policies, or have access to CFDs of other jurisdictions, and anything implemented by the County will apply only to County CFDs.)

**12-24:** Create procedures for oversight, over and above what the law requires, to include communicating with their constituencies, answering questions, and providing copies of notices or annual reports as requested through direct action or through their websites. Oversight information should include links to foundational documents, CFD administrator information, current tax levy analysis, and a simple description of the district.

**Response:** The recommendation requires further analysis. The recommendation is for procedures over and above what is required by law, and notes oversight information should include the following information: links to foundational documents, a simple description of the CFD, the CFD administrator, and the related tax levy. The County currently provides access to this information on County CFDs, via the previously referenced sources:

- County website
- Annual Board action confirming CFD tax levies
- CFD Administrator
- Tax Bill

In an effort to increase transparency and customer service, County staff will review opportunities to provide copies of notices or annual reports for County CFDs as requested by a homeowner in a more accessible manner that is also economical so as not to increase CFD-related costs. This may include updating or adding

information to existing websites, and in all cases, information provided will align with State or local legislation and policies.

This review and resulting implementation plan and schedule will be completed no later than December 15, 2022, by departments that are involved with the administration of County CFDs, including:

- Department of Planning & Development Services
- Office of Financial Planning
- Auditor and Controller
- Treasurer-Tax Collector
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Parks and Recreations
- San Diego County Fire

Please note that the County does not administer, have authority to develop policies, or have access to CFDs of other jurisdictions, and anything implemented by the County will apply only to County CFDs.

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**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO RESPONSE TO 2021-22 GRAND JURY REPORT**  
**“Water Report for San Diego County – Reclaimed Water for a Sustainable Future”**  
**Filed June 23, 2022**

**FINDINGS**

**Finding 01:** Traditional public relations and/or educational outreach is not improving public and political support for wastewater and stormwater reuse as potable water. The Public awareness of the Pure Water Program is limited.

**Response:** The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer disagree partially with the statement that outreach is not improving support for wastewater and stormwater reuse as potable water. The Department of Public Works actively engages with the community and stakeholders on a variety of projects, including (but not limited to) wastewater and stormwater reuse as potable water. To date, the department has performed outreach in multiple forums and continually assesses and enhances communication. The department has engaged in the following ways:

The County of San Diego is a regional partner of the East County Advanced Water Purification (ECAWP) program. The wastewater collected from East County residents and businesses will be treated at the ECAWP facilities and, when completed by 2025, it is expected to provide 30% of the local drinking water demand. DPW promotes on its website the ECAWP program (ECAWP (sandiegocounty.gov)) and via social media outreach (DPW Facebook and DPW Twitter).

- In 2018 the County completed the San Diego Region Stormwater Capture and Use Feasibility Study. This study included comprehensive outreach to stakeholders, including agencies involved in the provision of drinking water, wastewater and stormwater services; academia; non-governmental organizations; the California Stormwater Quality Association (CASQA); and members of the San Diego County Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Program; and evaluated the feasibility of reusing stormwater as potable water. In 2017, the County also led the development of the San Diego County Storm Water Resource Plan (SWRP) in response to Senate Bill 985, which requires regions to develop SWRPs to maintain eligibility for grants for stormwater and non-stormwater runoff capture projects, including indirect reuse. Plan development was collaborative and involved regional water management organizations and affected stakeholders, including regulators, jurisdictions, utilities, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, special interest groups, and the interested public. Involving representatives from disadvantaged communities (DACs) and Native American tribes was a priority. Engagement and plan implementation continues through the San Diego IRWM Program. The County's stormwater reuse study is available here: <https://projectcleanwater.org/stormwater-capture-and-use-feasibility-study/> , and the stormwater reuse plan San Diego County SWRP is available here: <https://sdirwmp.org/2017-swrp> .
- The County of San Diego and the 20 other San Diego jurisdictions in the region (18 incorporated cities, the Port of San Diego, the San Diego Regional Airport Authority, known as the Stormwater Co-permittees) collaboratively launched the Project Clean Water (<https://projectcleanwater.org>) education and outreach campaign in 2021. The campaign includes the “52 Ways to Love Your Water” pledge, which identified ways residents could capture rainwater from their downspouts in rain barrels and use to water lawns/gardens and feed captured rainwater into irrigation systems. To date:
  - 781 members of the public have taken the on-line pledge.
  - Approximately 32 million social media, website, advertisements, and event encounters have been recorded.
  - 17 regional movie theaters are playing the “Love Your Water” video trailer.
  - 3 different radio advertisements were run, each in English and Spanish, in about 90 spots per week for 7-8 weeks with average gross impressions of 3 million per advertisement.

General awareness messaging is being used to socialize the concept of capture and reuse to the public, mostly during face-to-face encounters at outreach events. The purpose of this is to get the public to start thinking of stormwater as a useful resource. The campaign aims to improve public awareness of stormwater issues, including capture and reuse of stormwater for potable and other water resources.

