

City of Seal Beach



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July 24, 2026

The Honorable Sheila F. Hanson
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court
700 Civic Center Drive West
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Judge Hanson:

On behalf of the City of Seal Beach, enclosed is the response to the findings and recommendations of the 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury report, "Wildfires Hit Home." The response was prepared and coordinated by Sergeant Brian Gray, Emergency Services Coordinator, Seal Beach Police Department.

Please contact Chief of Police Michael Henderson at (562) 799-4100 x 1175 or mhenderson@sealbeachca.gov if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Patrick Gallegos
City Manager

CC: City of Seal Beach City Council

The City of Seal Beach appreciates the work of the 2025-2026 Orange County Grand Jury in preparing the report titled "Wildfires Hit Home." The City recognizes the importance of wildfire preparedness, emergency planning, public education, and regional coordination in protecting Orange County communities.

The City of Seal Beach contracts with the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) as its primary fire service provider and wildfire authority. The City, through the Seal Beach Police Department and Emergency Services function, supports wildfire preparedness outreach, emergency planning, public education, and community resilience efforts in coordination with OCFA and regional partners.

The City provides the following responses to the findings and recommendations identified for the City in the report.

Responses to Findings

Finding F1

Response: The City agrees with this finding.

The City agrees that more frequent and severe wildfires, combined with increasingly hotter, drier, and windier conditions, have created significant impacts throughout Orange County and the State of California. The City further recognizes that these impacts extend beyond direct fire damage and include financial consequences such as increased homeowners' insurance premiums, policy nonrenewal, and difficulty obtaining insurance coverage.

Finding F2

Response: The City agrees with this finding.

The City agrees that actions addressing conditions in the home ignition zone can significantly reduce ignition potential and help prevent wildland-urban interface fire disasters or suburban conflagrations. The City recognizes the value of home hardening, defensible space, and public education in reducing the risk of structure ignition.

Finding F3

Response: The City agrees with this finding.

The City agrees that expanded community engagement regarding home hardening and defensible space can increase the effectiveness of wildfire risk mitigation and insurance risk reduction efforts. Public education and accessible preparedness information are important components of community resilience.

Finding F4

Response: The City agrees with this finding.

The City agrees that community-level and property-level wildfire risk mitigation designations can help reduce wildfire risk and may assist residents and communities in reducing insurance premium costs. The City supports efforts that help residents better understand available wildfire risk reduction resources and potential insurance-related benefits.

Finding F5

Response: The City agrees with this finding.

The City agrees that county residents should be made aware that the Safer from Wildfires regulation requires insurers to provide discounts to homeowners and communities that implement qualifying home hardening and defensible space measures, regardless of whether a property is located within a Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

Finding F6

Response: The City agrees with this finding.

The City agrees that AB 888, the California Safe Homes Grant Program, may provide financial assistance to eligible homeowners, cities, counties, and special districts for home hardening and defensible space measures. The City recognizes that public awareness of grant opportunities may help reduce wildfire losses and improve community resilience.

Responses to Recommendations

Recommendation R2

Recommendation: By December 31, 2026, cities and fire service agencies, including Orange County Fire Authority, should commit to participation in a county-wide annual wildfire prevention fair planned by the Orange County Board of Supervisors to showcase wildfire prevention outreach programs.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been implemented but will be implemented in the future.

The City of Seal Beach will plan to participate in a county-wide annual wildfire prevention fair if such an event is planned by the Orange County Board of Supervisors. The City will coordinate participation through its Emergency

Services function and, as appropriate, in coordination with the Orange County Fire Authority.

Timeframe for Implementation: By December 31, 2026.

Recommendation R4

Recommendation: By December 31, 2026, to ensure city residents are engaged and aware of wildfire risk reduction resources, OCFA member and non-member cities should provide information, develop their own outreach program, and establish a direct contact person(s) for their residents. This is in addition to whatever referrals or references are made to OCFA outreach programs.

Response: The recommendation has not yet been fully implemented but will be implemented in the future.

The City of Seal Beach will continue providing wildfire risk reduction and emergency preparedness information to residents, enhance outreach efforts where appropriate, and maintain a direct City contact for residents seeking information regarding wildfire preparedness and related resources. Sergeant Brian Gray, Emergency Services Coordinator, will serve as the City's direct contact person for this effort.

The City currently conducts and supports a variety of community preparedness and public outreach initiatives in coordination with OCFA and other regional partners. These efforts include emergency preparedness presentations for community groups and residents, CERT-related programming, preparedness meetings in College Park East and College Park West, outreach and presentations within Leisure World, emergency messaging distributed through AlertOC and Nixle, preparedness information shared through City and Seal Beach Police Department social media platforms, and participation in community-focused preparedness events.

The City also partners with OCFA through Neighbor 4 Neighbor community preparedness events designed to strengthen neighborhood resilience and emergency readiness. Additionally, the City recently partnered with the American Red Cross and OCFA during a "Sound the Alarm" event in Leisure World, where volunteers assisted residents with smoke alarm installation, fire safety education, and emergency preparedness outreach.

The City will continue coordinating with OCFA, as the City's primary fire service provider, to ensure residents receive accurate, current, and practical wildfire preparedness information, including Ready, Set, Go materials and other wildfire risk reduction resources.

Timeframe for Implementation: By December 31, 2026.

The City of Seal Beach appreciates the Grand Jury's work on this important regional issue and remains committed to emergency preparedness, public education, and coordination with regional partners. The City will continue working to provide residents with useful information and resources that support community safety and resilience.