

CITY OF

VENTURA

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**VENTURA COUNTY
GRAND JURY**

September 13, 2007

Ventura County Grand Jury
800 S. Victoria Ave., L#3751
Ventura, CA 93009

City Council

Carl E. Morehouse, AICP, Mayor
Christy Weir, Deputy Mayor
Neal Andrews, Councilmember
Brian Brennan, Councilmember
Bill Fulton, Councilmember
James L. Monahan, Councilmember
Edward W. Summers, Councilmember

RE: Response to Ventura County Grand Jury report titled, Ventura County: Disaster Evacuation Planning.

The City of Ventura would like to thank the Grand Jury for the opportunity to review the above captioned report received by the City on June 21, 2007. The City offers general concurrence with the findings and responses to the recommendations of the report pertaining to the City are as follows:

R-01 VC OES and VCDC should work with the ten cities in the County to facilitate development of coordinated and integrated emergency evacuation plans for each of these communities. These plans should include how the public and emergency services providers are to be informed of an alert and what their responses should be. These local plans need to recognize that the VC OES is the chief disaster coordinator in the County; the plans need to be readily available to the public.

The City currently has an adopted multi-hazard response plan in compliance with the California Emergency Services Act and the Standardized Emergency Management System. The points made in **R-01** are included in Part One of the City's plan.

R-06 Any evacuation plans developed by VC OES and the cities or special districts in Ventura County should be publicized and widely distributed. A user-friendly brochure detailing preparedness actions and evacuation routes should be developed for distribution to all residents in the County. As maps and plans are updated, the changes should be similarly publicized.

General evacuation recommendations have been developed and continue to be reviewed for enhancement. However, the public should be cautioned to not rely solely on predetermined evacuation routes and should be prepared to

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alter plans based on the directions of authorities during a specific evacuation. Further, any evacuation plans that also apply to terrorism scenarios should be carefully reviewed prior to public disclosure to avoid possible compromise of public safety.

The general recommendations contained in **R-06** are included in Part One of the City's emergency plan under the "Public Awareness and Education" section.

R-10 Ventura County, as well as all coastal cities in the County, should meet the required standards to obtain "Tsunami Ready" certification from the National Weather Service.

The "Tsunami Ready" certification is voluntary and there are no "required standards" by statute. However, the criteria for being "Tsunami Ready" has been used in the City's planning efforts (Threat Assessment 9, Part One of the City's response plan). The process of obtaining "Tsunami Ready" certification could be pursued regionally; however further study is necessary to determine if certification is an appropriate use of limited resources.

Preparing for disasters should never be considered complete. As additional threat assessments are completed and technology enhancements are developed, citizens, emergency planners and responders will continue to upgrade disaster preparation.

Thank you for your efforts in studying this complex subject. Should you wish to discuss this response further, please contact Brian Clark, Fire Marshal at 654-7794, or bclark@ci.ventura.ca.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rick Cole".

Rick Cole
City Manager

Cc: Colleen Toy White, Presiding Judge