

News Views

FALL/WINTER 2010

El Cerrito's Fiscal Challenges

HE RECESSION, continued State takeaways, and strained revenues could erode the quality of service in the City of El Cerrito. Residents rate city services highly and have said that they want to preserve the accomplishments that have taken years to develop. The State controls a significant portion of our revenue - and has taken \$22 million of our money over the past 15 years to solve the State's budget problems. We have continued to lose over \$1 million to the State each year over the past ten years. In order to maintain the high quality of services and facilities that the citizens of El Cerrito have said they expect, additional revenues will be needed.

Although the City has continued to balance the budget, the cost for City services is expected to be greater than existing revenues. Because of this, one-

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- Upcoming Events 2
- Proposed New Rules for Animals 3
- BART Construction Update 4
- October is Arts Month 4
- Dialing 9-1-1 5
- Prepare for Winter Storms 5
- Reducing Greenhouse Gases 6
- Get Ready, El Cerrito! 6
- Residential Sign Regulations 7
- Home Fire Escape Plan 7
- Voter Information 8

time reserve funds were used to balance the budget this fiscal year. The City has already made significant cuts and reductions to balance the budget and operate as efficiently as possible; City employees have taken cuts, while 10 percent of City staff positions have been cut or left vacant including police officers, firefighters, and parks and recreation staff.

During the past decade, the

level of customer service provided by the City to residents and the business community—which they rate as "high"—was achieved through creativity, fiscal prudence, and living within our means. Residents tell us that supporting the services that make El Cerrito a great community is important to our quality of life, including maintaining fire protection services, rapid emergency response times, neighborhood policing, after-school programs for children and teens, City parks, playgrounds,

athletic fields and recreation services.

The City Council has approved two budgets for this fiscal year. The current adopted budget assumes that a local revenue measure (Measure R) will pass November 2010, resulting in additional revenue that can be used to fund the services that residents say they want maintained. "Scenario B" in the City's budget shows the City's plan for providing reduced services to the community if Measure R fails. Scenario B requires more budget cuts, impacting services such





Fire Captains John Kelleher and Terry Pace prepare barrels to place at local businesses to collect donations of toys and books for the Holiday Toy Program.

LOCAL FIREFIGHTERS

Holiday Toy Drive

T WILL SOON be time for firefighters in El Cerrito and Richmond to gather donations for the Richmond/El Cerrito Firefighters Toy Program, benefiting children in West Contra Costa County.

Thanks to the generosity of individuals and local companies, over 1,000 families were served last year, and the need will be great this year as well.

The Program seeks toys and games for all age groups, especially pre-teens. They accept toys from late November through mid-December and monetary donations year-round.

ATTENTION BUSINESSES AND CIVIC GROUPS

To support the program by placing a donation barrel in your business or at

▶ TOYS: Page 3

UPCOMING EVENTS!

Thursday October 14 Cerrito Classics

Rialto Cinemas Cerrito Theatre presents Cerrito Classics, a monthly series of film classics, shown on the big screen as they were meant to be seen. The series is sponsored by Rialto and the Friends of the Cerrito Theater. October's Classic is "Rosemary's Baby". All seats \$7. More details at www.rialtocinemas.com

Where: Rialto Cinemas Cerrito 10070 San Pablo Avenue

Monday, October 18 VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE

This is the last day to register to vote in the next election.

See the story on the back page for voter information.

Tuesday, October 19 and Thursday, November 4 CRIME PREVENTION SEMINARS

Educational talks offered by the El Cerrito Police Department on ways to prevent burglary and theft. For more information, contact Police Lt. Paul Keith at **215-4400**.

When: Tuesday, October 19, 7-8 p.m.

Where: Castro Clubhouse

1420 Norvell Street

When: Thursday, November 4, 7-8 p.m.

Where: Garden Room

El Cerrito Community Center

7007 Moeser Lane

Thursday, October 21 THE GREAT CALIFORNIA SHAKEOUT

Join millions of Californians in a statewide earthquake drill.



Register your family, business or school at www.shakeout.org. Go online to www.elcerritokensingtoncert.com for more about emergency preparedness.

When: 10:21 a.m.
Where: Wherever you are!

