



**HACIENDA HEIGHTS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
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## **2021 Annual Health and Safety Report** **Prepared by: Maury Edwards Chairman**

### **Crime Report**

Crime statistics for 2020 and 2021 supplied by LASD Officer Cruz revealed some interesting trends in crimes in the Hacienda Heights Community.

- **Crimes against person** were up in 2021 by 20%
- **Robberies** were up in 2021 by 14%
- **Residential Burglaries** were down in 2021 by 12%
- **Vehicle Burglaries/thefts/grand thefts** showed little change
- **Auto Thefts** were up about 40%

These statistics support that public view that crime is up in Hacienda Heights is consistent with what we are seeing in California and most of the U.S.

### **Quemetco**

Quemetco has applied for a permit to increase capacity by 25%. A review on the environmental impact report (EIR) indicated that the increase will have little effect on the environment. This may be true if all the protocols are followed but this has not been the case with the operation and numerous incidents have occurred with the release of harmful materials. A tour of the facility made it clear that there are numerous avenues for harmful releases. For example, used batteries are stored outside and are subject to weathering and other environmental effects.

Quemetco has been operating since 2015 without a valid permit. This is allowed if an application for renewal has been submitted for approval. There have been problems with the renewal applications for various reasons and a final decision for renewal has not been forthcoming. This is primarily due the numerous environmental concerns and continued operating violations. A scoring system, VSP has been established to quantify the number and severity of the violations. Low scores are desirable with <20 being acceptable and > 40 being failing and reason for not issuing a permit. Any values in the 20 – 40 range are subject to review. Quemetco's VSP score in 2019 was 35.4 and in 2020 was 38.3. These numbers are not acceptable and are being reviewed. The trend is in the wrong direction and the general feeling among the community is that the facility should not be permitted and shut down immediately. The statistical significance of increased inspections that **lower** the VSP score has been questioned.

The principal reason for shutting down the facility is the continual release of toxic materials, namely Lead and Arsenic. Testing in the area around the facility indicate high levels of these materials in soil samples. A decision on reissuing the operating permit is planned by year's end.

## **Coivid-19**

COVID 19 Vaccine- Do I need that second shot? Do I need the booster?

There has been a lot of discussion concerning the need for the second or third “booster” shot of the COVID-19 vaccine. There’s data that indicates that upwards of 50 – 85 % efficacy after the first shot and the full 95% effect after the second shot. This efficacy wears off with time and an additional booster shot should be used to further boost immunity. Everyone is eager to get a vaccine right now and one dose is certainly better than none but with new variants spreading that are more contagious and deadly it’s important that everyone is as protected as possible.

Here’s why the booster dose is necessary. When the immune system first encounters a vaccine, it activates two important types of white blood cells. First up are the plasma B cells, which primarily focus on making antibodies. Unfortunately, this cell type is short-lived, so although your body might be swimming in antibodies within just a few weeks, without the booster shot this is often **followed by a rapid decline**.

Then there are the T cells, each of which is specifically tailored to identify a particular pathogen and kill it. Some of these, memory T cells, are able to linger in the body until they stumble upon their target – meaning immunity from vaccines or infections can **sometimes last a lifetime**. But crucially, you usually won't have many of this cell type until the second meeting. The booster doses are a way of re-exposing the body to the antigens –, once you've had your boost you'll have a higher frequency of memory T cells and ditto to some extent for the size of the pool of memory B cells you'll have. They'll also be making higher quality antibodies."

Special thanks to Jelena Verkler for her expert advice on the subject.

Here’s an excellent reference on the subject:

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20210114-covid-19-how-effective-is-a-single-vaccine-dose>

## **Proposed Heli-Hydrant Project**

In March, Scott Martin and I sent a letter in support of La Habra Heights’ Heli-Hydrant project. We attended the March La Habra Heights Public Safety/Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting (virtual) where the attributes of the Heli-Hydrant project were discussed. L.A. County Fire will be contracting to have high capacity Chinook helicopters available for fire suppression. These helicopters will have 3X the capacity of the currently used copters. The Heli-Hydrant will allow these high volume copters to refill in 6 minutes and return to the fire within immediately thus providing considerably more fire suppression. One of the concerns with regard to the location of the Heli-Hydrants was the possibility of disrupting the wildlife corridors in the area. We were relieved to hear that the Committee was in discussion with the Puente Hills Wildlife Authority and suitable locations were being identified. We also learned of the many safety restrictions necessary for proper site locations.

The heli-hydrant was installed and the first test of the remote controlled emptying and filling took place in December of 2021.

## **Asian Hate Crimes**

I attended the community meeting on anti-Asian hate and public safety. As has been reported in the news, hate crimes against Asian-Americans has been increasing since the pandemic began last year. In the county, hate crimes rose from 42 in 2019 to 72 in 2020 and looks to more than double that in 2021. This includes all ethnic groups but the rate for Asians has increased 4 fold. All incidents need to be reported. It is believed that less the 50% of hate incidents are actually reported. If you see something, say something.

In November of 2021, License Plate Recognition Cameras were installed at specific intersections in Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights. A suggestion for Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV) to be mounted in strategic locations in HH & RH to record criminal events against the AAPI Community was made during meetings with the AAPI Community in an effort to thwart crime.