

#### RALPH M. TERRAZAS FIRE CHIEF

September 17, 2015

**BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS** 

FILE NO. 15-107

TO: Board of Fire Commissioners

FROM: Ralph M. Terrazas, Fire Chief

SUBJECT: EXCESSIVE STORAGE ENFORCEMENT

FINAL ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Approved w/Corrections \_\_\_\_ Withdrawn \_\_\_\_ Other

#### SUMMARY

Excessive storage is a recognized mental disorder afflicting two to five percent of the world's population. Several recent fires underscore the hazards posed by persons living in these structures and the members of the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD). The Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau has taken the lead in the enforcement, of violations occurring in a single family dwelling, and working in conjunction with the Los Angeles Department of Housing for multi-unit dwellings. An Inspector II is assigned to the Compliance Unit with certified contractors to expedite the abatement of these problem properties with excessive storage issues. The residents of afflicted properties, with the compulsion to excessively store, are referred to the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Genesis program for counseling, if they are willing.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board:

Receive and file this report.

# DISCUSSION

Council motion 15-0496 on excessive storage is currently under review by the City Attorney's Office for issues of legality on interior abatement of individuals' homes. The LAFD instituted an excessive storage notification email: excessivestorage@lacity.org and there have been numerous referrals from the public, the Department of Housing, and from fire stations encountering excessive storage issues on responses.

The Excessive Storage Task Force is a group of agencies which includes the Los Angeles Department of Building & Safety (LADBS), City Attorney's Office, Department of Housing, Department of Transportation (LADOT), Animal Control, and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. The Task Force meets guarterly to

collaborate on problem solving and critique past cases. This allows all participants to understand and learn about each department's contacts and policies.

The following is a list of properties which have been remediated since inception of the task force:

Council Office	Total Excessive Storage Activity	Total Voluntary Compliance by Owner	Total Abatement by LAFD Contractors*
1, Cedillo	4	1	3
3, Blumenfield	2	1	1
4, Ryu	1	0	1
6, Martinez	2	2	0
7, Fuentes	2	1	1
10, Wesson	1	0	1
12, Englander	1	1	0
13, O'Farrell	2	0	2*
14, Huizar	2	1	1*
TOTALS:	17	7	10

<sup>\*</sup>Indicates abatement has been completed

### CONCLUSION

The Excessive Storage Inspector was officially launched on May 2, 2015. Excessive storage/hoarding continues to be a concern for the protection of life and property as well as firefighter safety. The implementation of the excessive storage email notification system as well as the placement of a full time Inspector II position to deal with these issues will reduce the amount of fires and fatalities in the City Of Los Angeles.

Board report prepared by John N. Vidovich, Deputy Chief, Fire Prevention and Public Safety Bureau.