COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294
(323) 881-2401

DARYL L. OSBY
FIRE CHIEF
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

May 24, 2011

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

HEARING ON RECOMMENDED FEE INCREASE FOR THE JUNIOR LIFEGUARD PROGRAM (ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

The Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County (District) is requesting a Junior Lifeguard Fee increase from $420 to $476 in order to maintain the Board mandated cost neutral zero-based budget for the program.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD, ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CONSOLIDATED FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY, AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Approve an increase of $56 to the Junior Lifeguard Program Fee from $420 to $476.

2. Find that the purpose of this increase is to meet increased operational expenses of the Junior Lifeguard Program.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

In June 1978, your Board directed that the Junior Lifeguard Program be self-sustaining through fees paid by participants. Since then, the program fee has been increased several times to ensure compliance with this policy. Therefore, we are recommending a fee increase to fully recover direct program costs.

The proposed Junior Lifeguard Program Fee reflects a complete accounting of direct employee costs (salary and employee benefits), uniform, and equipment costs. The recommended fee represents increased direct costs for the Program exclusive of overhead. Overhead has traditionally been absorbed by the District and the General Fund on a pro-rata basis, and we are recommending the continuation of this practice, which has been approved by your Board in the past. The fee methodology has been reviewed and approved by the Auditor-Controller.

Given the benefits of teaching water safety skills to our youth, this Program's proposed fee balances the need for cost recovery with the desire to maximize participation. There were a total of 3,100 paid participants in the summer of 2010, and we are estimating that 3,100 – 3,200 participants will be attracted to the five-week Program in the summer of 2011. The total Program costs will be approximately $1,477,000.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

There is no impact on net County cost. Direct Program costs are fully offset by fees paid by the participants.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Junior Lifeguard Program has been conducted by the County of Los Angeles for 51 years. The Program teaches beach safety and physical fitness to boys and girls from 9 to 17 years of age for five weeks during the summer. Each participant in the Program receives a swimsuit or trunks, a T-shirt with the Junior Lifeguard logo, and a one-year subscription (three issues) of "American Lifeguard" magazine.

A full-time Ocean Lifeguard Specialist, one Seasonal Ocean Lifeguard Specialist, four seasonal supervisors, two student workers, and eighty-five instructors (Ocean Lifeguards) comprise the Program's staff. This staff instructs Junior Lifeguards in ocean lifesaving techniques, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and first aid skills, environmental concerns, ocean safety, and ocean and beach sports. In addition to the improved personal ocean proficiency and health provided to every Junior Lifeguard, the optional Cadet Program provides additional lifeguard skills training and experience for veteran Junior Lifeguards planning to become professional lifeguards or pursue other career opportunities related to the marine environment.

The only requirement for participation in the Junior Lifeguard Program is the ability to meet a swim standard. Concerted efforts are made to attract youth from minority groups and from areas outside the coastal communities. Financial aid funded by program fees, in addition to community donations, will continue to ensure qualified youth can participate in the program regardless of their ability to pay.

The proposed fee increase is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it does not constitute a "project" subject to the act (Guidelines, Section 15061, Subd. (b) (1)).

This request for approval of the increased fee will be made after all public notification and hearing requirements as specified in Section 6062a and Section 66018 of the Government Code are conducted.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES

The Program's total enrollment has increased 35% since the last fee increase in 2007 from 2,290 participants in 2007, to 3,096 in 2010. The Program's goals are to maintain safety and quality as well as to continue to broaden the diversity of its participants. The Program's outreach efforts have traveled well beyond the coastal communities, providing education on ocean safety and information regarding the Junior Lifeguard Program throughout Los Angeles County.

The Junior Lifeguard Outreach Program continues to focus on three areas:

1. The inclusion of program sites with beaches more accessible to non-beach community residents. Cabrillo, Santa Monica, El Segundo, and Venice are beaches with freeway access, which reduces transportation time.
2. Providing transportation for children who live further than 15 miles from the ocean and otherwise may not be able to participate.
3. The cooperative effort with the Department of Beaches and Harbors W.A.T.E.R. (Water, Awareness, Training, Education, and Recreation) Program.

FEE INCREASE FACTORS

There are five main points concerning the Junior Lifeguard fee increase:

1. The Junior Lifeguard fee has remained the same since 2007 despite program cost increases and the discontinuation of the transportation subsidy by the Department of Beaches and Harbors. Therefore, the Program fee must be raised in order to fully recover direct program costs and continue to be self-sustaining as mandated.

