

For Immediate Release

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Santa Barbara County Grand Jury

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Santa Barbara Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau

In reviewing the operation of the Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau, the 2014-15 Santa Barbara County Grand Jury (Jury) has serious concerns regarding the Coroner's Bureau facility. The Jury has released a report that cites continuing problems in the ventilation system and infrastructure relative to the potential danger to its employees and the public.

"The distribution of fumes poses a major concern with communicable diseases, aerosol transmissible diseases and other pathogens," pointed out Jury Foreperson Sandi Miller. "Personnel and the public could be exposed to these dangers when procedures are performed on high risk cases such as tuberculosis and other airborne infectious diseases."

In response to a former Jury's concern regarding this potential danger to employees and the public, Mechanical Engineering Consultants, Inc. was contracted to perform a study, and estimated it would cost \$130,000 to make the necessary ventilation system repairs. While the Board of Supervisors previously declared, "Health and safety concerns identified through the Facility Condition Assessment will be given high priority for funding," to date no funds have been allocated for facility renovations. In addition, this year's Jury identified specific concerns regarding equipment, testing, training, policy and documentation.

The entire report "Santa Barbara Sheriff-Coroner's Bureau" can be found on the Jury's website, www.sbcgj.org. The Santa Barbara County Grand Jury is a basic part of California government within the judicial branch. The Grand Jury is charged with keeping watch over county government as well as cities and districts operating within the county.