THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE ISSUED: May 26, 2010 REPORT NO:

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee

SUBJECT: Engine Company Brownout and Lifeguard Reductions Monthly Report

REFERENCE: None

REQUESTED ACTION

This is an informational item only. No action is required by the Committee or the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Accept the Report.

INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth monthly report to the PS&NS Committee on the status of the Engine Company Brownouts and Lifeguard reductions being administered to achieve budgetary savings in the Fire-Rescue Department. Brownouts are defined as the temporary closures of up to eight fire engines per day in those fire stations housing more than one emergency response apparatus.

This month's report will update workload, brownout frequency, and response time statistics since the inception of the Brownout Plan on February 6, 2010. It will also address the status of the reassignment of "quint" fire trucks to the fire stations in University City and Pacific Beach to provide for fire extinguishment capability during times when the engines in these communities are browned out. Lastly, information will be provided regarding lifeguard emergency response activities at two beaches where lifeguard coverage was reduced to achieve budgetary savings and address impacts on training activities and personnel due to reductions.

SUMMARY

During this reporting period (February 6 to April 30, 2010), the thirteen engines subject to brownout were out-of-service from 23.20% to 99.51% of the time. As a result, compliance with the 5 minute 90% of the time national response standard for the first due unit has declined to 20.90% to 81.01% within these districts and 53.31% city-wide as compared to 30.80% to 86.71% in these districts and 55.15% city-wide for the same period last year. Average response times increased by 17 seconds within these districts and by 5 seconds city-wide when compared to the same period last year.

Response times for the assembly of an Effective Fire Force of 14-15 firefighters (3 engines, 1 truck and 1 battalion chief) within the 9 minutes 90% of the time national response standard was 0% to 100% within these districts and 66% city-wide as compared to 0% to 100% respectively and 73% city-wide for the same period last year. Average response times for an Effective Fire Force increased by 13% to 8.25 minutes within these districts and from 7.50 minutes to 8.27 minutes city-wide when compared to the same period last year.

Service delivery impacts are felt by all requestors for emergency response whenever a response is delayed due to brownouts or other reasons. These impacts range from prolonged pain due to injury, prolonged distress due to a medical condition, and increased fire spread and damage, to the possibility of diminished probability of survival in the most severe life threatening medical or fire and rescue incidents. However, accurately isolating the specific impacts of the brownouts on victim survival probability proves to be extremely difficult and it is important to note that over the past five years an average of four persons per year have died as a result of fires in our City.

As discussed during the April 28, 2010 report to PS&NS, to compensate for the loss of first due unit extinguishment capability when the fire engines in University City and Pacific Beach are browned out and the fire truck is the only unit remaining in service, specialized trucks with extinguishment capability known as "quints" are being reassigned to these communities. The quint from Fire Station 44 in Mira Mesa has already been reassigned to University City and the quint from Fire Station 46 in Santa Luz will be in service in Pacific Beach once crew training is completed this week.

Budget reductions within the Lifeguard Service have resulted in impacts to lifeguard coverage at Torrey Pines Beach, training activities, lifeguard work schedules and Reductions in Force. Appropriate adjustments have been made to mitigate these impacts to the degree possible, but both lifeguard coverage and the quality and quantity of training being provided have been diminished by these reductions. Lastly, the four Lifeguards II that were subject to a Reduction in Force (RIF) action continue to serve as hourly Lifeguards I on an as needed basis.

STATISTICAL DATA

Following is cumulative statistical data for the emergency response districts subject to fire engine brownouts and the response time impacts city-wide for the period indicated.

Brownout Frequency

Data in the table on the following page reflects the percentage of total operational hours in the reporting period (days in period x 24 hours) that the indicated engine company was out of service due to placement in brownout status.

Percent of Time Units Browned Out
02/06/2010 – 04/30/2010

Community	Engine	Pct.
College	E10	97.09%
Downtown	E201	60.99%
East Village	E4	23.20%
Golden Hills	E11	36.22%
Kearny Mesa	E28	32.89%
Lincoln Park	E12	34.64%
Midway	E20	34.32%
Mira Mesa	E44	99.03%
North Park	E14	33.92%
Pacific Beach	E21	59.77%
Rancho Penasquitos	E40	99.51%
San Ysidro	E29	50.02%
University City	E35	41.50%

Number of Emergency Responses

Data in the table below reflects the total number and type of emergency incidents that occurred within the City during the reporting period.