Saturday, October 23 CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS

The City of El Cerrito Arts and Culture Commission presents a Cele-



bration of the Arts. The event includes a City Hall Gallery Space exhibit and artists' reception with live music, local performers, and an intercultural exchange with the North Cheyenne Tribal Dancers from Montana. Light refreshments. FREE.

When: 2-6 p.m. Where: City Hall

10890 San Pablo Avenue

Friday, October 29 HALLOWEEN IN EL CERRITO

The Community Center will be transformed for some out-of-this-world fun for kids of all ages!

When: Carnival Games: 3-7:30 p.m.

Haunted House

Lights On: 3:30-5:30 p.m. Lights Off: 5:30-8 p.m.

Where: El Cerrito Community Center

7007 Moeser Lane

HALLOWEEN DOG COSTUME CONTEST AND PARADE



Join us for a howling good time at Cerrito Vista Park (across from the Community Center). For more information, call the Recreation Department at **559-7000**.

When: Sign-Up, 3 p.m.

Parade and Contest, 3:45 p.m.

Where: Cerrito Vista Park 950 Pomona Avenue

Saturday, October 30 "CASPER"

Join the El Cerrito Recreation Department and watch Casper the Friendly Ghost (Rated PG) on the big screen!

Special admission price: \$8 adults and \$6 kids (\$2 off the regular price).

When: Box Office opens, 9:45 a.m. Where: Rialto Cinemas Cerrito

10070 San Pablo Avenue

Tuesday, November 2 STATEWIDE GENERAL ELECTION

Remember to vote! For polling place information, call the County Elections Office at (925) 335-7800.

November 11 VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY

City Hall will be closed in observance of Veterans Day.



Saturday, November 13 C.E.R.T. BOOT CAMP

This one-day training will introduce participants to the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). Pre-registration required.

The CERT Boot Camp is designed for residents who want to find out more about CERT but cannot commit the 20 hours required for self-sufficiency in the event of a disaster. This non-certified one-day training will introduce participants to all of the program areas covered in a full-length CERT training.

When: 8 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Where: Kensington Community Center

59 Arlington Avenue

Kensington

November 25 and November 26 THANKSGIVING

City Hall will be closed in observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday.



Saturday, December 11 HOLIDAY PANCAKE BREAKFAST

The City's Annual Holiday Pancake Breakfast includes a visit from Santa and a puppet version of "The Nutcracker." Tickets are \$8 each (includes breakfast and the show). For tickets, or more information, visit the Community Center or call **559-7000**.

When: 9-11 a.m.

(Show starts at 10:30 a.m.)

Where: El Cerrito Community Center

7007 Moeser Lane

Friday, December 17 OPEN HOUSE SENIOR CENTER HOLIDAY PARTY

Adults 50+ can enjoy holiday entertainment, including music by an El Cerrito High Student and "Funk 4 Soul" dance performance, followed by a special visit from Santa. Call **559-7677** to make your lunch reservation.

When: 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
Where: Open House Senior Center
6500 Stockton Avenue

CITY HALL DECEMBER SCHEDULE

El Cerrito City Hall will be closed in December on the dates shown below. For additional details or possible changes, please check the City's online calendar at www.el-cerrito.org.

- Closed Friday, December 24 through Friday, December 31
- · Re-opening on Monday, January 3

RECYCLE YOUR HOLIDAY TREE!

Please place your tree next to your greenwaste cart (not inside it) on your normally scheduled green-waste collection day in January. Flocked or tinseled trees cannot be recycled.

Please remove all decorations and take the tree out of its stand.

Saturday, January 8 and Sunday, January 9 UNWASTE RECYCLING COLLECTION EVENT

Free recycling collection event for electronics, including TVs, computers, cell phones, CD's (players and discs), stereo equipment, video games, and VHS players. You can also drop off small household appliances such as blenders, coffee makers, toasters, electric shavers, electric toothbrushes, and hair dryers.

NEW ITEMS ACCEPTED

At this UnWaste Recycling Collection Event, now you can also leave clothing, textiles, shoes, fashion accessories, linens, towels, and handbags for free.

Large appliances, mattresses and tires are accepted for a fee. (Cash or exact change only required.)

The City contracts with UnWaste (a California State approved recycler) for these events. UnWaste staff will help to unload your car for you. It's fast, easy, and the right thing to do.

