



**2010-2011
Madera County Grand Jury
Final Report
Central California Women's Facility**

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Introduction:

On November 2, 2010, in accordance with California Penal Code 919 (b) which states "... the Grand Jury shall inquire into the condition and management of the public prisons within the county...", the Grand Jury visited Central California Women's Facility (CCWF), located at 23370 Road 22, Chowchilla, CA. The Grand Jury met with the Acting Warden and a Correctional Counselor II who conducted the tour.

Findings:

The Grand Jury found that CCWF was opened in October, 1990. It covers 640 acres. CCWF was originally designed to house 1,900 to 2,000 inmates. As of November 2, 2010, the inmate population was 3,778.

The Grand Jury found that CCWF is the only women's prison facility in California that houses death row inmates. Currently there are a total of 19 death row inmates, who are segregated from the general prison population. Troublesome inmates and those with serious disciplinary issues are also segregated.

The Grand Jury found that receiving and release is the first processing stop for incoming inmates and the last processing stop for out-going/paroled inmates.

The Grand Jury found that the State mandates inmate processing and transition into the general prison population must be completed within 120 days of arrival.

The Grand Jury found that each new inmate is physically and mentally evaluated prior to placement within the CCWF. Health care services consist of emergency care, mental health treatment, dental, and outpatient care. Mental health issues constitute a large part of treatment needs. The number of health personnel has risen with the increase of prisoners and their needs.

The Grand Jury found that Medical Personnel staffing is 237, comprised of psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, registered and licensed vocational nurses, site technicians, doctors, and dentists.

The Grand Jury found that nearly 1,000 health care appointments are made per day. Half of all visits are for mental health services; the remainder is split equally between dental and general medical services.

Approximately 22,000 drug prescriptions are issued per month, which equates to about six prescriptions per inmate monthly. No generic drugs are supplied.

The Grand Jury found that basic maternity and hospital after-care and pediatrics for inmates' newborns are provided on-site. Medical imaging is performed in a mobile van on-site, depending on the number needed at a single time. If only one or two are required, the procedure is performed off-site. Additional off-site services consist of dialysis and ICU care.

The Grand Jury found that all California State Prison hospitals have been placed under federal receivership as the result of a class-action lawsuit. The court has ordered that all inmates must be seen and/or treated within 24 hours of a complaint.

The Grand Jury found that CCWF and Prison Industries Authority offer inmates who meet the criteria the opportunity to work and earn wages. Inmates make prison jumpsuits and women's night gowns. They also make state and national flags, both standard and ceremonial versions, which are only sold to state agencies. Each flag is hand-made, including the silk-screening process. Only five to six flags per day are produced.

The Grand Jury found that the antiquated equipment and work procedures used to make these items lead to accidents and injuries. Many of the functions are performed by hand, thus exposing the inmates to potential injury.

The Grand Jury found that education/training is offered to qualified and motivated inmates. Courses are provided by volunteers from the general public and community college instructors. By participating in these programs an inmate can achieve an AA degree, high school diploma, or G.E.D. Vocational courses with certification in auto body/paint, automotive service, cosmetology, electronics, and office services I and II are offered. Graduation ceremonies are held twice a year. One hundred fifty-three inmates participated in the November graduation ceremonies. Eleven inmates earned AA degrees.

The Grand Jury found that the education department has a total of 27 personnel with seven academic programs and six vocational programs. Four additional specialized academic programs are funded by grants. There is a waiting list for all classes. The current education budget is \$3,342,326.

The Grand Jury found that there are 32 cells per housing unit. There are eight inmates per cell, for a total of 256 inmates in a unit. There are four sets of bunk beds in each cell and a locker for each inmate. Each cell has two sinks, one toilet, and one shower separate from the living quarters. The shower and toilet have a modesty screen instead of doors. There are no restrictions placed on water usage, showering time, or electric usage. Temperature control is a concern, as excessive heat can impact those inmates taking psychotropic medications. Cell blocks are cooled by evaporative coolers. The heating and cooling units on the roof of each building are original equipment, twenty plus years old.

