



ALAMEDA COUNTY HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Oakland Planning Commission
City Hall

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Oakland, CA 94612

Via e-mail: vienv.truong@gmail.com; pvollman@oaklandnet.com

RE: Agenda Item 7, 9850 Kitty Lane, Appeal for Crematorium requiring a Major CUP

Chair Truong and members of the City Planning Commission:

I write to express our support for requiring a Major Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to establish crematoriums. Cremators emit a number of criteria and toxic air pollutants such as particulate matter, sulfur compounds, lead, arsenic, hexavalent chromium, mercury and chlorinated dibenzodioxins, and furans.¹ Several of these emissions are known to exacerbate chronic conditions such as asthma, and have been linked to cancer.²

Given these potential health impacts, we believe that there should be public notice and a public process to determine conditions of approval, which would be required through a Major CUP for crematorium uses, as determined by the Planning Director on May 16, 2012. We understand that a crematorium, Sentinel Cremation Societies aka Sentinel Enterprises, is currently seeking appeal to a decision to obtain a Major CUP for their facility at 9850 Kitty Lane in East Oakland and will emit a range of pollutants.³

The East Oakland community already faces a disproportionate burden from illness associated with air pollution: the rate of asthma Emergency Department (ED) visits is over two times higher than the Alameda County rate and one of the highest in the county, and, among children under five years of age, the asthma ED visit rate in East Oakland is more than two times the County rate.⁴

¹ The criteria air pollutants from these cremators include: particulate matter, nitrogen compounds, sulfur compounds, carbon monoxide and precursor organic compounds. The toxic emissions from these cremators include: acetaldehyde, arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, copper, formaldehyde, hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride, lead, mercury, nickel, selenium, chlorinated dibenzodioxins and furans, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons/ benzo (a) pyrene equivalents.

² California Air Resources Board. 2009. Air Pollution and Health Fact Sheet. <http://www.arb.ca.gov/research/health/fs/fs1/fs1.htm>

³ Bay Area Air Quality Management District. Engineering Evaluation Report. Sentinel Cremation Societies, Inc. Plant #20905, Application #23669.

⁴ For Zip codes 94621 & 94603, the rate of asthma ED visits is 1,230 per 100,000 residents; the Alameda County rate is 553 per 100,000. The asthma ED visit rate for children is 2,048 per 100,000 (0-4 year-olds) compared to the Alameda County rate of 1,301 per 100,000. Asthma inpatient hospitalization rate is 339 per 100,000 residents; the county rate is 147 per 100,000. The childhood asthma hospitalization rate is 908 per 100,000; the county rate is 477 per 100,000. Source: ACPHD CAPE Unit with 2008-2010 data from California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD).

In light of the existing disproportionate burden of disease, a public process, as required in the Major CUP process, is necessary to protect community health.

The Alameda County Public Health Department (ACPHD) employs and recommends a range of strategies to protect individual and community health, including analyzing public health impacts of land use planning decisions.

ACPHD is dedicated to improving health of all Alameda County residents. Thank you for considering our recommendations for maximizing the public health protections and implementing this important policy. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Muntu Davis, MD, MPH
Alameda County Health Officer

cc: Council President Reid;
Vice Chair Huntsman;
Commissioner Colbruno;
Commissioner Coleman;
Commissioner Moore;
Commissioner Pattillo;
Commissioner Whales;
Scott Miller;
Anita Siegel, ACPHD Director
