



**2010-2011
Madera County Grand Jury
Final Report
Raymond Volunteer Fire Station #15**

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Introduction:

On November 17, 2010 the Madera County Grand Jury visited Madera County Fire Station #15, located at 32604 Road 600, Raymond, Ca. The Grand Jury met with the Division Chief, the Battalion Chief, and a Paid Call Firefighter (PCF) Captain. The Captain has been with the Fire Department as a volunteer for over 24 years.

Findings:

The Grand Jury found that the building now housing Station #15 was built in the 1950's and used as a family residence for several years. Before 2008 it was leased and manned by CAL FIRE employees. In September 2007 Madera County purchased the property with parks and recreation monies at a cost of approximately \$100,000. *(The purchase price included a full-time resident named Homer. Homer has been heard but not seen. The Fresno Paranormal Society has investigated Homer's presence.)*

The number of volunteers throughout the County is 193. Station #15 is manned by the Captain and seven volunteers. It serves the Raymond area and other adjacent rural locations.

The Grand Jury found that each volunteer receives over 100 hours of training which includes basic firefighting operations and medical treatment. Volunteers work for the County and are supervised by CAL FIRE.

The Grand Jury found that the operational expenses for the Raymond Volunteer Fire Department are paid by the County Fire Department. Worker's compensation/liability insurance is also paid by the County.

The Grand Jury found that the County provides each volunteer with personal equipment at a cost of approximately \$4,000. Volunteers provide their own work boots at a cost of approximately \$300.

The Grand Jury found that Station #15 firefighters respond to public safety, fire, and medical calls. When calls are received by the Mariposa Command Center, the Center pages all PCF via the emergency radio system. Volunteers report directly to the scene of the incident. Confusion regarding the location of the incident may result from a lack of knowledge of the area by the dispatcher.

The Grand Jury found that CAL FIRE has a full cost recovery program. Madera County is reimbursed for responding to fire and traffic accidents only under this program. Eighty percent of Station #15's calls are for medical aid and therefore not reimbursed.

The Grand Jury found that the physical condition of Station #15 is in a progressive state of decay. There is evidence of dry-rot throughout. Sanitary conditions of the interior would not pass a Health Department inspection. Both the restroom and kitchen areas need to be renovated. The sleeping quarters are being used for storage of furniture. There is no designated entrance, office, or meeting area. The two acres surrounding Station #15 are maintained by volunteers and inmate work details from Mariposa County.

The Grand Jury found that the garage is too small. The two-bay garage houses a mobile emergency cooking center, miscellaneous pieces of equipment, and the 1981 fire engine. A 1978 reserve engine is parked in an uncovered area behind the station. The Grand Jury was told that a private citizen has donated a canopy for this engine. Each engine is kept in response mode – all peripheral equipment is on board.

The Grand Jury found that Station #15 does not have a jaws-of-life. A truck from another station with a jaws-of-life on board is dispatched to incidents involving traffic accidents.

The Grand Jury found that adequate water storage is a constant issue. Hill View Water District is Station #15's source of water. There is not enough pressure for water to be directly piped to Station #15. Water for Station #15's water tank is brought in by truck. This procedure increased the cost-of-operation at Station #15. The current water storage facility at Station #15 is barely adequate.

The Grand Jury found that a new CAL FIRE Station is located approximately one mile from Fire Station #15 and houses the personnel assigned to man Station #15.

Conclusions:

The Grand Jury concludes that volunteer firefighters are an integral part of the public safety of the County.

The Grand Jury concludes that Station #15 is unnecessary due to the proximity of the new Raymond CAL FIRE Station at 34951 Road 606.

Recommendation:

The Grand Jury recommends that the Board of Supervisors close Station #15 and transfer or sell all equipment and property.

Respondent: Written response required pursuant to PC 933(c)

Madera County Board of Supervisors
200 West Fourth Street
Madera, CA 93637

Respondents: Response Optional

Madera County Fire Chief
14225 Road 28
Madera, CA 93638

CAL FIRE
State Fire Marshall
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Sacramento, CA 94244-2460