The Grand Jury did not tour the kitchen area due to time constraints, but did meet with the Food Services manager. The Food Service annual budget is \$3,590,000. The budget to feed each inmate is \$2.57 per day, which includes breakfast, lunch, and dinner. There are daily diet standards which must be met. One of the state mandated guidelines is that inmates are to receive 3,300 calories per day.

The Grand Jury met with the Associate for Business Services, a Services Officer II, and the Correction Plant Manager. The allocated total budget for operating expenses for the prison is \$77,180,853, of which the medical budget is \$47,683,385. The Grand Jury found that the custody coverage cost per inmate, per annum is \$41,926.92, which includes costs related to the institutionalization, education, and medical expenses.

The Grand Jury found that the prison meets and well exceeds all recycling mandates imposed.

The Grand Jury found that the prison does not have water meters in all areas. Design Criteria Guidelines estimates a female inmate will utilize approximately 220 gallons of water per day. The prison uses 628,000 gallons of water per day. The water is utilized for daily operations which includes feeding, showers, restrooms, medical, maintenance, laundry, and irrigation.

The Grand Jury found that the following water conservation measures are in place: low flow shower heads and faucets, low flow valves in toilets, reduction of landscape sprinklers, and removal of vegetation and lawn areas.

Since January 2010 Prison Industries Authority has utilized approximately 4,043,000 gallons of treated wastewater to irrigate alfalfa fields located at CCWF and Valley State Prison for Women (VSPW).

The Grand Jury found that CCWF proposed, submitted, and had approved a solar energy system. It has not been constructed due to lack of funding.

The Grand Jury found that Fire Station #5 is located on the CCWF prison grounds and has been in operation since 1990. In 1993 the CCWF Fire Department entered into an agreement with Madera County for reciprocal fire services. In 1994 the CCWF Fire Department became a shared service with VSPW which is located adjacent to CCWF. The State Fire Marshall has authority over Station #5, which is staffed by one chief, five captains, one Hazmat specialist, and ten inmate firefighters, who work and reside at the station. Station #5 covers an area of 225 square miles and responds to approximately 400 calls per year. The station appeared to be well managed and maintained.

The Grand Jury toured Station #5 and was shown their recent acquisition, a breathing equipment air compressor, costing \$47,000 and obtained through a Homeland Security grant. Other equipment assigned to Station #5 is vintage, but in good working order.

The Grand Jury found that the 400,000 sq. ft. multi-use warehouse facility holds a 30 to 60 day supply of food and dry goods for the Prison.

Conclusions:

The Grand Jury concludes that CCWF is well managed and maintained by an organized, efficient, and dedicated staff.

The Grand Jury concludes that due to budget cuts the educational and vocational programs, which motivate an inmate's behavior in a positive manner, are suffering the most. The Station #5 inmate program is a prime example of what works. Eighty percent of the inmate participants do not return to prison. They leave the program well equipped to support themselves and their family and re-join society. The average recidivism rate is 70% for the general population.

The Grand Jury concludes that medical treatment is the largest CCWF operating budget expenditure. As long as medical treatment is under federal receivership, this will not change.

The Grand Jury concludes that energy/water management could be achieved by instituting prudent conservation measures.

Recommendations:

The Grand Jury recommends that in order to avoid additional strain on budgets in educational and vocational programs, additional volunteers be recruited.

The Grand Jury recommends that CCWF evaluate the need for an expansion of inmate programs similar to the one sponsored and supported by the Fire Department.

The Grand Jury recommends that each department/division of the prison seek cost cutting measures. Special emphasis should be made in the areas of recycling and energy/water conservation. While costs saving measures are in place, more should be done in the areas of recycling and energy/water conservation.

The Grand Jury recommends that the Prison Industries Authority review safety measures for production and manufacturing activities.

Respondents: Written response required pursuant to PC933(c)

Central California Women's Facility
Warden
23370 Road 22
Chowchilla, CA 93610

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
1515 S Street, Room 400S
Sacramento, CA 95811

Respondent: Response Optional

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