For more details, contact Universal Waste Management, Inc. at **(888) 832-9839** or go online to **www.unwaste.com.**

When: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., both days
Where: El Cerrito DMV Parking lot
6400 Manila Avenue



Monday, January 17 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. PARADE AND RALLY

The Human Relations Commission invites everyone to celebrate the life and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This free event will feature a parade (from the DMV to El Cerrito High School), followed by a program, including entertainment, singing, dances, poetry, food, tributes to Dr. King, and much more. For more information, or to learn how you can get involved, please contact MLK Coordinator Patricia Durham at **234-2518**.

The 22nd annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade and Rally will be held on Monday, January 17. Charles Wilson, with St. Peter CME Church, organized the first march in 1989 to protest the fact that the City did not recognize the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday at that time. Today's parade and rally are a celebration of Dr. King and his legacy, sponsored by the City, St. Peter CME Church, and the El Cerrito Chapter of the NAACP. The event has featured governors, mayors, other city officials, professional athletes, ECHS students, and others as speakers. Over 800 people attend the rally each year.

Proposed Updates to City's Animal Ordinance

ASED ON A recommendation from the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC), City staff have been working for over a year on proposed revisions to the local laws about keeping common animals in El Cerrito at a "hobby level," meaning relatively small-scale, non-commercial operations.

The EQC, Planning Commission, and staff have held public meetings to get community feedback on the draft ordinance.

The new ordinance defines how animals must be kept, addresses sanitation and noise issues, and includes a list of prohibited animals. The proposed revisions would allow residents to keep chickens, bees, or pigs with an over-the-counter, administrative permit. Other livestock, including horses, llamas, and sheep would require a conditional use permit from the Planning Commission. There are only slight modifications to regulations regarding dogs. Any animals kept for commercial purposes would also require a conditional use permit.

The proposed draft is available online at http://www.el-cerrito.org/planning/animal.html. Share your opinion with the Planning Division Staff, who are still developing this proposal. The revised animal ordinance will need to be adopted by the City Council before it goes into effect.

If you have questions or comments, contact the Planning Division at **215-4330** or online at **planning@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.**

TOYS: Continued from page 1

a special event, contact the Fire Department. They would be happy to deliver toy barrels, pick up toys, and take the barrels away when the drive is over.

For more information or to order barrels, contact the El Cerrito Fire Department at www.firefighterstoyprogram.org or 215-4457. Donations payable to the Richmond/El Cerrito Firefighters Toy Program can be mailed to 2163 Meeker Avenue, Suite105, Richmond, CA 94804.

BART Continues Major Earthquake Safety Construction

AY AREA RAPID Transit District ("BART") has begun a major retrofit of facilities, including those in the City of El Cerrito. BART's \$1.2 billion Earthquake Safety Program will strengthen the transit district's core system to better withstand a major earthquake. This passenger safety improvement program is funded by the 2004 voter-approved Measure AA.

Over the next four years, BART crews will undertake major upgrades to the El Cerrito Plaza and El Cerrito del Norte stations and the elevated structures along the Ohlone Greenway. Stations will stay open but portions of the greenway will occasionally close, and pedestrians will have to detour through city streets.

Residents and BART riders should expect temporary construction-related noise, dust, and traffic delays as well as loss of parking on streets and at BART stations. BART will post notices to keep people informed and to indicate detours. For more information about the BART Earthquake Safety Program, please visit BART's website at **www.bart.gov/earthquakesafety** or call BART's Earthquake Safety Program Information Line at **412-5546**.

Below is a brief description of current and upcoming BART construction activities in El Cerrito. Dates are subject to change.

EL CERRITO PLAZA STATION

A retrofit is already underway at the El Cerrito Plaza Station and is scheduled for completion by the end of 2012. Crews are constructing temporary enclosures, demolishing concrete structures, adding steel and concrete to foundations, wrapping columns with reinforcement, and protecting utilities and equipment. During construction, pedestrian access in and around the station will shift periodically.

EL CERRITO DEL NORTE STATION

Strengthening of the El Cerrito del Norte Station parking structure began in 2009 and is scheduled for completion by the end of 2010. Strengthening of the station itself is expected to occur between late 2011 and mid 2013. Crews will construct temporary enclosures, demolish concrete structures, add steel and concrete to foundations, wrap columns with reinforcement, and take other steps to protect utilities and equipment.

