



County of Santa Cruz

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HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

June 17, 2001

AGENDA: June 26, 2001

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: REPORT ON ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANUP REVOLVING FUND

Dear Members of the Board:

Background:

In the 2000-01 budget, your Board appropriated \$200,000 for an Environmental Cleanup Revolving Fund. Your Board directed the Health Service Agency, Planning Department, and County Administrative Office to report back on Fund guidelines and implementation activities. A report to your Board on December 12, 2000 described the procedures used in the implementation of the Fund. An inter-departmental Oversight Committee consisting of the Environmental Health Director, the Assistant Planning Director for building and administrative services, and County Counsel administers the program. Planning Department fiscal staff provides accounting support for the Fund.

Use of the Fund:

Although the fund has only been used a few times this year, it has been very helpful in adding flexibility for addressing difficult clean up issues. In the past, there had not been a ready source of funds to promptly move forward and address problems. This caused significant delays and frustration in addressing clean up problems. The kinds of situations appropriate for fund expenditures include the following: illegal grading affecting streams and water ways; sewage discharges from onsite sewage disposal systems; accumulations of fecal material or refuse from illegal encampments or inside dwellings (dirty house syndrome); and prevention of access to hazardous premises pending abatement of the hazard.

Since establishing the Fund, five cases have been brought to the Oversight Committee. County Counsel brought the first case to the Oversight Committee. County Counsel had a court case involving illegal grading that could severely impact waterways. Because there was concern that remedial work was inadequate, a contract was made with an independent engineering firm to do an analysis of the work and provide recommendations for correction. The cost of the expert analysis and report should not exceed \$10,000. The Oversight Committee determined that the case met the criteria for use of the Environmental Cleanup Fund and approved the request for payment.

The second case involves clean up of oil-contaminated soils on Scott Creek. This project, coordinated by County Parks, was part of the Scott Creek Beach Dune Restoration project. This clean up on the north coast is very important for environmental reasons, and due to the extent of the leakage into the soil, the clean up exceeded the Parks Department's existing available funds. Additional clean up will be done using the Environmental Cleanup Fund, allowing County Parks to finish this important project. The Parks Department has funding sources that it can claim against in order to replenish the majority of the funding.

Finally, there were three different houses where conditions were hazardous, requiring clean up activities. The availability of the Fund was extremely helpful, as a back up option if homeowners or their relatives did not address the mitigation needs of the property. In these cases, the Fund was not needed. However, its availability was instrumental in facilitating a rapid response to the problem with property owners or their agents.

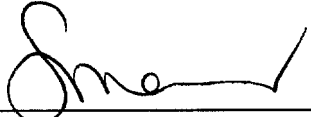
It is RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report.

Sincerely,



Rama Khalsa, Ph.D.
Health Services Administrator

RECOMMENDED:



Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

cc: County Administrative Office
County Counsel
Planning
Parks Department