California Health and Safety Code Section 17958 Findings

ATTACHMENT A

FINDINGS

FOR REVISION OF THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
AMENDMENTS TO THE 2016 CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 24, PART 9

As required by Health and Safety Code section 17958.7 the Board of Directors of the Valley Center Fire Protection District does herewith make express findings that amendments to the California Building Standards Code are necessary for the protection of the public health, safety and welfare due to certain climatic, topographic or geological features existing in the County of San Diego.

The following matrix lists the Valley Center Fire Protection District amendments and the corresponding express findings. Minor editorial changes or typographical corrections to the Fire Code are not shown in these findings. The full text of the proposed Valley Center Fire Protection District amendments to the California Building Standards Code is shown in the Valley Center Fire Protection District Fire Code.

MATRIX OF FINDINGS

Fire Code Amendments

SECTION/CHAPTER	***PAGE NUMBER***	***FINDING NUMBER(S)***
505.2.1 – Traffic Access Limitations	23	All
507.2.2 – Water Tanks	25	All
507.5.7 – Fire Hydrant and Fire Valve Location	26	All
507.5.7.1 – Signing of Fire Hydrants	26	All
507.5.8 – Fire Hydrant Construction and Configuration	26	All

ATTACHMENT A

Findings for the Fire Code

Finding 1

The Valley Center Fire Protection District finds that flood conditions carry the potential for overcoming the ability of the fire department to aid or assist in fire control, evacuations, rescues and the emergency task demands inherent in such situations. The potential for flooding conditions result in limiting fire department emergency vehicular traffic, with resulting overtaxing fire department personnel, may further cause a substantial or total lack of protection against fire for the buildings and structures located within the jurisdiction.

Finding 2

Much of the rural area of the County of San Diego is a mountainous topography and lacks the infrastructure needed for water supply (fire flow) and experiences water shortages from time to time. Those conditions have an adverse effect on water availability for firefighting. Fires starting in sprinklered buildings are typically controlled by one or two sprinkler heads, flowing as little as 13 gallons per minute.

Hose streams used by engine companies on well-established structure fires operate at about 250 gallons per minute each, and the estimated water need for a typical residential fire is 1,250 to 1,500 gallons per minute, according to the Insurance Service Office and the International Fire Code.

Under circumstances such as, lack of water infrastructure, earthquakes, multiple fires and wildland fires within a community, the limited water demands needs of residential fire sprinklers would control and extinguish many fires before they spread from building to wildland. In such a disaster, water demands needed for conflagration firefighting probably would not be available.

Finding 3

The topography of the County of San Diego presents problems in delivery of emergency services, including fire protection. Hilly terrain has narrow, winding roads with little circulation, preventing rapid access and orderly evacuation. Much of these hills are covered with highly combustible natural vegetation. In addition to access and evacuation problems, the terrain makes delivery of water extremely difficult. Some hill areas are served by water pump systems subject to failure in fire, high winds, earthquake and other power failure situations. This would only allow domestic gravity feed water from tanks and not enough water for fire fighting.

Finding 4

The seasonal climatic conditions during the late summer and fall create numerous serious difficulties regarding the control of and protection against fires in the County of San Diego. The hot, dry weather typical of this area in summer and fall coupled with Santa Ana winds frequently results in wildfires which threaten or could threaten the County of San Diego.

Code requirements regarding fire-resistive construction methods have a direct bearing on building survival in a wildland fire situation. In a dry climate, on low humidity days, many materials are much more easily ignited. More fires are likely to occur and any fire, once started, can expand extremely rapidly.

Finding 5

Due to seasonal climatic conditions, major brush fires are a common occurrence in Southern California and repeatedly destroy many structures each fire season. For example:

a) The Southern California Firestorms of 1993 resulted in the devastation of 1,171 structures; and

b) The Harmony Grove of 1996 resulted in the devastation of 122 structures; and

c) The Gavilan Fire (Fallbrook) of 2002 destroyed 43 homes and damaged 13; and

d) The Cedar and Paradise Firestorms of 2003 destroyed 2,684 homes in San Diego County; and

e) The Witch, Harris, Rice and Poomacha fires of 2007 destroyed approximately 1,200 homes and 1,100 accessory structures in the County of San Diego.

Finding 7

In the County of San Diego, windswept brands from burning structures have spread fire not only to adjacent structures but also to other structures considerable distances away, which happened to be in the path of the flying burning brands.

Finding 8

In the County of San Diego, radiant heat from involved structures has spread fire to adjacent and distant combustible structures, thereby jeopardizing the safety of the citizens and the effectiveness of the firefighters.

Finding 9

The County of San Diego is situated near three major faults, each capable of generating earthquakes of significant magnitude. These are the Rose Canyon Fault, the Elsinore Fault, and the Agua Caliente Fault. These faults are subject to becoming

active at any time; the County of San Diego is particularly vulnerable to devastation should such an earthquake occur.

The potential effects of earthquake activity include isolating certain areas of County of San Diego from the surrounding area and restricting or eliminating internal circulation due to the potential for collapsing of highway overpasses and underpasses, along with other bridges in the area, or an earth slide, and the potential for vertical movement rendering surface travel unduly burdensome or impossible.