A separate project to improve station access and repair sidewalks along Key Boulevard, Cutting Boulevard, Liberty Street, and Hill Street will begin in fall of 2010 and will take approximately five (5) months. For more information about this project, please contact Jeffrey Garcia with BART at **464-6492**.

BART ELEVATED STRUCTURES

A retrofit of the elevated structures along the Ohlone Greenway in Berkeley, Albany, and El Cerrito is scheduled for early 2011 to 2013. Crews will add steel and concrete to the foundations, protecting utilities and equipment.



CHALLENGES: Continued from page 1

as fire service, emergency response, neighborhood police patrols, and parks and playgrounds.

MEASURE R

Measure R is a temporary ½ cent sales tax (seven years) to maintain city services. If approved by the voters, Measure R will help the City maintain some priorities identified by the community as essential, including:

- Fire protection and emergency medical services
- Current levels of police and firefighters
- After-school programs for children and teens
- Maintenance of city parks, playgrounds, athletic fields and courts

If Measure R is not approved by the voters, the service cuts in the alternative budget (Scenario B) will be implemented.

For more information, visit the City's website at **www.elcerrito.org** or call **215-4318**.

pARTicipate in the ARTS in October

ACH YEAR, THE City of El Cerrito celebrates art and culture in October, beginning on California Arts Day, the first Friday in October, and continuing throughout the month.

October is National Arts and Humanities Month, when communities across the United States recognize the importance of art and culture in our daily lives. California Arts Day is designated by statewide initiative as a day to show the impact that art, creativity and imagination have on the economy, education and job preparation, and the health and vitality of civic life. By joining together under the unifying banner of the arts, Californians can show the importance of the arts to the California experience. This year's theme is "pARTicipate!"

To honor these initiatives, El Cerrito is designating October as "Arts Month,"

when the City's Arts and Culture Commission will promote the local businesses, organizations, and events that celebrate our vibrant arts and culture scene. The City has created a list of events that is available on the City's website at **www.el-cerrito.org.** The list includes a map and directions to the different venues and will be available throughout October.

More details and a full calendar of events are available on the City's website at **www.el-cerrito.org.** The City encourages you to "pARTicipate" in all of these wonderful art events, and to patronize the businesses and organizations that support art and culture in El Cerrito. For more information on arts events in October, contact Karen Pinkos at **kpinkos@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us** or call **215-4302**.

Getting Help in an Emergency: Dailing 9-1-1

IALING 911 IS very stressful and often overwhelming. 911 call-takers are trained to guide callers through the experience, but knowing what to expect can make the 911 call go more smoothly.

The City of El Cerrito contracts with the City of Richmond to provide emergency dispatch service. This means when you call 9-1-1 from a land-line in El Cerrito or call the Dispatch Center directly at **237-3233**, you will be talking to the Richmond Police Department Dispatch Center.

Call 911 only for emergencies, including

- Fire
- Crime
- Any serious medical condition
- Any situation requiring immediate response of Police, Fire, or Emergency Medical Personnel.

When calling 911 to report a crime, try to stay calm. Any situation that requires 911 is by definition an emergency but the dispatcher is trained to get the necessary information from you as quickly as possible.

Wait for the dispatcher to ask questions then answer clearly. If you are in danger of assault, try to answer the questions anyway. You can answer quietly, if necessary. Most questions can be answered by "yes" or "no."

Be ready to answer these questions.

- What happened?
- Where did it happen?
- Who is responsible? Answer as many of the following questions as possible: name, sex, race, height, weight, age, hair color, clothing
- Was there a weapon used or is there a weapon present?
- Is there a vehicle involved? What type of vehicle was it? If someone left the scene, what direction did they take?
- Provide any other details you think might be relevant to the capture of a suspect.

Let the dispatcher guide the conversation. He or she will be typing the information into a computer while you talk and it may seem to take forever. However, there is a good chance that emergency services are already on the way, even though you are still talking.

Do not hang up until directed to do so by the dispatcher.

If you dial 911 by accident, explain to the dispatcher that the call is a mistake. DO NOT HANG UP. Emergency services will be dispatched unless you tell the operator that there is no emergency.

Remember: stay calm and speak clearly. Be prepared to answer questions and receive instructions. Stay on the phone until you are told to hang up.



