



COUNTY OF LAKE

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Promoting an Optimal State of Wellness in Lake County

MEMORANDUM

Jim Brown
Health Services Director
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DATE: 8/25/14

Karen M. Tait, M.D.
Health Officer
(707) 263-1090

TO: The Honorable Stephen O. Hedstrom, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court, via the Lake County Board of Supervisors

Ray Ruminski, REHS, Director
Environmental Health Division
(707) 263-1164

FROM: Jim Brown, Health Services Director

SUBJECT: Required Response to FY 2013-14 Grand Jury Final Report on Environmental Health Oversight

Pursuant to Penal Code Section 933, I am submitting this response to the FY 2013-14 Final Grand Jury Report via the Lake County Board of Supervisors.

Response to Environmental Health Oversight (Pages 25 – 26)

Response to Discussion and Analysis:

Overall, we agree with the Discussion and Analysis, but we would like to clarify some of the points made in section 1.

#1 discusses the number of food facilities in Lake County, risk factors, and the number of “required” inspections for each facility. The State statute that authorizes the permit and inspection program and defines all of the standards that we follow does not specify the number or frequency of inspections. The risk factors and “required” number of inspections are set by Lake County Environmental Health internal policy.

Response to Findings:

F1, F2. The present staffing level makes it constantly challenging to accomplish any set number of food facility inspections. Failure to meet departmental inspection frequency goals, however, does not put Lake County Environmental Health in violation of any State statute or County Ordinance.

F3. Health Services Department is currently reviewing the appropriateness of fee waivers and will be bring this before the Board of Supervisors for discussion.

Response to Recommendations:

R1. We have already started to explore avenues to increase revenue for food inspections in Lake County. Once we have gathered all of the necessary data, we will take this before the Board of Supervisors for future

discussion and direction. (F1, F2, F3)

R2. The reassignment of Environmental Health staff from other programs, other than for very short assignments, will negatively impact other important, mandated programs. Rather than just robbing Peter to pay Paul, we have shifted some of our priorities to emphasize inspections of higher risk fixed food facilities over other less critical tasks and lower risk facilities. Our goal is to become current on inspections of all food facilities by the end of the year.

We appreciate the Grand Jury's oversight to help Environmental Health find ways to improve, while noting the many challenges we face. We will continue to explore ways to improve not only the food inspection program, but all of Environmental Health's programs.