

# HILLSBOROUGH

W I N T E R 2 0 0 6



## JOSEPH D. GRANT

### HILLSBOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL INDUSTRIALIST

By Michael Svanevik & Shirley Burgett

WEalthy Hillsborough industrialist Joseph D. Grant, who maintained a lifelong romance with California's Sequoia sempervirens, coast redwoods, wasn't a man who minced his words.

"The heritage which we pass to our children must not be less than what we have received," he declared in the summer of 1917. "The big trees are being indiscriminately slaughtered...to make stakes for grape vines, boxes for vegetables and railroad ties."

Cutting these towering giants for such purposes, said Grant, is "like breaking up a grandfather's clock for kindling to avoid chopping logs in the woodpile...or lighting one's pipe with a Greek manuscript to save the trouble of reaching for matches."

California's lumber titans found it difficult to dismiss Grant's comments as the ramblings of a tree-hugging activist. He was one of Northern California's leading financiers and industrialists who lived in exclusive Hillsborough where he'd built luxurious Villa Rose on a 50-acre forest estate in the hills. A subsequent owner renamed the estate Strawberry Hill.

Born in 1858, Grant was the son of Adam Grant who, along with Daniel T. Murphy had formed the largest dry goods firm in San Francisco.

Young Grant was well schooled. There were three years of education at the University of California followed by a tour of Europe and study at La Sorbonne in Paris.

Upon return, Grant was among the first to recognize that electricity was the wave of the future, serving "railroad and telegraph, factory and mine, farm and home." Water was the basis of electricity and, therefore, he said, was more valuable than gold. Grant became a pioneer promoter of hydro-electricity and in 1911 incorporated the California-Oregon Power Co. with himself as president.

Along with Hillsborough neighbor John Barneson, Grant also helped to pioneer California's oil industry through the formation of General Petroleum Co. Well before American entry into World War I, the company had 4,000 employees and was moving oil from the San Joaquin Valley along a 184-mile

pipeline to Los Angeles. With its own fleet of tankers, General Petroleum soon exported oil to China, Japan and Argentina. Company sales reached \$48 million by 1925.

For half a century after the Gold Rush, there was virtually no steel production in California. Considering this commodity essential to the state's growth, Grant opened Columbia Steel Co. in 1908 at the town of New York on Suisun Bay, a community soon more aptly renamed Pittsburg. By the outbreak of World War I, Grant found himself with another amazing bonanza.

All this notwithstanding, Grant despised the confines of an office, preferring the out-of-doors and rigors of polo and golf, both games he helped introduce to the West at the Burlingame Country Club. He was an avid fisherman, hunter and yachtsman. He owned two huge ranches, one near San Luis Obispo and the other east of San Jose at the base of Mount Hamilton where he bred polo ponies.

Still, his most enduring romance was for California's redwood trees, some as old as buildings constructed in the dawn of Christianity. The wanton destruction of these towering giants by the lumber companies was a concept repugnant to Grant. Relentless cutting was robbing the right of these noble trees to survive.

In the Palace Hotel, at a meeting hosted by Grant in 1919, a group of like-thinking Californians convened to form the Save-the-Redwoods League.

For the last 19 years of his life before his death in 1942, Grant served as chairman of the board of the organization. The League devoted itself to purchasing redwood groves by private subscription and to lobbying the public for acquisition of the finest stands along state highways.

Grant reasoned that the giant Coast Redwoods offered California a far greater economic benefit as a tourist attraction that would continue to bring visitors to the state than they would cut up for railroad ties, roofing shingles and cigar boxes.

As a token of the industrialist's devotion, a grove of Redwoods in the Del Norte coast region has been named the J.D. Grant Grove.



For 21 years, Grant served as chairman of the board for Save-the-Redwoods League. Below, Joseph D. Grant Grove, Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park.



