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Nov/Dec.08

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THE JACOB JOURNAL

A Newsletter from Vice Chairwoman Dianne Jacob

Winter 2008



County may Weed out Thirsty Landscaping

Serving the Cities of:
El Cajon
La Mesa
Lemon Grove
Poway
Santee

Serving the communities of:
Agua Caliente
Allied Gardens
Alpine
Barrett
Blossom Valley
Bostonia
Boulevard
Campo
Canebrake
Casa de Oro
Crest
Cuyamaca
Dehesa
Del Cerro
Descanso
Dulzura
Eucalyptus Hills
Fernbrook
Flinn Springs
Granite Hills
Grantville
Guatay
Harbison Canyon
Jacumba
Jamul
Julian
Lake Morena
Lakeside
Mount Helix
Pine Hills
Pine Valley
Potrero
Ramona
Rancho San Diego
Rolando
San Carlos
San Pasqual
Santa Ysabel
Shelter Valley
Spring Valley
Tecate
Tierra del Sol
Vallecitos
Wynola

Serving the Indian Reservations of:
Barona
Campo
Cosmit
Cuyapaipa
Inaja
Jamul
La Posta
Manzanita
Mesa Grande
Santa Ysabel
Sycuan
Viejas

As San Diegans face water rationing in the near future, the County of San Diego may soon mandate drought-tolerant and fire-resistant landscaping for all new construction projects in the unincorporated area.

At the request of Vice Chairwoman Jacob, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously last month to consider stricter landscape requirements that would swap thirsty vegetation with varieties that use less water and can slow the spread of fire.

A report is due back in the spring.

Some 60 percent of residential water usage goes toward watering yards, reports the San Diego County Water Authority. Water agencies across the region have been calling on San Diegans to voluntarily conserve water and warning of drastic cuts and shortages as soon as January.

Supervisor Jacob believes that by requiring water-wise and fire-wise landscaping, the County can help San Diegans save water, protect homes and even save money.

She praised building industry officials who supported the proposal and said businesses, residents and government need to join forces to increase water conservation.

"We are an arid region facing record drought and dwindling water supplies. The statewide water crisis is everyone's problem," Jacob said.

Smart Vegetation
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An Eyesore No More

'Bamboo City' Dismantled in Spring Valley

The final pile of garbage from a decades-old transient encampment in Spring Valley has been cleared and Vice Chairwoman Dianne Jacob is praising the many partners that helped with the massive cleanup.

Twelve County Probation Department work crews, totaling 158 public service workers, and twelve supervising probation officers spent two consecutive weekends



Breaking it down: Supervisor Jacob thanks crews for cleaning up the mess.

cleaning up the now notorious "Bamboo City," adjacent to the Spring Valley Swap Meet on Quarry Road. Over the years, the

Bye Bye Eyesore
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Smart Vegetation

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Home, safe home: The firewise garden can help your family plant safe and smart vegetation.

“San Diegans are already conserving and many are eager to do more. Government and the private sector need to lead by example and ramp up our conservation efforts.”

Jacob encouraged residents to visit the Water Conservation Garden at Cuyamaca College. In partnership with the San Miguel Fire Protection District, the garden features a fire-wise exhibit designed to educate homeowners about fire-resistant landscaping. More information is available at www.thegarden.org.

Last year, the County strengthened its landscaping rules to require drought-tolerant and fire-resistant landscaping at new County projects.

Bye Bye Eyesore

Continued from page 1

the encampment drew the ire of local residents who complained about noise, trash, violence and other public safety issues. At one point, a registered sex offender was living among the bamboo. Some of the transients even managed to rig electricity from car batteries to power appliances like microwaves and televisions.

In total, 1,032 man hours were expended removing 84 tons of garbage.

“This was an extraordinary mess that required extraordinary muscle to clean up,” said Jacob who praised nearby residents and public and private agencies for joining forces to dismantle the encampment. “A huge thanks to Allied Waste, EDCO, the Spring Valley Swap Meet, the Probation Department, the Sheriff’s Department and the County’s Codes Enforcement Division for their efforts,” she said.

