



**2010-2011  
Madera County Grand Jury  
Final Report  
Madera City Fire Department, Station #6**

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**Introduction:**

The Grand Jury visited Fire Station #6 located at 317 North Lake Street, Madera, California 93638, and met with the Battalion Chief, a Fire Captain and a Firefighter.

**Findings:**

The Grand Jury found CAL FIRE employees who staff this station are professional, highly motivated, and a very cohesive group who do what is necessary to get their work done. This was evidenced when two firefighters excused themselves to respond to a “call” during the Grand Jury interview. The station is manned 24-hours a day, seven days a week. There has been no change from the complement of personnel found by the 2007-2008 Grand Jury.

The Grand Jury found, when discussing the duties and responsibilities of staff with the Battalion Chief, that all personnel are overloaded. As an example, the Battalion Chief is responsible for the routine oversight, staffing, and paperwork for Stations #6 and #7. In addition, she is responsible for the majority of the payroll paperwork for six City and County Fire Stations. Station staff provides aid to those calling for emergency medical assistance, assists law enforcement when dealing with vehicle accidents, responds to structures fires, and assists with wild-land fires.

The Grand Jury found that this station is responsible for providing emergency services to a growing population of several thousand. The geographical area of coverage has increased due to population shifts. The Battalion Chief noted that there are a significant number of empty buildings/homes within Station #6 area of responsibility – empty buildings/homes are more of a fire hazard and a greater challenge should a fire occur.

The Grand Jury found that the common areas of Station #6 have been renovated, including a completely remodeled kitchen. The sleeping quarters provide limited privacy. A single bathroom serves all staff, both male and female.

The Grand Jury found that all mandated training is conducted in-house, which lessens the need for the backfilling of positions. Backfilling costs for off-site training can be over \$2,000 for each person per training session.

The Grand Jury found the Station’s inventory contained several turn-out kits, each costing over \$2,000. Because it can take an extended period of time to receive a turn-out kit for new personnel, it is necessary to maintain an inventory of additional kits in several sizes.

The Grand Jury found that breathing equipment used for City and County is not compatible.

The Grand Jury found the vehicles assigned to Station #6 are a 1991 reserve engine #206, a patrol (small pumper) which affords easy access behind homes, and a 2002 engine with 56,000 miles. The reserve engine needs replacement as it does not meet current diesel emission standards.

**Conclusions:**

The Grand Jury concludes that Station #6 has had some improvements since the Grand Jury visit of 2007-2008, although the sleeping quarters are still in need of an upgrade and an additional bathroom.

The Grand Jury concludes City and County breathing equipment needs to be standardized.

The Grand Jury concludes that Madera's population growth has placed added responsibilities on individuals manning and operating this fire station. While this has placed pressure on most personnel, the individuals involved are accepting the added responsibilities willingly.

The Grand Jury questions the cost effectiveness of high inventory turn-out kit levels at Station #6 and any other stations given the fact that hiring levels are low and the inventory may remain unused for extended periods.

**Recommendations:**

The Grand Jury recommends that training and upgrading the levels of expertise of those staffing Station #6 should continue.

The Grand Jury recommends the City of Madera add a second bathroom and remodel the sleeping quarters at Station #6.

The Grand Jury recommends Madera City Fire Department establish an inventory pool of equipment, i.e. turn-out kits.

The Grand Jury recommends the City of Madera standardize breathing apparatus, making it compatible with Madera County equipment.

**Respondent:** Written response required pursuant to PC933(c)

Madera City Council  
205 West Fourth Street  
Madera, CA 93637

**Respondents: Response Optional**

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

Madera City Fire Chief  
14225 Road 28  
Madera, CA 93638

CAL FIRE  
State Fire Marshall  
PO Box 944246  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460