# DOWN UNDER IN HILLSBOROUGH

## *A day with the sewer crew*

It was an interesting contrast. On a chilly morning, parked at the corner of Geri Lane and Forest View, were a shining 1931 Dusenber car and a 25,000-pound mud-splashed jet-vac truck. While the Dusenberg strutted its stuff and a professional photographer framed it between two brick gateposts with a backdrop of bright autumn leaves, the awkward-looking truck pulled over to the curb and waited. The Dusenberg garnered attention and praise while looks turned away from the ugly truck. Beauty and the beast. And just as in the fairy tale, the beast was not justly recognized. The jet-vac and city's sewer crew. The unsung heroes of the Town. Follow them for a day.

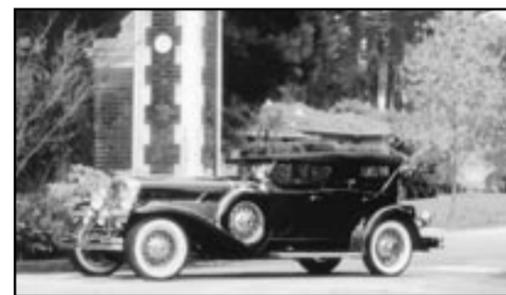
**6:30 a.m.** – Employees of Hillsborough's Sewer Department climb out of bed before the sun has risen and spend their days repairing and maintaining the dank pipes of the dark underground. At the Town's Municipal Services Center, they gather their daily assignments by 7:30 a.m. and hit the road.

**8:15 a.m.** – On this autumn morning, Wayne Rosaia and Lynn Berliner have already begun their regular maintenance with the jet-vac. Their coworkers have headed off to replace a broken manhole cover, a problem that was reported by a fellow Public Works employee. Sewer work is mostly maintenance, thanks to tree roots and grease from cooking oil. Tree roots seek out Hillsborough's old clay pipes and reach for any and every opportunity to infiltrate the slightest crack. The Town is in the process of replacing or lining the old clay lines. In the meantime, crews use the rodder truck, a smaller companion of the jet-vac, to tackle, grind up and spit out the obstructive roots.

**8:30 a.m.** – At Forest View and Eucalyptus, Wayne and Lynn begin their day's work with the jet-vac that is used on pipes fitted with a seamless lining that prevents root intrusion. Their goal is to find and remove the large blocks of hardened grease that clog the pipes and prevent smooth flow. They cone off the area, pry off a manhole cover and lower a hose and nozzle into the exposed sewer line. The truck holds 750



*A handsome Dusenberg, right, stands in contrast to the awkward jet-vac truck, below, that cleans the Town's sewer lines of debris, such as congealed grease, left.*



gallons of water that is shot out through the nozzle at 2,500psi (pounds per square inch) to move the nozzle through the pipe, clearing it, until it reaches the next manhole cover approximately 300 feet away. Another crewman stands at the second location and listens for the approaching nozzle. As it reaches the opening, he alerts via radio the truck crew who stop the water and reel in the hose. All clear. Future problems averted.

**9 a.m.** – Wayne and Lynn run into an obstruction on the second length of pipe. They retrack the clearing apparatus, pick up the cones, and move the huge truck to the receiving manhole and try the operation from a different direction. Wayne determines that the obstruction is simply a bit of clay from a residential lateral and there is no need to bring in a rodder. The line is cleaned and sewage flows smoothly toward one of two lines that leaves Hillsborough at a metered location and travels to either the Burlingame

or San Mateo sewer treatment plant.

**9:45 a.m.** – The truck pulls up to a nearby fire hydrant to replenish its 750-gallon tanks.

**9:55 a.m.** – The next length of pipe presents a challenge. The crew cannot readily locate the next manhole cover. After consulting a Public Works ring binder of maps, they find it in a neighbor's yard behind a fence and shrubbery, covered with leaves. "Sometimes it's tough in Hillsborough," Lynn said as he brushes off the debris. "In other cities, pipes run right under the street." He pulls out a can of green spray paint and marks the location for future ease.

**11 a.m.** – Returning from a break and driving by Floribunda and Pepper, the jet-vac crew passes a string of trucks with a Brownsville, Wisconsin logo. That is the contractor hired to line the pipes, and their machinery hums as it pulls linings down into lines and seals them.