Overall System Wide
02/06 - 04/30

	Fire	Medical	Other	Total
2009	863	22,497	3,054	26,414
2010	711	22,846	2,672	26,229
Percent Change	-17.61	1.55	-12.51	-.01

City-wide Response Time Performance

This following data reflects City-wide response time performance expressed in two formats. The first table shows the percentage of incidents where no more than 5 minutes elapsed from the time an engine or truck company was notified of an emergency response and their arrival at the scene of the emergency. The nationally accepted standard is 90% and the Department's current performance target is 55%. The second table uses the same notification and arrival time stamps, but reports response times as an average (mean).

5 Minutes or Less Response Time Percentage (1st Arriving Engine or Truck)

2009 Pct	2010 Pct	Percent Change
55.15%	53.31%	-3.34%

Average Response Time (1st Arriving Engine or Truck)

2009 Avg	2010 Avg	Percent Change
05:03	05:09	2.01%

Data Reported by Brownout Community

The data in the following tables uses the same criteria as described above, but breaks the data down by individual community.

Browned Out Districts
Incident Counts
02/06 – 04/30

	2009			2010			Percent Change		
	Fire	Medical	Other	Fire	Medical	Other	Fire	Medical	Other
College (Sta. 10)	19	611	70	21	628	56	10.53	2.78	-20.00
Downtown (Sta. 201)	14	518	89	15	493	98	7.14	-4.83	10.11
East Village (Sta. 4)	21	964	120	16	979	117	-23.81	1.56	-2.50
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	32	476	36	21	490	52	-34.38	2.94	44.44
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	22	579	143	20	578	114	-9.09	-.17	-20.28
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	43	1,045	100	42	1,064	62	-2.33	1.82	-38.00
Midway (Sta. 20)	15	702	94	21	769	69	40.00	9.54	-26.60
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	16	379	69	12	345	0	-25.00	-8.97	-27.54
North Park (Sta. 14)	38	652	72	17	711	58	-55.26	9.05	-19.44
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	23	654	104	18	714	98	-21.74	9.17	-5.77
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	9	284	40	9	264	31	00.00	-7.04	-22.50
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	16	747	44	23	750	44	43.75	.04	00
University City (Sta. 35)	34	744	203	26	699	159	-23.53	-6.05	-21.67

5 Minutes or Less Response Time Percentage (First Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009 Pct	2010 Pct	Pct Change
College (Sta. 10)	53.98%	43.29%	-19.81
Downtown (Sta. 201)	80.49%	81.01%	0.65
East Village (Sta. 4)	86.71%	77.60%	-10.51
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	72.25%	66.28%	-8.26
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	36.16%	34.74%	-3.93
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	47.24%	45.23%	-4.25
Midway (Sta. 20)	57.92%	49.63%	-14.31
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	40.47%	30.41%	-24.86
North Park (Sta. 14)	57.05%	48.07%	-15.74
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	74.80%	69.37%	-7.26
RanchoPenasquitos (Sta. 40)	30.80%	20.90%	-32.13
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	58.40%	52.68%	-9.79
University City (Sta. 35)	33.13%	26.60%	-19.70

Average Response Time (First Arriving Engine or Truck)	2009 Avg	2010 Avg	Pct Change
College (Sta. 10)	0:05:05	0:05:23	5.86
Downtown (Sta. 201)	0:03:44	0:03:45	0.27
East Village (Sta. 4)	0:03:50	0:04:10	8.76
Golden Hills (Sta. 11)	0:04:15	0:04:30	6.27
Kearny Mesa (Sta. 28)	0:05:53	0:05:46	-1.88
Lincoln Park (Sta. 12)	0:05:16	0:05:24	2.51
Midway (Sta. 20)	0:04:50	0:05:14	8.33
Mira Mesa (Sta. 44)	0:05:49	0:06:12	6.50
North Park (Sta. 14)	0:04:12	0:04:33	8.22
Pacific Beach (Sta. 21)	0:04:46	0:05:25	13.68
Rancho Penasquitos (Sta. 40)	0:06:03	0:06:36	9.19
San Ysidro (Sta. 29)	0:05:00	0:05:16	5.55
University City (Sta. 35)	0:06:21	0:06:26	1.28

