

CITY OF CALISTOGA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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July 28, 2008

The Honorable Francisca P. Tisher
The Honorable Raymond A. Guadagni
Presiding Judges
Superior Court of the State of California
County of Napa
825 Brown Street
Napa, CA 94559

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Clerk of the Napa Superior Court

By: C. B.
Deputy

Dear Judges Tisher and Guadagni,

The City of Calistoga Police Department has been requested to respond to the 2007/2008 Napa County Grand Jury Report on Napa County Emergency Communications. The recommendations of their report as regards the Calistoga Police Department are:

1. On an urgent basis the Napa County PSAPs institute formal quality assurance programs, preferably audited by outside third party organizations qualified in the area of emergency communications.
2. Modify the Master Plan to include a consolidated Napa County PSAP and planning be initiated to establish the facility.

Up until 1980 the Napa County Sheriff's Office dispatched for the Calistoga Police Department from Napa. Problems encountered during that time, such as delays in dispatching of calls, led to the implementation of our own local dispatch center. The Calistoga Police Department has effectively run its own dispatch ever since. We are proud that our operation, as described by this Grand Jury, is "well organized" and its policies and procedures are up to date.

The Grand Jury has recognized that Calistoga Police Department dispatches effectively and has noted that the break down of information occurs as it is passed from Napa Central Dispatch to Cal Fire. In our opinion, consolidating dispatch services does not address that problem, since calls would still have to be transferred to Cal Fire.

The Grand Jury's report focused primarily on medical emergency calls for service because of the problems that occur during the transfer of these calls. Emergency medical calls for service are only a small portion of the calls handled by our dispatch. In 2007 the Calistoga Police Department logged 7,526 calls for service. 375 were emergency medical calls. To address the issues of delays and possible data loss during call transfers

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this department instituted a policy of pre-alerting our fire department of pending dispatches. This has resulted in the Calistoga Fire Department having the lowest response time to calls in the county.

The Calistoga Dispatch center provides a wide array of services to the City of Calistoga which includes:

- Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP)
- Front lobby reception
- Data entry and computer support
- Records Clerk
- Holding cell monitoring

Other benefits of Calistoga's dispatching include a local's knowledge of the area, its residents, businesses and working relationships with other city departments. Also, the department can maintain close supervision of its dispatchers and monitor the effectiveness of its policies and procedures.

We recognize along with the Grand Jury that the need for quality assurance is paramount. Recurring errors threaten life, safety and the confidence the public has in its police department. The Calistoga Police Department will develop a method for recording and analyzing its errors as a measure to bring accountability to our PSAP.

The City of Calistoga thanks the Grand Jury members for their dedication and thoughtful recommendations. The responses contained in this letter are in accordance with section 933c of the California Penal Code.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Mills
Chief of Police