



**2011-2012  
Madera County Grand Jury  
Final Report  
Madera County Sheriff Oakhurst Substation**

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**Introduction:**

The Madera County Grand Jury made a scheduled visit to the Madera County Sheriff Substation in Oakhurst on August 11, 2011. This visit was performed pursuant to section 925 of the California Penal Code. The substation was selected for Grand Jury review due to its recent completion and occupancy by the Sheriff Department in June 2010. The facility was evaluated for functionality, serviceability, security, and cleanliness.

The substation is located at 48267 Liberty Drive in Oakhurst. The main facility is 9,400 square feet. It houses 25 sworn members of the Sheriff Department along with 7 civilian personnel. There are 15 patrol vehicles and 10 miscellaneous vehicles assigned to the facility. The substation houses Detective and Patrol Bureaus, Crime Lab, Evidence Storage, Community Service personnel, Records, Search and Rescue, Citizens on Patrol, and Bass Lake Boat Patrol.

Grand Jury members were met by the Mountain Area Commander, who gave a brief overview of the Department's utilization of the facility followed by a tour. The Commander was instrumental in planning and design of the substation.

**Findings:**

1. The Grand Jury found that the purpose of the substation is to provide a greater presence of the Madera County Sheriff Department to better serve the citizens of Eastern Madera County.
2. The Grand Jury found that the facility was well planned and suitably designed.
3. The Grand Jury found that a private cleaning service is currently contracted to clean the facility twice a week.
4. The Grand Jury found that the facility was clean and neat. However, staff expressed dissatisfaction with the facility's condition between cleanings.
5. The Grand Jury found that security cameras were located in and around the building. These cameras did not cover the North side or completely cover the East side of the building where prisoners are received.
6. The Grand Jury found that monitoring equipment for the security cameras was located in the wiring closet.
7. The Grand Jury found that the security camera equipment was not consistently monitored during normally staffed hours and not at all after hours and on weekends.

8. The Grand Jury found that the touch pad to open the automatic gate to enter the compound is located out of reach of the driver of a vehicle.

**Conclusions:**

1. The Grand Jury concluded that the Madera County Sheriff Substation in Oakhurst provides valuable services to citizens in Eastern Madera County. The layout of the facility was well planned, meets current needs, and will accommodate future growth. The layout provides an ergonomic design for efficient staff interaction and work flow.
2. The Grand Jury concluded that additional cleaning would help maintain a cleaner overall appearance and extend serviceability of the facility.
3. The Grand Jury concluded that security cameras are necessary to enhance safety and security. Security cameras need to cover the entire perimeter of the facility. Better coverage of the North and East sides of the building is needed, giving emphasis to the back entrance.
4. The Grand Jury concluded that security cameras should be monitored by the front desk as well as by the watch commander's office. The security cameras also need to be monitored by Sheriff Dispatch in Madera. This is a security issue as well as an officer safety issue.
5. The Grand Jury concluded that when a vehicle drives up to the closed gate, the driver must exit the vehicle and walk to the touch pad to activate the opening of the gate. This is inconvenient as well as a personal safety concern.

**Recommendations:**

1. The Grand Jury recommends that the Mountain Area Commander be commended for his contributions to the design and layout of the substation.
2. The Grand Jury recommends that the Sheriff Department evaluate the need for and cost of additional cleaning services for the facility.
3. The Grand Jury recommends that security cameras be positioned to cover the North side of the facility and the East side with emphasis on the back entrance.
4. The Grand Jury recommends that all security cameras be monitored by front desk personnel and the watch commander's office.
5. The Grand Jury recommends that Sheriff Dispatch in Madera be given the capability and responsibility to monitor the security cameras at the substation.

6. The Grand Jury recommends that either the gate touch pad be relocated or a remote activation device be placed in the vehicles.

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

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