**11:15 a.m.** – The crew waits for comple-

tion of the photo shoot of the Dusenberg, then tackles a few more stretches of main. Before noon they clear a main of large hunks of both grease and asphalt – the asphalt thoughtlessly dumped by a construction crew into a sewer.

The remainder of the afternoon follows the same course – positioning the truck, lifting manhole covers, lowering hoses, cleaning mains, retracting, and so on.

Wayne retired after owning his own liquor store and deli in South San Francisco for 27 years and is happy to be working outside. He's been with the Hillsborough Public Works Department for two years. Lynn has been with the Town's Public Works Department for only four months. A sewer crew of seven works five days a week, and more during storms or emergencies.

As the crew worked on this morning, cars with drivers on cell phones passed by, again and again, oblivious to the essential work, and the beauty of the beast.

## POLICE BLOTTER

### *Investigations*

Construction site burglaries consumed a large percentage of Hillsborough's police detectives' time during the latter part of 2005. In early October there was a rash of burglaries from construction sites, including an odd one in which the only item taken was a portable potty. Despite undercover surveillance, there were no breakthroughs until November when the San Mateo County Crime Lab made a positive identification of fingerprints lifted from two of the burglaries. The fingerprint evidence, plus additional evidence secured via warrant searches of the suspect's residence, led to the identification of a suspect already in the custody of the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department. The evidence was forwarded to the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office for prosecution. In the weeks following the suspect's arrest, only one construction site burglary was reported, apparently linked to a disgruntled employee who had been recently fired.

As of press time, Hillsborough's investigators had also issued an arrest warrant for a suspect believed to have stolen a credit card from a resident and used it to make purchases at several Home Depot stores. He was identified via video surveillance and recognized by the victim as a former employee.

Investigators are also working on three residential burglaries reported in late November.

### *2005 statistics*

While the final month of statistics for 2005 was not in as of press time, figures through November provide a fairly comprehensive overview of police activity for the year.

During that time, the HPD received 6,738 calls for service, 101 more than at the same time for 2004. Police made 67 adult arrests, 42 of which were for misdemeanor offenses and 17 for felonies. Thirty-nine were booked into jail and 28 were cited and released. There were 27 juvenile arrests, all for misdemeanors. Two were booked into Hillcrest Juvenile Facility and 25 were cited and released.

Criminal activity for 2005 showed vandalism as the primary problem, with 114

cases. Looking at burglaries and theft, most of the cases (28) occurred at construction sites. There were 10 residential burglaries. Total property related cases numbered 204 through November.

Of the 35 fraud related cases, there were 17 identity theft cases and 14 credit card fraud cases.

Police reported 39 criminal cases involving persons, with the largest number (12) for child abuse, followed by domestic violence (11) and assault and battery (10).

Through November, police handled 12 drunk driving incidents, 14 psychiatric committals, and 12 coroner cases or death investigations.

The traffic report for the year-to-date showed no fatalities, 11 injury accidents and 61 non-injury accidents. Most traffic citations were issued for overnight parking violations (459), followed by moving violations (366) and courtesy citations (166).

Police dispatch received 2,551 alarm activations, 834 of which were cancelled before dispatch. Alarm citations numbered 187.

Excerpts from police log for one recent month

- Tools stolen from a construction site on Scott, totaling \$2,929.
- Purse, miscellaneous items taken from a locked vehicle on El Cerrito, total damage \$279.
- Burglaries from residences on Hayne, Skyfarm and Pear. Taken were a safe and cash, totaling \$2,250, plus another \$200, a television, checks, credit cards and other items.
- Petty thefts amounting to \$150 each were reported at residences on Parrott and Denise. In both cases, items were stolen from unlocked cars.
- Residents on Waverly, Darrell, Oakdale and Pear all were victims of fraud involving unauthorized charges to credit accounts, theft of personal information, and theft of checks and credit cards.
- Non-injury collisions occurred on San Raymundo (a hit and run resulted in property damage) and on Buckeye (an unoccupied runaway vehicle resulted in property damage).
- There was an injury collision at El Camino Real and Floribunda resulting in two persons being transported to the hospital with minor to moderate injuries.

