

**PUBLIC
BUILDINGS**

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Public Buildings and Properties Committee

Working Conditions in Building 300

Citizen Complaint #00/01-C-023

Reason for Report

The Grand Jury investigated a citizen's complaint that the working conditions in the Sheriff's Department, Building 300 were unsafe and unhealthy.

Scope of Investigation

The Public Buildings and Properties Committee of the Grand Jury:

- Visited and inspected Building 300;
- Interviewed the Undersheriff;
- Interviewed the Sheriff's Department Manager of Administration and Finance; and
- Interviewed the Sheriff's Department personnel.

Findings

- F1. Building 300 does not have adequate space for the number of personnel assigned to the building.
- F2. Crowding of desks and file cabinets in Building 300 results in very poor working conditions including improper lighting and ergonomic problems.
- F3. Evidence storage areas are located in the old jail area of Building 300. Evidence stored in these areas includes both hazardous and biological materials. The inside storage areas do not have adequate ventilation or proper refrigeration facilities.
- F4. General housekeeping in the evidence storage area was lacking.
- F5. Of the three air-conditioning or air handling units in use at Building 300, only one was in good working condition. The other two are very old. Repair parts are hard to procure, and in some cases must be manufactured. This leads to long delays in making repairs.
- F6. Some evidence is stored in an uncovered outdoor area. This can lead to the evidence being degraded.
- F7. A portion of the old jail area of Building 300 is being used as an exercise room for Sheriff's Department personnel. This area has numerous problems, which include:

- Most of the ceiling tiles are missing. The remaining ceiling tiles are loose and falling out.
 - There is frayed and temporary electrical wiring.
 - Ventilation is inadequate.
 - Floor tiles are missing and/or deteriorated.
- F8. The Officer's dressing and shower area is too small for the number of personnel using it.
- F9. Housekeeping in the dressing and shower area was inadequate.
- F10. Numerous violations were noted on a fire safety inspection performed by the Fire Marshal during March 2000. As of April 2001, no re-inspection had been performed to verify corrective actions.

Recommendations

- R1. The Board of Supervisors (BOS) should provide adequate facilities to house personnel of the Sheriff's Department.
- R2. The Department of General Services should upgrade the ventilation and refrigeration systems of Building 300 to meet current health and safety standards.
- R3. The Sheriff's Department should see to it that good housekeeping practices are observed at all times.
- R4. The Department of General Services should upgrade two remaining air conditioning / air handling systems to current standards or replace them.
- R5. The Sheriff's Department should identify and obtain new storage areas to protect the integrity of stored evidence.
- R6. The Department of General Services should upgrade the exercise room in Building 300 to meet current health and safety standards.
- R7. The dressing room and shower area in Building 300 should be expanded to meet current needs.
- R8. It is recommended that the 2001/2002 Grand Jury re-inspect Bldg. 300.

Responses Required for Findings

F1 through F10 El Dorado County Sheriff & Board of Supervisors

Responses Required for Recommendations

R1 through R7 El Dorado County Sheriff & Board of Supervisors

Public Buildings and Properties

Animal Control Facilities

South Lake Tahoe

Reason for Report

The Grand Jury selected, as one of its general investigations, a follow up on the 1999/2000 Grand Jury Report on the Animal Control Facilities in South Lake Tahoe.

Scope of Investigation

The Public Buildings and Properties Committee of the Grand Jury:

- Reviewed the 1999/2000 Grand Jury report on the Animal Control Facility and response to findings and recommendations;
- Visited the South Lake Tahoe Animal Control Facility on 2/27/02;
- Interviewed Animal Control personnel;
- Inspected the facility's buildings and grounds; and
- Reviewed the status of actions taken on the 1999/2000 Grand Jury Findings and Recommendations.

Findings

F1. The office area, kennels and cat rooms were clean, neat, and well maintained.