Effective Fire Force

This following data reflects response time performance for the assembly of the 14-15 firefighters needed to complete the tasks necessary to combat a typical residential structure fire. In our City, this is achieved by the response of 3 engines, 1 truck, and 1 battalion chief. The table shows both City-wide and brownout district performance. The nationally accepted standard is 90% and the Department's current performance target is 72%.

Effective Fire Force*
02/06 - 04/30

		2009	2009	2009	2010	2010	2010
Community	**Engine**	**Percent 9 Min**	**Average (Minutes)**	**Count**	**Percent 9 Min**	**Average (Minutes)**	**Count**
College	10	75.00%	7.98	4	25.00%	9.47	4
Downtown	201	100.00%	4.72	3	75.00%	7.29	4
East Village	04	100.00%	4.61	11	62.50%	6.46	8
Golden Hills	11	100.00%	5.21	6	100.00%	6.19	7
Kearny Mesa	28	100.00%	8.32	1	100.00%	7.34	5
Lincoln Park	12	83.33%	7.36	6	77.78%	7.49	9
Midway	20	50.00%	8.22	2	50.00%	8.73	4
Mira Mesa	44	0.00%	9.84	2	0.00%	13.07	2
North Park	14	100.00%	5.36	6	100.00%	6.92	6
Pacific Beach	21	75.00%	8.31	4	100.00%	8.88	1
RanchoPenasquitos	40	100.00%	7.94	2	0.00%	10.22	2
San Ysidro	29	75.00%	8.69	4	100.00%	5.44	2
University City	35	50.00%	10.40	6	42.86%	9.79	7
City Wide		73.20%	7.50	153	66.14%	8.27	127

* (7) incidents originally dispatched as single engine responses and later upgraded were not included in this EFF calculation

SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACTS

There is ample scientific data to support that the more quickly the right type and number of resources can be brought to bear on an emergency incident, generally speaking, the better the outcome. Under the best of circumstances, multiple concurrent calls for service, routine maintenance, training, community educational outreach events, administrative activities, and unit location at the time of an incident dispatch can all impact incident response times.

Because many variables can influence incident outcomes, it is very difficult to isolate changes in incident outcomes resulting solely from brownouts. However, it can be safely assumed that any emergency receiving a delayed response for any reason will result in undesired impacts. In the case of fires, the most likely impact is increased fire spread and damage and the increased possibility of injury or death. In the case of a medical emergency, the impact may be prolonged pain from an injury, distress from a medical condition, or greater risk of permanent injury or death.

Ripple Effect of Brown-Outs on Emergency Response System

When an emergency response unit is unavailable for response for any reason, including brownouts, another unit must be sent to the incident. When there are multiple concurrent incidents (a common occurrence), a ripple effect occurs that can impact several communities as units move throughout the City to provide the best coverage possible. While the Brownout Plan exacerbates this situation, these types of response delays occurred before the Plan was implemented and are aggravated by the fact that the City has less than the optimal number of fire stations and crews needed to serve our communities.

Status of Adjustments Made to Mitigate Brownout Plan Impacts

As discussed during the April 28, 2010 report to PS&NS, to compensate for the loss of first due unit extinguishment capability when the fire engines in University City and Pacific Beach are browned out and the fire truck is the only unit remaining in service, specialized trucks with extinguishment capability known as "quints" are being reassigned to these communities. The quint from Fire Station 44 in Mira Mesa has already been reassigned to University City and the quint from Fire Station 46 in Santa Luz will be in service in Pacific Beach once crew training is completed this week.