## TOWN BRIEFS

### At the November meeting, City Council:

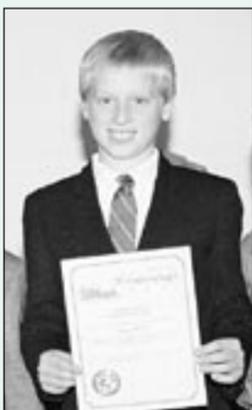
- Approved funding for a human resources specialist in the City Manager's Department. There is a five-step process for setting the salary, with the top step being \$90,000 annually.
- Approved a \$7,000 expenditure to help restore the gates and pillars at New Place Road, which are in need of re-plastering and upgrading to make them seismically sound. The project is being undertaken by the Hillsborough Beautification Foundation which plans to split the cost three ways with the city and the Burlingame Country Club.
- Directed staff to update an appraisal of an abandoned reservoir site at 115 Reservoir Road and determine the feasibility of selling the property. The reservoir was abandoned more than 30 years ago and the property is vacant.
- Heard a report on the poor and unsafe condition of the Gate House at Ralston and Eucalyptus drives. The roof of the 1000-square-foot, 1930's structure has collapsed and the interior is subject to vandalism.

### At the December meeting, City Council:

- Approved purchase of four police vehicles – two black and white Crown Victoria units and one administrative Crown Victoria for \$69,000 from the vehicle replacement fund; and one Expedition Special Service vehicle for \$30,000 in grant money. They also approved purchase of a \$21,600 forklift for the Municipal Service Center.
- Approved the expenditure of \$32,000 for two emergency repairs of a sinkhole at the intersection of Bellevue and Pepper avenues and the damaged storm drain beneath it, plus repair of a sewer main adjacent to Rowan Tree Lane damaged in a landslide which may have been caused by installation of a non-permitted retaining wall.
- Authorized funding \$100,000 for the Town's backflow device reimbursement program. The Town provides reimbursement of 50 percent of a resident's cost of installing a sewer backflow device, from \$500 up to \$1,000 for high-risk properties. The program is to run through December 2006.
- As a result of a report prepared and submitted by Hillsborough's Citizen's Trust, a private group, decided to form a citizen's committee to study the Town's regulation of house size in relation to lot size.
- Adopted a resolution approving the issuance and financing of \$12 million in bonds for water and sewer improvement projects.
- Approved spending \$36,500 for a software system to manage maintenance of the Town's wastewater collection system.
- Set a public hearing date of January 9 to add a chapter to an ordinance regarding the approval and placement of wireless facilities within the Town. The ordinance addresses the safety and aesthetic concerns presented by the new wireless technologies.
- Learned that the Hillsborough School District withdrew their application for an encroachment permit for the removal of approximately 43 Eucalyptus trees near Crocker School. The district decided to commission further study of the condition of the trees by an arborist.

### People

- In December, Tom Kasten was elected by City Council to a second term as mayor of Hillsborough. Likewise, Catherine Mullooly was elected to a second term as vice mayor.
- Council honored young resident Johnny Wilson at the December meeting. Johnny swam from Alcatraz Island to the San Francisco shoreline on October 10, shortly before his 10th birthday in 58-degree waters. He swam not only to break a record for the youngest to make the famous swim but to help victims of hurricane Katrina. He and six of his friends raised \$40,000 that was donated to the Red Cross relief effort.
- Four members of the Hillsborough Police Department were honored by Jim Granucci, head of the San Mateo County Crime Lab, for submission of exemplary quality latent fingerprints from burglary scenes. Officers Steve Tharp and Julianne Giusti were recognized for the detailed and diligent job they did in lifting fingerprints from construction site crime scenes, which led to breaking cases in Hillsborough as well as other cities. Also recognized were Inspectors Dave Agee and Rob Chinca for their fingerprint and shoeprint work.
- The Town of Hillsborough and Finance Director Edna Masbad have been recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada for receiving the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, the highest award for governmental budgeting.
- Walter Heyman has been named the new chair of the Town's Architecture Design Review Board, replacing long-serving Richard Reisman who will remain on the ADRB. George Jewett and Jennifer Werbe were appointed to serve second terms on the board.
- Central County Fire Chief Bill Reilly has announced that he will be retiring in the next year. Fire Captain Kim Olson is also retiring.
- The Town's new Deputy City Clerk is Miyuki Yokoyama.