Prepare Now for Winter Storms

T IS ALMOST time for winter rainstorms and the possibility of temporary flooding. Local creeks and culverts often overflow during periods of heavy rain but you can help by clearing your gutters and keeping an eye on storm drain grates.

The City's storm drain system is designed to collect and convey street runoff from normal rainfall. During periods of very heavy rainfall or "cloudbursts," the system may not be able to handle all of the water flowing into it. This may cause some temporary flooding that usually dissipates as soon as the rain subsides. Because water collected by the storm drain system is carried into San Francisco Bay, high tides can further overload the system. When high tides coincide with heavy rain, temporary backups are likely, especially in the low-lying areas of the City.

The City has made extensive repairs and improvements to the storm drain system since the mid 1990s, replacing old pipes to improve flow capacity. Residents can

also help by clearing the gutters in front of a business or residence, and checking street grates frequently during heavy rain to make sure they are not blocked with trash or leaves.

If you have a drainage system on your property, make sure it is functioning properly and that surface runoff or roof downspouts are not directed into a neighbor's yard, causing flooding on an adjacent property.

Residents are entitled to ten (10) sandbags per household from the City with proof of residency. Pick the bags up at the Corporation Yard, located at 7550 Schmidt Lane (across from the Recycling Center). You will need to fill the bags yourself.

For questions or to report a storm drain problem, please contact the Maintenance Division at **215-4369**. In an emergency situation after hours or on weekends, contact Police Dispatch at **237-3233**.



City Reduces Greenhouse Gases and Saves Money!

HE CITY OF El Cerrito is taking proactive, cost-effective steps towards reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in response to the threats of global climate change. By reducing green-

house gas emissions from our own operations, we also hope to demonstrate that taking action to reduce greenhouse gases makes economic as well as environmental sense.

Since 2008, the City has pursued energy efficiency, vehicle fuel efficiency, and employee trip reduction projects. As part of its Climate Action Planning process, Environmental Services staff has

just finished quantifying these efforts and have found the results to be very impressive. In just 2 years, the City has reduced GHG emissions from its own operations by 205 tons of CO2 per year. This amount is equivalent to nearly 9% of its emissions in 2005 (the year for which the City conducted a baseline GHG emissions inventory). The 205 tons of CO2 the City saved is equivalent to driving 431,000 miles per year in a car with average fuel efficiency!

The table at right provides a list of the projects and their annual emissions reductions. Two of these projects, replacing the lighting along

> Greenway with energy efficient LED lighting, and doing comprehensive lighting retrofits in 14 City buildings, are being funded by Federal Stimulus dollars. Work on both projects will be completed by the end of 2010.



EL CERRITO MUNICIPAL GHG EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES CO₂e TONS Public Safety Building Lighting (2008) 20.84 Community/ Swim Center Lighting (2008) 7.33 Swim Center Pool Pumps (2009) 22.60 San Pablo Ave LED Street Lights (2009) 20.34 Computer Power Mgmt (2009/10) 5.17 Park Buildings Lighting (2010) 30.61 Ohlone Greenway LEDs (2010) 11.23 **Employee Trip Reduction** May No Car Challenge (2010) 5.18 Fire Dept Shift Schedule Change (2008) 77.00 **Fuel Efficiency** Recycling Truck Fuel Efficiency (2010) 5.00 TOTAL TONS REDUCED 205.30

Because all these projects help the City reduce its fuel and energy use, they also help the City save

operating dollars. To date, the City is avoiding \$31,800 in costs per year. Once all the listed retrofits are completed, estimated savings to the City will be nearly \$53,000 per year.

The California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) recommends that local governments strive to reduce GHGs

from their municipal operations by 15% by 2020. Having already reduced its emissions by 9% in just 2 years, El Cerrito is well on its way to reaching the AB 32 goal.

For more information about El Cerrito's work to reduce greenhouse gas pollution, call Maria Sanders at 215-4351 or email msanders@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Get Ready, El Cerrito! How to Survive a Disaster

New energy-efficient pool

pump controllers save almost

\$11,000 per year in energy

costs at the Swim Center.

RE YOU READY? We live in an area with a high probability of a major earthquake

in the next several years. Police and Fire services are ready but may be overwhelmed in the event of a



major disaster. Hurricane Katrina taught us that even when we know a disaster is coming, severe damage to transportation infrastructure can prevent emergency responders from reaching residents for up to 2 weeks. First-responders recommend residents prepare to be self-sufficient for up to 12 days. The most important steps you can take to prepare are the following.