The cleanup project was carried out by the Probation Department and Sheriff’s Department. EDCO donated bins, Allied Waste waived dumping fees, and the Spring Valley Swap Meet provided technical assistance and financial support.

“The next step is to remove the bamboo to keep this community nuisance from coming back,” Jacob said.



Mountain of Trash: The takedown of “Bamboo City” yielded 84 tons of garbage.

Standing Up to the State’s Flawed Sexually Violent Predator Program

deserves to play host to a Sexually Violent Predator, not Boulevard or anywhere else. She continues to question the wisdom of State mental health experts who claim that this class of heinous offender can be reintegrated into society. East County has already been forced to contend with two Sexually Violent Predators released into the community of Jacumba earlier this year, one of whom immediately violated the conditions of his release. Mr. Norman belongs in an institution, not in a peaceful, rural area far removed from the costly and unproven treatment programs he is mandated to attend.

Here we go again. This month, another Sexually Violent Predator was ordered released into East County. John David Norman and his long history of sex crimes against children, will reside in Boulevard.

Supervisor Jacob continues to believe that no community

SDG&E’s High Wind Plan Suffers Blow Back

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) got an earful recently at a public hearing held in San Diego to examine San Diego Gas and Electric’s (SDG&E) role in the 2007 wildfires.

The Commission also heard from concerned attendees, including Vice Chairwoman Jacob, who questioned the utility’s new plans to turn off power lines in rural areas during high wind conditions.

Vice Chairwoman Jacob’s office met with SDG&E officials before the utility announced its plan and instructed SDG&E to work with communities to craft the plan. She advised SDG&E to attend community planning group meetings and work with water districts and school districts.

SDG&E was expressly warned about medical baseline customers and customers with electric-powered wells. It was also warned about the challenges associated with communicating emergency information to customers without power.

“The Commission needs to know that SDG&E did not heed this advice,” Vice Chairwoman told four out of five Commissioners present at the hearing. “Instead, the utility moved forward with an extreme plan without securing buy-in from affected communities,” Jacob said.

“My constituents are extremely self-sufficient. They are reasonable and willing to help. They feel blind-sided by this plan and are distraught by the manner in which it was rolled out,” Jacob said.

“I urge the Commission to provide immediate oversight of this poorly-crafted plan.” she said to applause.

Jacob also called on the Commission to force SDG&E to step up measures designed to prevent fires caused by lines, including tree-trimming and regular vegetation management along lines.

After the Cedar Fire in 2003, it was known that wooden poles could be swapped out with steel poles to prevent or slow the spread of wildfire. Steel poles provide better protection in terms of reliability to the rural grid. SDG&E has not changed out wood poles with steel poles in key areas. In addition, experts say that spacing lines farther apart can prevent fires too.

By its own admission, SDG&E has not placed a high priority on the undergrounding of distribution lines in high fire areas.

“The Commission should examine current rules governing the funding for undergrounding projects and ensure that the regulations consider fire danger,” Jacob told commissioners.

“Right now, the rules say projects must be on public property. Local jurisdictions must have ability to use undergrounding dollars where they are needed to save lives and property,” she said.

Save the Date or Set Your DVR...

You are Cordially Invited

State of the County Address

February, 11, 2009 at 6 p.m.

**Cuyamaca College
Rancho San Diego**

*Catch the action on the County Television Network!
Cox channels 19 or 24, depending on your location,
Time Warner Channel 24, digital cable channel 124.*



Recycle your used batteries!

Wondering what to do with used batteries that can’t go in the trash? The County’s Department of Environmental Health is partnering with the County Library to provide collection containers at many backcountry libraries. Collection sites are available at libraries in Alpine, Campo, Jacumba, Julian, Pine Valley, Descanso and Portero.

For library locations and hours visit www.sdcl.org.