### Miscellaneous

- If you have questions regarding the Hillsborough City School District's facilities improvement plan (Measure B), information is available by accessing the Web site at [www.HCSD.K12.Ca.US/MeasureB](http://www.HCSD.K12.Ca.US/MeasureB) or by calling the school district at 342-5193.

## IMPROVEMENTS PROMPT HIKE IN TOWN WATER RATE

Since January 1, 2006, water bills have shown a raise of 15 percent, the first raise since July 2004.

A number of factors contributed to City Council's decision to raise rates, the primary reason being debt service on bonds that are necessary to repair, maintain and upgrade the Town's 100-year-old water system. The law requires a certain level of revenue to cover operating expenses and debt service. Compliance with this requirement is mandatory to retain Hillsborough's good credit rating, which affects future borrowing capability.

Due to high rainfall levels last year, water consumption in Hillsborough is down 14 percent, ironically creating a condition that requires raising rates to maintain the required revenue level. Additionally, as a

consumer, Hillsborough is facing rising wholesale rates. The supplier of water, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, will be undertaking seismic improvements to the Hetch Hetchy system (source of water) and higher rates are an inevitable result of the project.

Hillsborough's water capital improvement program remains the primary reason for the rate hike. Ten years ago, the rehabilitation program began with \$30 million in bonds to maintain the Town's 14 pump stations, 18 storage tanks and 97 miles of pipelines. To date, water mains have been replaced or upgraded under more than 30 streets, fire hydrants have been added, computer monitoring systems have been installed and seismic improvements have been made. The work continues.

## WU WINS ANNUAL POSTER CONTEST

Jordan Wu, a student at South School, won the Grand Prize in the Central County Fire Department's annual fire safety poster contest. The contest drew more than 140 entries from students in kindergarten through fifth grades in the Hillsborough and Burlingame school districts.

First, second and third place winners were chosen from each grade, and the local students were recognized at the November 14 City Council meeting. Wu's poster depicted the importance of never leaving a candle unattended in a room.



## HEAR YE, HEAR YE

### Noise rules designed to enhance Town's tranquility

Hillsborough recently made changes to the Town's noise ordinance to simplify and clarify allowed levels of decibel disturbance. The purpose of the ordinance is to preserve and enhance the tranquility of the Town and to minimize neighborhood noise levels to the extent that is reasonably possible.

The ordinance defines two types of noise: normal noise and discretionary noise.

Normal noise is generated by everyday activity – cars, household appliances usually within the residence, human voices, domestic pets, wildlife, weather and other forces of nature, and other inevitable noises of living.

Discretionary noise is generated by activities outside of ordinary living – construction, heavy machinery, gas-powered and electric gardening tools, indoor and outdoor power equipment and other devices not included in normal noise.

There is no regulation of normal noise. It is allowed at all times, seven days of the week. However, the Town has placed rules on discretionary noise. These rules are not applicable to Public Works crews engaged in construction or street maintenance.

- Sundays and holidays (when Town Hall is closed for observance of a holiday) -- There is to be no discretionary noise of any kind.
- Saturdays – No gas-powered gardening devices to include leaf blowers, lawn mowers, hedge trimmers, edgers, rototillers and chain saws.
- Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. – Use of non-gas-powered tools is allowed if the combined noise does not exceed a standard 70-decibel reading.

Mondays through Fridays (except holidays):

- 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. – Allowed activities include construction, alterations, demolition and repairs providing that no individual piece of equipment shall produce a noise level exceeding 100 decibels at a distance of 25 feet from the source. Anyone can conduct an activity permitted by law that does not produce a noise level exceeding 70 decibels.

- 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. – Anyone may operate gas-powered or electric-powered gardening equipment providing the combined noise level does not exceed 70 decibels.

- 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. – Property owners, residents and family members may operate residential power equipment on the owner's or resident's property if standards are met.

For questions and information on fines and penalties, contact the Hillsborough Police Code Enforcement Department at 650-375-7497.

