

Southern Inyo Fire Protection District Policy Handbook

POLICY TITLE: Claims against the District

POLICY NUMBER: 1040

APPROVAL DATE: 02/17/09

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to District staff for processing and resolving (if possible) claims against the District. Inherent in this policy is the recognition that every claim will be unique, and that guidelines cannot be written to accommodate every case. Therefore, staff must use discretion and good sense in handling each claim.

1040.1 Property (Land and Improvements) Damage Claims

When a property owner informs a District employee of damage to their property (by telephone or in person), the employee receiving the claim will document in writing, the time and date, and a description of the stated circumstances and allegations. Employees should respond to questions, be cordial and respectful, but refrain from commenting on liability questions.

Investigations shall be done in a timely fashion and documented with a written report, including photographs and/or interviews.

If the investigating staff person is convinced that the damage was caused by District personnel, equipment, or infrastructure, he/she shall prepare a work order to have the damage repaired, subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Property owner agrees that the proposed repairs are appropriate and adequate;
- (2) Property owner agrees to allow District personnel access to their property to perform the repair work;
- (3) District personnel have the necessary tools, equipment, and expertise to perform the necessary work;
- (4) Repair work can be accomplished within a reasonable amount of time; and
- (5) Cost of material for the repairs will not exceed \$500.00.

If the cost of material and labor for repairs is stated by claimant or estimated by staff to exceed \$500.00, the owner will be asked to submit their claim in writing on a District claim form.

The General Manager/Fire Chief shall review the damage claim and the proposed repair work. If he determines that the damage is the District's responsibility and that the proposed repair work is appropriate; a report shall be made to the District Board describing the damage claim, including a description of the work needed to resolve the claim, if the cost of material and labor for the repairs will not exceed \$1,500.00.

If the cost or material for repairs is stated by claimant or estimated to exceed \$1,500.00, the claim will be submitted to the District Board. The District Board shall review the claim and receive input from staff in closed session (qualifies as "anticipated litigation" under the Brown Act).

1040.2 If the claim is denied, the District will provide supporting information for the denial.

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POLICY TITLE: Copying Public Documents

POLICY NUMBER: 1050

APPROVAL DATE: 11/18/08

1050.1 Individuals requesting copies of public documents shall be charged twenty-five cents (\$.25) per sheet copied to defray expenses associated with the copying process.

1050.2 Copies of agendas and other writings (except for privileged documents) distributed to a majority of the Board of Directors at open Board meetings shall be made available to the public. A limited quantity of such documents (based on normal audience attendance) shall be copied in advance of each meeting and made available to the public in attendance at no charge. Individuals requesting copies of such documents prior to the Board meeting will be charged twenty-five cents (\$.25) per sheet. The copy charge will be levied at Board meetings for copies of documents if more are needed and/or requested in addition to those normally prepared for the public at Board meetings.