



Office of Mayor and City Councilmembers

Phone: (949) 361-8322 Fax: (949) 361-8283

Website: <http://ci.san-clemente.ca.us>

E-mail: CityCouncil@san-clemente.org

Joe Anderson, *Mayor*
Lori Donchak, *Mayor Pro Tem*
Jim Dahl, *Councilmember*
G. Wayne Eggleston, *Councilmember*
Steve Knoblock, *Councilmember*

George Scarborough, *City Manager*

April 30, 2008

Honorable Nancy Wieben Stock
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
Orange County Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Subject: "PARADISE LOST: If a Tsunami Strikes the Orange County Riviera..."

Dear Judge Stock,

The City of San Clemente is grateful for the Orange County Grand Jury's efforts to examine and evaluate the County's readiness for a tsunami. We are particularly pleased to have been included in this investigative effort and we appreciate the Grand Jury's objective and very thoughtful assessment of San Clemente's Tsunami Preparedness Program.

As directed by the Grand Jury, and in accordance with Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, the City of San Clemente provides its response to the following findings.

F-1 - The Sheriff Department's existing tsunami inundation maps are inconsistent with those used by the two largest coastal cities, appear to minimize the threat and could contribute to misinformed decision-making during a crisis.

The City of San Clemente agrees with this finding. The choice of maps currently available to study inundation due to floods or tsunami tidal action exists in the City's General Plan...the very same map that is used the Orange County Emergency Management office. Working in cooperation with the County Office of Emergency Management, the City will pursue the development of another map that shows greater detail and we will incorporate such a map into our revised tsunami readiness plans. We expect this finding to be satisfactorily resolved during the fiscal year 2009-10.

F2 - Existing tsunami signs along roadways are small, difficult to read and, in at least one city, not visible to visitors driving into the tsunami hazard zone.

The City of San Clemente understands the Grand Jury's concern in this area; however, the tsunami warning signs employed in our community are those that have been sanctioned, approved and sized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in their certificated Tsunami/Storm Ready Program. A field review of

the placement of the City's signage has revealed the need for two (2) additional Tsunami Warning Signs. These signs are on order and when received one will be placed on the westbound Avenida Pico just before its intersection with the Pacific Coast Highway and the other will be placed northbound on Pacific Coast Highway just before its intersection with Avenida Pico. The City believes the addition of these two signs will provide additional adequate and appropriate warning to visitors to the City's beach. This recommendation will be implemented by no later than June, 2008.

F-4 – Public education directed at beach visitors is inadequate, making them the least prepared and highest at-risk population in the event of a tsunami.

The City of San Clemente understands the concern the Grand Jury has expressed in this regard. The summer season is our busiest time for beach goers and many of those who visit our community's beaches are from out of town. Several options have been evaluated to provide additional tsunami awareness and readiness information to visitors. First, we will development specialized informational handouts to be placed at strategic locations of ingress to the beach areas. Our only concerns in this regard are there is no assurance every visitor will take a handout and if there are a large number of handouts taken, they most assuredly will become a littering problem for the beach. Second, the City maintains a page on its website <http://web1/sc/inf/weather/beach/beachreport.aspx>, short titled the San Clemente Beach Report. This website receives a high number of hits locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. In addition to the Tsunami Warning sign depicted o this page, we have provided links to frequently asked questions about tsunamis and also provide tsunami information that is contained in the City's All Hazards Emergency Plan. This particular recommendation has already been implemented effective April 16, 2008.

R-1 – The Sheriff Department's Emergency Management Bureau: Develop a plan in coordination with beach cities to standardize tsunami maps for the entire Orange County coast.

The City of San Clemente agrees with this finding. A meeting has been scheduled in May 2008 by Orange County Emergency Management to discuss the development of new maps using more up-to-date information and newly acquired technical data. The City will, to the extent funding is available, support this initiative and we would expect this recommendation would be completed by the County by the end of fiscal year 2008-09.

R-2a – All beach cities and the County on behalf Sunset Beach: Replace all small and medium sized tsunami signs with the largest tsunami signs authorized by Caltrans.

Once again, the City of San Clemente appreciates and understands the concern expressed by the Grand Jury in this regard; however, the City is employing the largest signs that are available and are sanctioned by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for the Tsunami/Storm Ready Program.

R-2b – All beach cities and the County on behalf of Sunset Beach: Post the largest tsunami hazard zone signs visible to inbound traffic on major roads and on Pacific Coast Highway if tsunami hazard signs are not already posted there.

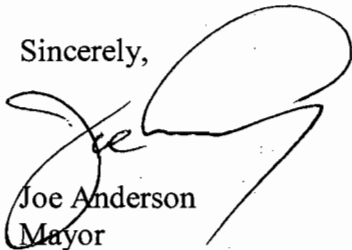
As stated previously under Section F-2, the City of San Clemente has determined there is a need for two additional Tsunami Warning Signs and these signs will one be placed on westbound Avenida Pico just before its intersection with Pacific Coast Highway and the second sign will be placed northbound on Pacific Coast Highway just before its intersection with Avenida Pico. The recommendation will be implemented by June, 2008.

R-4 – All beach cities and the Sheriff Department's Emergency Management Bureau: Develop methods to communicate tsunami public education messages to beach visitors.

The City of San Clemente agrees with this finding. In this regard, the City would respectfully direct the Grand Jury's attention to the City's previous response provided under Section F-4.

Once again, the City of San Clemente appreciates having had the opportunity to work with the Grand Jury on this very important report and should the Grand Jury or any member of its staff have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the City Manager, George Scarborough, at 949.361.8322 or e-mail at ScarboroughG@San-Clemente.org.

Sincerely,



Joe Anderson
Mayor

cc: City Council Members
George Scarborough, City Manager
David N. Lund, Director, Public Works
James Russell, Emergency Planning Officer