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

May 7, 2006 marks the 50th anniversary of the Hillsborough Concours d'Elegance. What began in 1956 as a small community car show has evolved into the longest-running concours d'elegance in the western United States. The first Concours emphasized beauty, grace and efficiency of hundreds of aesthetically-pleasing, well-designed products of automotive designers from the early 19th century to modern day. Today, the show continues to attract more than 20 classes of prestigious automobiles. Mark your calendar for the May 7 event and support 50 years of tradition.

## Citizens of Year / Community Care Award

When Randi and Gordon Murray, Citizens of the Year, moved to Hillsborough from the East Coast 18 years ago, they decided the best way to acclimate to their new surroundings was to become involved in their town. Volunteering, Randi said, has enriched their lives and made them feel at home. With two sons, Sam and Ben, in South School, the Murrays dedicated their free time to the Hillsborough schools. Randi served as treasurer and board member of the Hillsborough Schools Foundation for three years in the early 1990s and was on the Town's Financial Advisory Committee for three years in the late 1990s.

When Randi left the Foundation board, she was replaced by Gordon who also served for three years and co-founded the Foundation's Scholars Circle. The Murrays said they were "honored and thrilled" to be selected for the Hillsborough Schools Parent Group Award. They added, "Volunteerism is its own reward. We've made friends and had fun."



Community Care Award recipients Kathy and Rick Birkett have given to Hillsborough something very special – gifts that keep on giving. Together they have a combined 55 years educating Hillsborough students, having taught more than 1,000 children in various programs. Now, the Birketts report, many of the oldest students live, work, volunteer and vote in the Bay Area, even some in Hillsborough. Two of their former students are fellow teachers in the school district. Kathy has taught at West School for 21 years. Rick has taught at South School (1972-1985), West School (1985-1991) and North School (1995-present). Additionally he was director of Summer Recreation Programs and Summer School principal from 1978 through 1990.

The Community Care Award is given annually to individuals living outside Hillsborough who have made major contributions to the community's children. "We are humbled to be included in this group," Kathy said. "We are grateful for the opportunity to work with a staff, parent group, and resident community dedicated to the education and welfare of the community's children."



## EMERGENCY HELP ENHANCED BY NEW WIRELESS 911 SYSTEM

In the not-too-distant past, if you encountered an emergency while driving around Hillsborough and phoned 911 on your cell phone, your call would most likely have been directed to the Golden Gate District of the California Highway Patrol in Benicia.

Things are different now in Hillsborough. When severe weather hit the Town hard on New Year's Eve weekend, the dozens of 911 storm-related calls placed by local cell phone users went directly to the Hillsborough Police Department's (HPD) dispatch center, saving often-precious minutes in response time.

The siphoning of local 911 wireless calls to the local police station is the result of hours of coordination between Captain Mark O'Connor and the major cell phone companies, plus adjustments to software programs in the Hillsborough dispatch center. "What we have now, as of October, is a tremendous tool for the residents and us," O'Connor said, adding that other than man-hours, the system cost the Town nothing. O'Connor is particularly proud of the fact that the new system not only directs wireless calls to dispatch but supplemental software development also shows the location of the cell phone user on a dedicated mapping system computer screen in dispatch when the call is placed. The mapping component increases speed and reliability of response and verifies information related by the caller.

Hillsborough was one of the first of the 23 San Mateo County law enforcement agencies to incorporate wireless calls into their 911 systems. Hillsborough, along with Belmont, Burlingame, Menlo Park, Redwood City, Redwood City CHP, San Bruno and San Carlos, is on the leading edge of wireless call capability.

Not only is the system good for Hillsborough, it also lessens the load on the Benicia CHP center which has had to steadily increase its number of dispatchers since cell phone usage began. Benicia's CHP office employs about 25 dispatchers, 24-7. In contrast, a busy sheriff's office has about eight dispatchers. The local system assures local service, quickly dispatched.

It increases the eyes of the police force, too. "Now, anyone driving through Hillsborough is a potential reporting party," O'Connor said.

