



**2011-2012
Madera County Grand Jury
Final Report
Madera County Central Garage**

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Introduction:

The Madera County Central Garage is responsible for servicing and repairing all Madera County vehicles, except those used by the Road and Fire Departments. The County's vehicle fleet includes sedans, ½-ton through 1-ton pickups, vans, as well as emergency vehicles assigned to the Sheriff's Department. General oversight of Central Garage is provided by the County Administrative Officer (CAO), with the Automotive Shop Supervisor in charge of the day-to-day operations. Staffing includes the Shop Supervisor, 3 Automotive Technicians, a Senior Automotive Technician, and a Parts Assistant II.

The Central Garage was selected for Grand Jury review due to its relocation last year to a new 10,000 square foot modern facility located at 14355 Road 28, Madera. Its old location was sold to the State for the new County courthouse. The new facility has metal fabrication, smog, and tire shops and 6 bays equipped with 4 automotive lifts. The facility is designed for expansion. A fenced area surrounding the facility provides parking spaces for 84 vehicles with an additional 4 handicapped spaces.

In its review, the Grand Jury examined the department's budget, staffing levels, organization, operation, and security. Interviews were conducted with the CAO, shop supervisor, an automotive technician, the parts assistant, and representatives of two County departments which utilize Central Garage services. The Grand Jury also toured the Central Garage facility.

Findings:

1. The Grand Jury found that Central Garage was well organized and very clean.
2. The Grand Jury found that the lighting for the bays was located on the 20 to 22 foot high ceiling of the garage.
3. The Grand Jury found that the facility's security measures include perimeter fencing topped with razor wire, internal motion detector alarms, an external gate alarm, and after-hour card key access.
4. The Grand Jury found that the fuel dispensing system at Central Garage is currently being automated to capture vehicle and driver identification data, vehicle mileage, and quantity of gasoline obtained.
5. The Grand Jury found that only frequently used parts are stocked at Central Garage, minimizing inventory costs.

6. The Grand Jury found that when non-stocked parts are needed, the parts assistant purchases from local parts suppliers based on price and availability.
7. The Grand Jury found that the automotive technicians are required to furnish their own tools.
8. The Grand Jury found that the automotive technicians are reimbursed 50% of tool purchases annually, up to \$500.
9. The Grand Jury found that the staff works as a cooperative team, sharing specialty tools and brainstorming ideas for solving difficult repair problems.
10. The Grand Jury found that Central Garage staff alternate mandatory furlough days, thus keeping the garage open for business Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
11. The Grand Jury found that Central Garage schedules every vehicle for preventative maintenance every 4 months or 4,000 miles.
12. The Grand Jury found that with the use of synthetic oil, oil changes are performed with every other preventative maintenance service.
13. The Grand Jury found that the Central Garage operation is self-supported by charging County departments for services provided:
 - a. Departments which use pool vehicles or have assigned vehicles are charged standard rates based upon mileage utilization and type of vehicle.
 - b. Annual standard rates are set to include the costs of vehicle maintenance and repair, fuel, and future vehicle replacement.
 - c. Departments which own their vehicles are charged the actual costs of fuel used and maintenance and repair services provided.
14. The Grand Jury found that Central Garage outsources some repair jobs, such as automatic transmission and body work.
15. The Grand Jury found that Central Garage currently services and maintains about 340 vehicles in the County's fleet.
16. The Grand Jury found that on October 25, 2011, the Board of Supervisors (BoS) adopted the "Vehicle Replacement and Disposal Policy and Guidelines" which defines replacement/disposal criteria for the various types of vehicles in the County's fleet.
17. The Grand Jury found that on October 25, 2011, the BoS approved reduction of the County's fleet through salvage of 41 vehicles identified as high mileage, older inefficient models.
18. The Grand Jury found that the mountain area vehicles have to be brought 50 miles to the Central Garage in Madera for servicing or repairs.

19. The Grand Jury found that it requires approximately 5 man-hours when a mountain area vehicle is brought to and serviced at Central Garage.
20. The Grand Jury found that on August 8, 2011, the County issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to determine the viability and options for servicing and inspecting County fleet vehicles in the mountain area. As of the August 25, 2011 submission deadline, only one response to the RFP had been received.
21. The Grand Jury found that the shop supervisor is exploring the possibility of establishing a satellite garage in the mountain area to perform the vehicle maintenance and repair services.
22. The Grand Jury found that the County departments which utilize Central Garage services are very satisfied with the services received and the condition of vehicles provided.

Conclusions:

1. The Grand Jury concluded that the Shop Supervisor and staff have established a teamwork environment which promotes an efficiently run operation.
2. The Grand Jury concluded that the Shop Supervisor is constantly and vigorously seeking to improve operations and services of Central Garage.
3. The Grand Jury concluded that with the number of vehicles assigned to the mountain area, a great number of man-hours and money is wasted driving to Central Garage in Madera, waiting for the vehicle to be serviced, and returning to Eastern Madera County. This places the vehicle and operator out of service for an extended period of time as well as adding to the vehicle's operating cost. It may be economical to perform vehicle servicing and repairs in the Oakhurst area, either by Central Garage staff or outsourcing to local business.
4. The Grand Jury concluded that the standard of services to vehicles in the mountain area would be well maintained if performed by staff supervised by the Central Garage Supervisor.
5. The Grand Jury concluded that additional portable lighting would be beneficial to the employees working in the garage bays.

Recommendations:

1. The Grand Jury recommends that the County pursue the establishment of a satellite Central Garage facility in the mountain area.
2. The Grand Jury recommends that the County provide additional portable lighting for use in the garage bays.

3. The Grand Jury recommends that the Automotive Shop Supervisor be recognized and commended for his outstanding management of the County Central Garage.

Respondents: written response required pursuant to PC 933(c)

Madera County Board of Supervisors
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Informational: response optional

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