



Date: August 20, 2019

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *P.H. West*

From: Xavier Espino, Fire Chief *X.E.*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Relocation of Apparatus from Fire Station 9**

This memorandum is to provide you with a recap of events leading to the closure of Fire Station 9, located at 3917 Long Beach Boulevard on the diagonal strip of land between Virginia Road and Long Beach Boulevard, north of Roosevelt Road (in Council District 8). Fire Station 9 was built in 1938 on 0.15 acres and comprises approximately 3,800 square feet. Workforce privacy updates to the firefighter dorms have been completed; however, several large projects, including modifications to the crew bathroom and the Captain's office, remain on the list of required construction.

Due to a series of illnesses reported by Fire Department employees assigned to Fire Station 9, the City Safety Office conducted an industrial hygiene assessment on November 29, 2017. This evaluation determined active mold was present in the building. The station was temporarily vacated as described in the December 13, 2017 memorandum to the City Council. Remediation of the station was completed in March 2018, and Engine 9 returned in April 2018 and Paramedic Rescue 9 returned in May 2018.

In January 2019, heavy rainfall resulted in water leaks into the station around the windows, and City staff made temporary repairs to this area. Quarterly industrial hygiene testing of the station conducted in June and October 2018 and January 2019 found no active mold; however, it was determined the windows in the paramedic dorm area needed to be removed and replaced. This construction impacted the dorm and locker areas of the paramedics assigned to the station. Accordingly, Paramedic Rescue 9 was relocated to Fire Station 13 (2475 Adriatic Avenue), as outlined in the June 4, 2019 memorandum to the City Council. As repairs began in June 2019, active mold was discovered in the area near the upstairs windows. During that period, to provide continuing coverage to the area surrounding Fire Station 9, Engine 9 remained in quarters while portions of the upstairs area were sealed off for remediation and testing.

On June 17, 2019, staff from the Fire Department and the City Safety Office met with a representative from American Technologies, Inc. (ATI), at Fire Station 9 to discuss water penetration beyond the scope of the initial construction quote. The ATI representative expressed extreme concern about the water shedding capability of the exterior of the structure, the windows, and the roof. He further indicated that any work ATI performed would be extensive and would likely only be a temporary remedy. The ATI representative recommended an extensive study be completed by a water intrusion specialist prior to beginning of any work.

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Give the concern of water penetration into areas being inhabited by the crew of Engine 9, the history of active mold in the station, the history of previous illnesses reported by crew members, and the likely extent of repairs, Engine 9 was moved the following day to Fire Station 16 (2890 East Wardlow Road).

On July 17, 2019, representatives from the City Safety Office, Public Works, and the Fire Department met to discuss whether rehabilitation of Fire Station 9 was practical. After this meeting, the Fire Chief recommended to the City Manager that the City seek a temporary location for Fire Station 9, with the ultimate goal being to build a new replacement station in a suitable location.

To protect the health and safety of Fire Department employees, Fire Station 9 will remain vacated until an alternative location is found, and suitable structures are put in place to house Engine 9 and its crew. Until this occurs, Engine 9 will operate out of temporary trailers at Fire Station 16, and Rescue 9 will operate out of Fire Station 13. Fire Stations 13 and 16 were chosen for the temporary relocation because they share contiguous response area borders with Fire Station 9 and will minimize the impacts of such a move. Some areas that were traditionally served by Fire Station 9 resources may see an increase in response times, though the Fire Department will strive to maintain them. The Fire Department is working diligently to counteract this by actively patrolling the area during the day, when possible.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call me at (562) 570-2509.

XDE:JR:ARA

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