## INTERESTED IN RENTING A CORNER OF YOUR HOUSE?

City Council recently adopted a wireless communications ordinance that allows cellular telephone providers to install antennae on residential structures or private property. A wireless facility usually consists of 4 to 12 antennae mounted on a pole or building and ancillary cabinets about the size of an air conditioning unit, which can be located indoors or outdoors, even underground (examples can be seen on [www.hillsborough.net](http://www.hillsborough.net)).

Residents can negotiate leases with cellular telephone providers which can typically yield incomes of \$1,800 to \$3,000 per month. Wireless companies are regularly seeking to expand their coverage areas to enhance their cellular phone services. The Town is assembling a list of property owners who are interested in hosting such facilities on their property. To express your interest as a potential site for a cellular antenna, please send your contact information to Public Works, c/o Town Hall or [pw@hillsborough.net](mailto:pw@hillsborough.net).

## THE SILENT KILLER – PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

With the cold weather upon us, and many more months of chill to come, it is time to take a look at your heating devices and appliances that produce carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, tasteless, colorless gas that is produced by a burning material that contains carbon. CO is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in America. Because you cannot detect this gas, it has become known as a "Silent Killer," claiming more than 2,000 lives every year. CO is produced by common household appliances. Some of the early symptoms of CO poisoning can be easily mistaken for the flu, such as headaches, nausea, and fatigue. But prolonged exposure can lead to brain damage and ultimately death.

Preventative measures can be taken to protect yourselves from CO poisoning:

- Have flues and chimneys checked regularly for blockages.
- At the beginning of the winter season, have a trained professional check your fuel burning appliances, and oil or gas furnaces, gas water heaters, gas space heaters, fireplaces or wood stoves.
- Install and maintain appliances according to the manufacturer's instruction.
- Never leave a car running in a garage whether the garage door is open or closed.
- Never use charcoal barbecues indoors.
- Never sleep in a room that uses gas or kerosene space heaters without proper venting.
- Do not use gas-powered tools or engines (i.e. mowers, chain saws, etc.) in improperly vented enclosed spaces.

Homeowners can invest in CO detectors. Much like a smoke detector, an installed CO detector will recognize and announce unusually high levels of CO in your home. It is another safety device to help protect you and your family from what could become very deadly situations.

For more information or answers to questions regarding carbon monoxide poisoning and prevention, contact the Pacific Gas & Electric Company or the San Mateo County Health Department.

## TOWN REQUIRES PERMITS

*Inspections can save lives as well as money*

If you are having any work done on your house, get a permit! It's the law – but that's beside the point. The point is that it only makes sense. It's inexpensive, takes very little time and, most importantly, it helps protect you and your neighbors.

An improperly installed furnace could vent fumes and cause carbon monoxide poisoning. Improper electrical installations could cause a fire. Improperly installed pool equipment could cause electrocution. An improperly vented roof could trap fumes and cause dry rot.

Hillsborough Chief Building Official John Milke said he is surprised at how many people either don't know about the importance of permits or who look at the issuance of permits as an unnecessary obstruction to a project. Pulling a permit enables qualified city officials to inspect a project to try and make sure it is done properly, pure and simple. That saves headaches and money, and it is the right thing to do.

"We're not the bogeyman here," Milke said. "We're part of a team that wants to ensure that our residents are not only safe but are getting what they paid for." Milke said his inspection team members are all proficient at plumbing, electrical, mechanical and framing and can detect problems or work not performed in accordance with minimum codes. While a fee is charged for the work, the amount is

kept as low as possible and in the long run the inspection could actually save lives as well as costs.

"For example," Milke said, "we checked on the work done at the home of one of our elderly residents and discovered she was overcharged for incomplete work.

We have been instrumental in recouping part of those costs."

While recouping costs is not a usual part of Milke's business, eliminating hazardous conditions is. His team once found a roofing job where the workers forgot to install vents, allowing fumes to escape into the attic.

Milke said "almost everything structural and/or having to do with plumbing or electricity" requires a permit.

When in doubt, call the Building Department at 650-375-7411. Ask your contractor to show you the permit and the amount you are being charged for it. Check with the Building Department on the cost to assure you are not being charged more than the city charges.