No adjustments to improve response times are possible without shifting impacts to busier units or re-staffing browned out units. Re-staffing of browned out units can only be accomplished by the allocation of additional revenues to offset the anticipated budgetary savings that would be lost.

LIFEGUARD DIVISION

The Lifeguard Division also contributed to budgetary savings via a number of reductions. Impacts from reductions taken have been felt in several areas of lifeguard operations: lifeguard coverage, training activities, personnel schedules and Reductions in Force (RIF). These impacts are discussed below.

Budget Reduction Impacts on Lifeguard Training

Over the past couple of years, all permanent Lifeguards, other than those assigned to the night crew, were scheduled to be on-duty on Wednesdays. With the Lifeguard Division split into two shifts, on Wednesdays, one shift would be assigned to training while the other would be assigned to operations. Thus, the two shifts would rotate between operations and training allowing for ten hours of training on alternate Wednesdays during the six months of the year when beach attendance was at its lowest levels.

To achieve budgetary savings for Fiscal Years 2010-2011, dedicated training on Wednesdays was eliminated and employee schedules were altered to create additional relief shifts. These relief shifts allow the Lifeguard Division to cover open operational shifts on straight time rather than with overtime. Additionally, the River Rescue Team had its annual training reduced by half. Both of these changes resulted in a reduction in the overtime budget. The Lifeguard Division also eliminated one Lifeguard II position dedicated to developing, organizing, and conducting training. Budgetary savings achieved by these reductions are $236,000 in overtime and $68,912 for the LGII FTE.

While these reductions have decreased training opportunities overall, critical training required for employees to maintain essential skills is being achieved through in-service training, as well as a series of modules offered at the start of employee shifts.

Reduction in Force (RIF) and Utilization of Out of Class (OCA) Assignments

Eight full time equivalent (FTE) positions were eliminated from the Lifeguard Division budget. Four of these positions were unfilled at the time of the budget reductions; four of the positions were filled. The four impacted employees were demoted as a result of the RIF and returned to open positions in the classification of Lifeguard I.

Lifeguard I is an hourly position with no benefits. The Lifeguard Division has traditionally employed approximately 200 Lifeguards I.

The four positions associated with the RIF represent a budgetary savings of approximately $256,476.

As a result of negotiating RIF impacts with Teamsters, it was agreed that the four employees impacted by RIF would receive priority for filling out-of-class (OCA) assignments as Lifeguards II for temporarily unfilled positions caused by reasons such as sickness or long term injury.

Update on Torrey Pines Incidents

The following incidents have been recorded for Torrey Pines City Beach:

2010 Torrey Pines City Beach Responses	April	May*	Total
Medical Aids (via 911 or Call Box)	0	0	0
Water Rescues	0	0	0
Cliff Rescues/Recoveries	4	0	4
Preventative Actions (cliff warnings/non-rescue calls)	1	0	1
Enforcement	0	0	0
Other Calls for Service	3	0	3
Total Incidents	8	0	8

*Incidents from 4/1/10 through 5/14/10

Following are incidents recorded for the non-City sections of Torrey Pines Beach:

2010 Torrey Pines Beach Response (non-City sections)	April	May*	Total
Medical Aids (via 911 or Call Box)	2	4	6
Water Rescues	3	0	3
Cliff Rescues/Recoveries	3	0	0
Preventative Actions (cliff warnings/non-rescue calls)	0	3	3
Enforcement	0	1	1
Other Calls for Service	0	1	1
Total Incidents	8	9	14

*Incidents from 4/1/10 through 5/14/10

Following is the nature and description of the incidents listed above:

April

Location: City of San Diego

4/5 **Cliff Rescue**: person on beach reported a male and his dog stuck on the cliff.
Response: 2 Lifeguard units, State Lifeguards.
Outcome: victim and dog safely rescued.

4/8 **Cliff Rescue x 3**: report at sunset of three persons and a dog stuck on the cliff.
Response: 3 LG units, Fire, FD Helo.
Outcome: all victims safely rescued from cliff; Fire Helo provided lighting for rescue.

4/10 **Preventative Act**: report of person climbing cliff in unsafe area.
Response: Lifeguard unit.
Outcome: subject advised not to climb cliffs.