- DPW is planning to implement several projects that will capture and re-use stormwater, and the Department will conduct education and outreach with communities and stakeholders in various venues and forums as well as multiple languages to convey the importance of reusing stormwater.
- The County participates with 12 other wastewater agencies in the Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority (JPA), which is directly supporting and providing planning oversight over the Pure Water program. In coordination with other agencies, and similar to what is currently done for ECAWP, the County will leverage its websites and social media accounts to message the public on the importance of wastewater reuse as potable water.

**Finding 02:** The California State Water Resources Control Board is developing regulations for potable reuse. In 2014, Board's Division of Drinking Water finalized groundwater replenishment regulations, which were incorporated in the recycled water-related regulations. In 2017, Assembly Bill 574 was signed into law and established a deadline of December 2023 for initial State Direct Potable Reuse regulations.

**Response:** The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding.

**Finding 03:** The implementation of SB-552 is important for small water suppliers in rural areas. Recently approved State of California legislation encourages the development of water shortage strategic plans and encourages administrative funding to mitigate the impact of drought and to promote water resiliency and water re-use.

**Response:** The County of San Diego Chief Administrative Officer agrees with this finding.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**The 2021/2022 San Diego County Grand Jury recommends that the County of San Diego Department of Public Works:**

**22-38:** Support the City of San Diego water reclamation efforts by improving public trust in the safety and benefits of reclaimed water through continually educating County of San Diego elected officials, media representatives, and the public about the community goal of 35% reclaimed potable use water by 2035.

**Response:** This recommendation has been implemented. As stated above, County has been exploring opportunities for stormwater and wastewater reuse since 2018, up to and including the Department of Public Works' (DPW) participation in the FCAWP program (starting in 2020.) These efforts included outreach and education to improve trust in the safety and benefits of reclaimed water through educating County of San Diego elected officials, media representatives, and the public. Additional action will be taken to support the City of San Diego in further promoting the community goal of 35% reclaimed potable use water by 2035.

- Summary of Actions Taken:
  - Since 2020, the County has proactively worked with the City of San Diego and other stormwater Co-permittees on a variety of outreach and stakeholder



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engagement efforts that have promoted potable reuse. General awareness on water topics, including reuse, is being messaged through social media, YouTube videos, websites, list-serve e-mails and face-to-face encounters at Project Clean Water outreach events. The purpose is to get the public thinking of stormwater as a useful resource.

- The County also collaborates with CASQA, which has a 2020 Statewide vision for sustainable Stormwater Management including Maximizing Urban Stormwater Capture.
- The County also participates with 12 other wastewater agencies (City of San Diego, City of Chula Vista, City of Coronado, City of Del Mar, City of El Cajon, City of Imperial Beach, City of La Mesa, City of Lemon Grove, City of National City, City of Poway, Otay Water District, and Padre Dam Municipal Water District) in the Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority, which is directly supporting and providing planning oversight over the City of San Diego's Pure Water program.
- In coordination with all these other agencies, the County will leverage its websites and social media accounts to message the public on the importance of stormwater and wastewater reuse.

**22-39:** Incorporate new current state regulatory standards for potable water reuse into their operational management.

**Response: This recommendation has been implemented.** As a matter of certification, Department of Public Works' (DPW) incorporates all applicable changes to state regulatory standards on the systems we operate. Together with our ECAWP partners, DPW is specifically incorporating new potable water reuse standards into that project. These standards will be memorialized in our Sewer System Management Plan by the end of 2022. The ECAWP project is expected to be operational by 2025.

- Summary of Actions Taken: DPW is responsible for operation and overall administration of the San Diego County Sanitation District (District). The District's sewer service areas are located within eight unincorporated communities (Alpine, Campo, East Otay Mesa, Julian, Lakeside, Pine Valley, Spring Valley, & Winter Gardens) in the region. The District is presently engaged as a JPA member of two regional potable water reuse programs: Pure Water, led by Metro Wastewater JPA; and ECAWP, led by the ECAWP JPA. In addition, DPW is moving forward with developing projects that will capture stormwater runoff for treatment and reuse as potable water while reducing impacts to water quality in the local watershed. The District will update the Sewer System Management Plan incorporate potable water reuse standards stated above prior to December 2022.

**22-40:** Support small water agencies in their efforts to comply with new laws for agency water operations and wastewater management practices above and beyond what are current regulatory requirements.

**Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.** Department of Public Works' (DPW) does not have regulatory oversight over small water agencies. However, the department engages with partner agencies and stakeholders and actively monitors new laws and regulations.

**22-41:** Solicit the participation of small water suppliers and DACs in water re-use policy and practice development.

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**Response: This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted.** Department of Public Works' (DPW) does not have regulatory oversight over small water systems and DAC's. Until recently, small community water systems operated by DPW were regulated by the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health and Quality, which acted as the Local Primacy Agency (LPA). On April 7, 2021, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution to transfer the LPA authority to the State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Drinking Water, effective July 1, 2022. The department engages with partner agencies and stakeholders on policy and practices.