2. In order to replace outdated and worn equipment, continue to provide a high quality uniform and various program supplies, and purchase enough new equipment to safely accommodate the increased number of Program participants, the Services and

Supplies budget for the Program should be increased to $200,000 (approximately $135,000 is dedicated for uniforms).

3. In order to effectively manage a Junior Lifeguard Program in excess of 3,100 children, provide adequate supervision of eight-five instructors and ensure participant safety, the current budgeted and dedicated Junior Lifeguard Program positions must be maintained, and the previous dedicated supervisory position (Youth Programs Captain) must be restored.

4. The requested fee increase from $420 to $476 ($95 per week) for FY 2010-2011 maintains the Los Angeles County Junior Lifeguard Program as the most cost-effective program for one of its size, as surveyed along the California Coastline:

City/County Sponsored Programs

LA County (Ocean)	$476	(5 weeks); 3,175 participants @ $95/wk.
Newport Beach	$750	(7 weeks); 1,200 participants @ $107/wk.
San Diego	$500	(4 weeks); 1,000 participants @ $125/wk.
Huntington City	$550	(8 weeks); 1,100 participants @ $68/wk.
Ventura	$325	(3 weeks); 300 participants @ $108/wk

Private Ocean Safety Camps

Aloha Surf camp	$1,060	(2 weeks)
Hammerheads	$1,000	(6 weeks)
Fitness by the Sea	$1,560	(5 weeks)
Beach Sports	$ 775	(5 weeks)
PV Surf camp	$1,050	(5 weeks)
Kanoa Surf camp	$1,320	(5 weeks)
Santa Monica Surf school	$1,275	(5 weeks)
Aqua Surf School	$1,850	(6 weeks)
Malibu Makos	$1,500	(5 weeks)

5. Parents of participants continue to request that the program be maintained at the traditional five-week length as often as the local school schedules permit. Without a fee increase to $476, program days may have to be cut in order to avoid a Program cost overrun. Many parents have indicated a preference of a fee increase over a loss of overall program days.

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid awards are allocated to qualifying participants based on family income and number per household, regardless of district affiliation. Therefore, the financial aid funds for the 2011 Junior Lifeguard Program have been budgeted to be $60,000. This 9% increase in available aid will accommodate any potential growth in the number of families who need financial assistance due to increased program costs.

CONCLUSION

Upon approval by your Board, please instruct the Executive Officer to return adopted copies of this letter to the following:

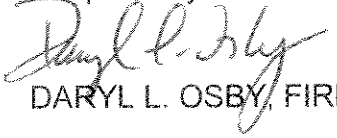
1. Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County
   Executive Office
   1320 N. Eastern Avenue
   Los Angeles, CA 90063

2. Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County
   Central Regional Operations Bureau
   141 W. Regent Street
   Inglewood, CA 90301
   Attention: Deputy Chief Mark J. Bennett

3. Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County
   Financial Management Division
   5801 S. Eastern Avenue, Suite 130
   Commerce, CA 90040
   Attention: Theresa R. Barrera, Chief

4. Consolidated Fire Protection District of Los Angeles County
   Lifeguard Division
   2300 Ocean Front Walk
   Venice, CA 90291
   Attention: Chief Lifeguard Mike Frazer

Respectfully submitted,



DARYL L. OSBY, FIRE CHIEF

DLO:cm

c: Chief Executive Office
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller
Director, Beaches and Harbors

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS IN SUPERVISOR DISTRICT

	2010	2009	2008
DISTRICT 1	13	24	23
DISTRICT 2	188	158	149
DISTRICT 3	541	484	429
DISTRICT 4	2280	2085	1842
DISTRICT 5	19	17	16
Out-of-County	45	37	35
TOTAL	3086	2805	2494

FINANCIAL AID IN SUPERVISOR DISTRICT

DISTRICT	1	2	3	4	5	
2010						TOTALS
95%	11	39	27	48	3	129
75%	0	2	4	5	0	10
50%	1	0	0	2	0	3
25%	0	1	2	3	0	6
10%	0	0	1	1	1	3
TOTALS	12	42	34	59	4	151
2009						TOTALS
95%	18	38	27	35	3	121
75%	0	1	1	2	0	4
50%	0	1	1	3	0	5
25%	1	0	1	1	0	5
10%	0	2	2	6	0	8
TOTALS	19	42	32	47	3	143
2008						TOTALS
95%	13	19	21	23	1	77
75%	3	4	6	8	1	22
50%	1	3	4	9	1	19
25%	1	6	1	8	0	15
10%	0	0	0	1	0	1
TOTALS	18	32	32	49	3	134