

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT RESPONSE  
SANTA BARBARA COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY'S 2005-2006 REPORT  
"EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION"

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 3: *Only the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department and the Lompoc Police Department Dispatch Centers have a Reverse 911 Notification System. These dispatch centers could be greatly impacted by large populated cities like Santa Maria and Santa Barbara requesting the use of their systems in a County-wide emergency.*

**Response to Finding 3: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.**

Recommendation 3: *Within Santa Barbara County, each city and special fire district dispatch center should establish its own independent Reverse 911 Emergency Notification System. This will reduce the possibility of overloading the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department and Lompoc Police Department Dispatch Centers in the event of a County-wide major disaster.*

**Response to Recommendation 3: This recommendation will not be implemented by the Sheriff as it pertains to other agencies.**

This recommendation will not be implemented by the Sheriff as it pertains to other agencies. However, the Sheriff's Department is committed to the reverse 911 technology to notify the public in emergency situations and to training other agencies in using this technology. Since the Sheriff's Department, through its Public Safety Dispatch Center, dispatches for the special fire districts of Carpinteria-Summerland, Solvang and Orcutt, they should not be responsible for establishing their own independent Reverse 911 notification system. Neither should the city of Guadalupe need to have a Reverse 911 notification system as their police and fire are dispatched through the Sheriff's center. Nothing should preclude the Montecito Fire District from obtaining a Reverse 911 notification system if they choose to do so. However, both the Sheriff's Department and the Montecito Fire District would prefer to use the current Sheriff's Reverse 911 notification system to prevent duplicate messages and in times of emergency conflicting messages. Notification to the public in a County-wide emergency could be severely taxed if Santa Maria or Santa Barbara also request to use either the County system or the Lompoc City system simultaneously to those agency's current use of their systems in notifying the public. If those two cities purchased the Reverse 911 notification system all agencies could share the telephone lines for single event notification thereby getting the word out to the public faster.

**Finding 8:** *In late 2005, representatives of agencies in Santa Barbara County that are responsible for providing the public with emergency information formed a public information group (EPIC), with the goal to address problems relating to the collection, verification and dissemination of accurate emergency information.*

**Response to Finding 8: The Sheriff's Department agrees with this finding.**

**Recommendation 8:** *All participating agencies should continue to support the efforts of the Emergency Public Information Communicators Group (EPIC), which is dedicated to improving the emergency public information system throughout Santa Barbara County.*

**Response to Recommendation 8: This recommendation has been implemented.**

The Sheriff's Department has been committed to the EPIC group since its inception and will continue to support this group.