



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

November 2, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

EVALUATION BY SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS TO IMPLEMENT A TSUNAMI EMERGENCY SIREN WARNING SYSTEM (ITEM 63-A, AGENDA OF JUNE 7, 2011)

On June 7, 2011, on motion of Supervisors Yaroslavsky and Knabe, the Board moved that upon completion of the California Emergency Management Agency's (CalEMA) survey, the Chief Executive Office, Office of Emergency Management (OEM) proceed with an evaluation by subject matter experts and report back to the Board the results of the evaluation, including the estimated costs and scope of a "Project," along with identifying potential funding sources to implement a Tsunami Emergency Siren Warning System in Los Angeles County.

CalEMA has informed OEM that previously available Federal and State grant funding has been expended on a specific targeted coast threat area in Northern California (Humboldt County) and that no further funding is being made available due to cutbacks in Federal and State grant programs (Attachment). In order to proceed with the recommendation to hire a subject matter expert to evaluate the cost impact and engineering requirement of the implementation of a siren warning system, funding will need to be identified.

TSUNAMI PREPAREDNESS EFFORTS

In the absence of the deployment of a siren warning system, there are several tsunami preparedness measures that can be undertaken to increase the safety of our citizens and guests in the tsunami inundation zone.

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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- **Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) –**
Provide support for the expansion of CERT teams within the incorporated area of Marina Del Rey. CERT teams can provide assistance to the community in times of emergency such as a tsunami or earthquake.
- **Coordinated Multi-Agency Tsunami Response Plans –**
Identify tsunami response requirements, including deployment of staff and equipment, between the Sheriff's Department, County Fire Department, Department of Beaches and Harbors, and the Department of Public Works. Develop plans for the coordinated use of staff, facilities, and equipment in response to a tsunami event.
- **Public/Private Tsunami Emergency Preparedness Outreach Campaign –**
Tsunami emergency preparedness measures can be expanded to provide additional distribution of the current tsunami information through schools (grades 1-12), local chambers of commerce, utility billings, and inserts in local telephone directories.

In our efforts to add a siren warning system as an additional level to the current tsunami warning system of the County, OEM will continue to work with our Federal and State emergency management partners to secure future funding opportunities. In the meantime, please be assured OEM will continue its efforts to improve tsunami awareness and preparedness among the Los Angeles County region.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me or a member of your staff may contact Senior Manager John Fernandes, OEM, at (323) 980-2261.

WTF:JF:JT:llm

Attachment

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Sheriff
Beaches and Harbors
County Counsel
Fire
Public Works

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

MIKE DAYTON
ACTING SECRETARY



Cal E·M·A
CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY

September 27, 2011

Jeff Terry
Program Manager
Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management
1275 North Eastern Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90063

Dear Mr. Terry,

As you requested, here is some information on CalEMA Earthquake & Tsunami Program activities related to tsunami sirens.

Based on a recent internal survey, the following counties have one or more tsunami siren(s): Contra Costa, Del Norte, Humboldt, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Luis Obispo, San Francisco, and San Mateo. Four of these counties answered "yes" to the question "Do your signaling devices have both voice and audible signal capabilities" and two responded that the tsunami warning tone differs from tones for other hazards.

There are currently two active NOAA "Remote Community Alert Systems Program" grants "to provide for outdoor alerting technologies in remote communities effectively underserved by commercial mobile service..." A "remote area" is defined for this grant as "a county with a population density of 100 persons per square mile or less..." The counties receiving these grants are Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino. These grant opportunities were offered in 2008 and 2009 and the funding source has been exhausted.

Some things to consider when looking at sirens are the equipment needed (the siren itself, activator, and controller), the location (land use restrictions and/or required studies, appropriate spacing, electricity availability), testing, maintenance, and community concerns. The Redwood Coast Tsunami Work Group prepared a document outlining some of these issues which I have provided to you separately. Sirens are more effective in areas where people are outside and in an isolated area with homogeneous tsunami exposure. They are significantly less effective where people are indoors, over great distances, and over linear areas.

Also, as I'm sure you're aware, sirens can be helpful for distant-source tsunamis which may take several hours to arrive on-shore, but for near-source events, public education and community outreach emphasizing the need to recognize an earthquake as the only warning are critical.


Another area of interest to you may be the NOAA/NWS TsunamiReady program which requires communities to have redundant notification systems both within their agencies and for the public. Sirens can be a part of this effort but are not required. For a list of CA communities that are already TsunamiReady, please see <http://www.tsunamiready.noaa.gov/>.

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(916) 845-8506 • (916) 845 8511 FAX

Name: J. Terry
Date: 09/27/11
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Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need additional information.

Sincerely,



Johanna Fenton
CalEMA Earthquake and Tsunami Program
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Oakland, CA 94612