F2. The following findings from last years Grand Jury still exist:

- The sloping roof in the kennel area is so low that it causes employees to work in a stooped position;
- The kennel gates contact the ceiling, restricting the gate openings to approximately 45 degrees;
- Fluorescent lights are suspended from low ceilings creating a potential for head injuries;
- There was a broken window in the kennel area;
- The roof over the euthanasia room is badly deteriorated;
- Water, sink, and floor drains are not provided in the euthanasia room;
- Asphalt in the animal exercise area is badly deteriorated and breaking up;
- Barbed wire is broken and hanging on the fence around the exercise area;
- There are no provisions to control runoff from the slope behind the building. This causes occasional flooding of some interior areas of the building;
- The asphalt driveway and parking area used by department vehicles are steep and hazardous to use during snow and ice conditions. Employees have sustained

injuries from falls in these areas, and vehicles have slid down the slope while parked;

- There is no access for the public to enter the facility, other than walking up the driveway;
- There are no provisions for handicapped entry;
- The facility is not enclosed by a security fence.

Recommendations

- R1. The response to the 1999/2000 Grand Jury Report indicated that funding to correct the findings identified would be included in the County budget for 2001/2002. The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors insure that this funding is included in the 2001/2002 budget.

Responses Required for Findings

- F2 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Responses Required for Recommendations

- R1 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Public Buildings and Properties Committee

Basement Flooding at District Attorney's Office

Reason for Report

The Public Building and Properties Committee, in the course of other investigations, became aware that the basement of the District Attorney's office was subject to flooding.

Scope of Investigation

Members of the Committee:

- Interviewed persons working in the District Attorney's office;
- Interviewed personnel of the General Services Department; and
- Visited the facility.

Findings

- F1. An outfall pipe from the building stairwell that drains into the creek behind the building becomes clogged with debris during high water levels in the creek.
- F2. When the outfall pipe becomes clogged, water backs up in the stairwell resulting in basement flooding.
- F3. Cleaning up the facility after flooding episodes is time consuming and costly.

Recommendations

- R1. The General Services Department should redesign and revise the drain system to prevent water backup in the stairwell and flooding in the basement of the facility.

Responses Required for Findings

F1 through F3 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Responses Required for Recommendations

R1 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Public Buildings and Properties Committee

Department of Transportation

Maintenance

Reason for Report

The Grand Jury selected the Department of Transportation (DOT) Maintenance Section as one of its general investigations for 2000/2001.

Scope of Investigation

The Public Buildings and Properties Committee of the Grand Jury:

- Visited the Placerville and South Lake Tahoe maintenance and engineering facilities;
- Interviewed the Maintenance Section personnel;
- Inspected the buildings, grounds, and maintenance equipment;
- Reviewed the County's Road Maintenance Budget;
- Reviewed road maintenance budget.

Findings

- F1. No evidence of improper or wasteful expenditure of road maintenance funds was found.
- F2. Although the 2001/2002 Road Maintenance Budget has increased from last year, the new amount is still inadequate to prevent further road deterioration.
- F3. The DOT engineering staff at South Lake Tahoe lacks adequate space to efficiently perform all of the duties required at this site. This is due largely to the added workload generated by work on the Lake Tahoe Clarification Project.

Recommendations

- R1. The County should develop additional sources of funding for road maintenance to prevent further deterioration of the county road system and allow work to start on repairing past deterioration.
- R2. The County should act in a timely manner to procure adequate facilities for the DOT engineering staff at South Lake Tahoe.

Responses Required for Findings

F1 through F3 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Responses Required for Recommendations

R1 through R2 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Public Buildings and Properties Committee

Use of Laminated Beams in Exterior Construction

Reason for Report

The Grand Jury investigated the use of laminated beams in the exterior construction of some county buildings. This investigation was initiated because of the obvious deterioration and delamination of some of those beams.

Scope of Investigation

The Public Buildings and Properties Committee of the Grand Jury:

- Examined the condition of laminated beams used in exterior construction on several county buildings; and
- Contacted the American Plywood Association (APA) for recommendations as to the use of laminated beams and repair procedures.

Findings

- F1. Laminated beams used in the exterior construction of some county buildings are delaminated and deteriorating.
- F2. APA recommends that laminated beams not be used in exterior construction.
- F3. Repair procedures are available for laminated beams that have delaminated. If done properly, these repairs can protect beams from further delamination and deterioration.

Recommendations

- R1. The Department of General Services should repair, or cause to have repaired, the laminated beams that are currently deteriorated.
- R2. The Department of General Services should take appropriate action to protect those laminated beams used in exterior construction that have not yet started to delaminate.
- R3. Laminated beams should not be used on the exterior of structures in future County construction projects.

Responses Required for Findings

F1 through F3 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Responses Required for Recommendations

R1 through R3 El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

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