"Consider if a fire occurs due to improperly installed equipment," Milke said. "If you failed to get a permit as required, will insurance cover the damage?"

"Sometimes owners see contractors as being on the hook for performing work properly and discount the importance of a permit," Milke said. "Please allow us to check the contractor's work. We try our best to look out for you and whomever may live in the house in the future."

**You may not realize it, but you need permits for the installation of new water heaters, new furnaces and changes in window size. Contact the Building Department for additional permit requirements.**

## THANKS FOR HOLIDAY GIVING

- Thank you to the Kasten family who made holiday food basket centerpieces for the annual holiday employees party. The baskets not only decorated the tables, but were later donated to Shelter Network.

- The Central County Fire Department collected 156 barrels of new toys this past season. This year there were 36 collection sites at schools and businesses in Burlingame and Hillsborough. The department was able to support distribution programs at eight different charities in San Mateo

County. Thanks to the community for their support of Central County Fire Department's 2005 Holiday Toy Program.

- The 9th Annual Town of Hillsborough Holiday Giving Tree was another success. Ornaments offering a "Gift of Shelter for a Homeless Child" were displayed on the tree in Town Hall. In excess of \$450 was donated. This equates to more than 25 nights of shelter. Many thanks to the employees, friends and residents who generously supported this worthwhile program.

### Want to read the minutes of the last meeting?

Go to the Town's Web site, [www.hillsborough.net](http://www.hillsborough.net), click on city departments, city council, then agendas and minutes, then minutes and select the date of the minutes you want to read.

## CALENDAR

### CITY COUNCIL MEETING

2nd Monday  
6 p.m. - Town Hall



### CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION

Study Sessions are held as needed at Town Hall.



### ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN REVIEW

#### BOARD MEETING

1st and 3rd Monday  
4 p.m. - Town Hall



### DEPARTMENT COMMISSIONERS

Mayor Tom Kasten, Ex officio Commissioner  
John Fannon, Community Services  
D. Paul Regan, Administration  
Vice Mayor Catherine U. Mullooly, Fire Department  
Mayor Thomas M. Kasten, Police Department

### ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

John Fannon, Commissioner  
Walter Heyman, Chairman  
Richard C. Reisman, Jennifer Werbe,  
George Jewett, Kathleen Benoit



## COMMITTEES

### FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

D. Paul Regan, Commissioner  
Jess "Jay" Benton, Chairman  
J. Lawrence Onderdonk, John Lockton, Al Clark,  
Al Royle, Josh Cooperman, Larree Renda

### CITIZENS COMMUNICATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Catherine U. Mullooly, Commissioner  
Diana Witzel, Chairwoman  
Marie Chuang, Candace Lyche,  
Janet MacGregor, BeBe Trinkner



### HILLSBOROUGH RECREATION

342-5439  
D. Paul Regan, Commissioner  
Christine Krolik, Commissioner

### HILLSBOROUGH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Marilyn Loushin Miller, Superintendent: 342-5193

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

Business: 375-7470  
Emergency: 911  
Alarm Specialists: 375-7472

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

Business: 375-7422  
Emergency: 911

## NUMBERS

### TOWN HALL

Administration: (650) 375-7400  
Website: [www.hillsborough.net](http://www.hillsborough.net)

### Town Hall Hours:

Mon. – Thurs. 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Fri. 7:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Emergency after hours and weekends: 375-7470

### City Council: 375-7400

Main and Finance Department: 375-7400

Water (service and billing):

Mon. – Thurs. 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Fri. 7:30 - 12:30 p.m. 375-7402

Building and Planning: 375-7411

Public Works and City Engineer: 375-7444

### CITY MANAGER

Anthony Constantourous: 375-7400

### Comcast

Customer Service: 1-800-945-2288

### PG&E (24 hrs.)

Outage Information: 1-800-743-5002

Customer Service: 1-800-743-5000

### BFI

Main Number: (650) 592-2411

Hazardous Material: (650) 363-4718

*The Hillsborough Newsletter is published on a regular basis by the Town of Hillsborough to keep residents informed of local and Town news.  
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