4/15 **Call for Service:** report of a person stuck on cliff.
Response: Lifeguard unit, State Lifeguard & Ranger.
Outcome: victim self cleared himself; all units canceled.

4/18 **Call for Service**: Glider Port staff reports 3 persons climbing cliffs in unsafe area.
Response: 2 Lifeguard units.
Outcome: victims made it safely to the bottom on their own.

4/20 **Call for Service**: Lifeguards and Fire receive 911 calls of numerous manned gliders blown off course by sudden strong winds; one paraglider reported stuck in tree at Torrey Pines Golf Course.
Response: 3 Fire units, 3 LG units, Medic.
Outcome: uninjured pilot rescued from tree, all other gliders land safely.

Location: UC Property

4/3 **Medical Aid**: report of an injured person on the beach.
Response: LG unit, Fire, Medics.
Outcome: patient treated by Lifeguards; Medics & Fire canceled.

4/10 **Cliff Rescue x 2**: two persons reported stuck on the cliff.
Response: 3 Lifeguard units, State Ranger & Lifeguards, UCSD PD.
Outcome: victims safely rescued.

4/10 **Water Rescue x 3**: three persons witnessed struggling in a rip current.
Response: Lifeguard unit, State Ranger, UCSD PD.
Outcome: victims rescued (all UCSD students); UCSD PD advised for report.

4/29 **Medical Aid:** woman with medical condition requests aid due to problem accessing across high tide.
Response: Lifeguard unit.
Outcome: non-injured victim transported to Scripps parking lot by lifeguards.

Location: State Park

4/17 **Cliff Rescue:** beach patrons report male stuck on cliff.
Response: 2 Lifeguard units, State Lifeguard & Ranger.
Outcome: victim safely rescued off cliff.

May

Location: UC Property

5/2 **Enforcement:** illegal beach fire, glass, nudity and alcohol found with two individuals.
Response: Lifeguard unit. UCSD PD.
Outcome: subjects compliant, units clear scene.

5/7 **Cliff Warnings:** three (3) persons reported stuck on cliff face 150' above beach.
Response: 2 LG units.
Outcome: Lifeguards arrive on scene as victims walk themselves to beach.

5/9 **Medical Aid:** surfer lacerated his scalp from his surfboard fin.
Response: Lifeguard unit.
Outcome: treated and transported to friends vehicle for private transport.

5/14 **Medical Aid**: patient experiencing chest pain after walking up road from beach.
Response: Lifeguard unit, Medics, Fire.
Outcome: MI patient transported to hospital

Location: State Park

5/6 **Call for Service:** person reports suspicious item in clear bag.
Response: Lifeguard unit, UCSD PD
Outcome: bag contained a seal carcass. State Lifeguards contacted to handle disposal.

5/7 **Medical Aids**: two females pulled from water by citizens; nearly unconscious.
Response: 2 LG units, 2 State LG., Fire, 2 Medics, UCSD PD.
Outcome: Lifeguards treat and transport to Medics; Medics treat and transport both patients to hospital.

Lifeguard Division Update on Wind ‘n Sea Beach

Wind ‘n Sea Beach is an area guarded on a seasonal basis. There has never been year-round lifeguard protection at this beach. Historically, it is an unguarded area in January, February and March, except for Spring Break. Wind n’ Sea is guarded on Spring Break and weekends following Spring Break by hourly employees. There is no Lifeguard II assigned to Wind ‘n Sea Beach until the middle of June.

To date, there has been no unusual impact on Lifeguard operations caused by the budget reductions to Wind ‘n Sea Beach. Any impacts from theses budget reductions would occur during the summer.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS
The brownouts are projected to achieve an FY2011 budgetary savings of $11.5M.

The Lifeguard Division reductions to overtime, Torrey Pines operations, Wind ‘n’ Sea operations and operational relief hours are projected to achieve an FY2011 budgetary savings of $721,915.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL and/or COMMITTEE ACTIONS
N/A

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS
Ongoing

KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PROJECTED IMPACTS
Community and Citizens

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Javier Mainar, Fire Chief