STORE EMERGENCY WATER

Store a 12 day water supply for every person and pet in your household.

- Each person or pet needs 1 gallon of water per day.
- Store water in an accessible location like a garage or shed.

MAKE A FAMILY EMERGENCY PLAN

- In-state phone lines will most likely be down but long-distance phones lines may be available. Identify an out-ofstate contact.
- Inform your contact of your location and intentions.
- To get started on your family emergency plan, download a template from www.elcerritokensingtoncert.org

BUILD A FAMILY EMERGENCY KIT

Build your own or purchase a prepackaged emergency kit such as the ones available at redcrossstore.org Add your personal items. Download a complete emergency supply list at www.elcerritokensingtoncert.org

Visit www.elcerritokensingtoncert.com or call the Fire Department at 215-4450 to learn more.

ALREADY READY? TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Join the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and learn how to prepare

for and respond to an earthquake, wildfire, or other disasters. CERT is a comprehensive training course that could save



your life, and it's free! For a class schedule call **215-4450** or visit the Fire Department at www.elcerritokensingtoncert.org.

Putting a Sign on Your Residential Property?

ESIDENTIAL SIGNS, SUCH as those advertising a garage sale, and political signs are a common sight in the fall. If you're thinking of putting such a sign on your property, for the benefit of the neighborhood, follow City regulations regarding the type, size and placement of signs in residential areas.

The following is a summary of the City's regulations on residential signs. These regulations are intended to create an attractive, positive image for the City and maintain the quiet, restful character of its neighborhoods. Depending on the situation, you may be able to ask for an exception to the rules through the Conditional Use Permit process. To ensure public safety, all signs (temporary or permanent) must comply with the Building Code.

There are separate and additional regulations for business signs in commercial and mixed-use zones. For questions about signs in these areas, please contact the Planning Division at **215-4330**.

Only non-internally illuminated signs are allowed in residential zones with the following restrictions.

PERMANENT SIGNS

- Up to four noncommercial signs, not to exceed 8 square feet total
- Two flags per frontage, not exceeding 12 square feet and not containing commercial copy
- In some situations, residential properties are permitted to post a commercial sign related to a permitted business on the property (such as a child care business).

TEMPORARY SIGNS

Up to four noncommercial signs (such as political or garage sale signs), each no larger than six square feet in area, may be displayed for up to 60 days. The temporary signs may be attached to free-standing sign structures no more than five feet in height, or to the building walls, or to fences.

HOLIDAY DISPLAYS

 Noncommercial decorative holiday displays are permitted on private property, provided that such displays are removed within 45 days of their installation.

REAL ESTATE SIGNS

- One sign conveying information about the sale, rental, or lease of a specific property is allowed on each street frontage of the property; The real estate signs must not exceed more than 6 square feet in total, cannot be illuminated, and must be removed no more than one week after the property is sold, leased or rented.
- Directional signage for the purposes of advertising an open house is exempted from "off-site" provisions, provided the signs are removed within 48 hours of posting and do not cause a hazard for pedestrians or vehicles

WINDOW SIGNS:

 Signs placed in windows shall not exceed 20 percent of the area of window.

PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following types of signs are prohibited throughout the City (regardless of type):

- Banners, streamers, pennants, or other signs made of lightweight fabric or similar material (However, public schools may post up to five banners on their buildings or fences without a permit. The banners should not exceed 4' x 2½' in size.)
- Inflated, animated, blinking, or moving signs; signs with moving parts; or signs lit from the inside
- Signs that produce sound, visible smoke, vapor, particles, or odors that can be detected at the property line
- Signs in the public right-of-way, including signs at medians or parking strips; signs attached to street trees, lamp posts or utility poles; or over a public street
- Signs that create traffic hazards, such as signs that obstruct a driver's view, or use the words "stop," "look," "danger," or any other word or image that

that may confuse or mislead drivers; signs within five feet of a fire hydrant, street sign, or traffic signal if such placement could create a safety hazard; signs that create an obstruction, interference, or injury to passersby, residents, or occupants

Off-Premises (or "off-site") signs, that is, a sign belonging to you that is displayed on someone else's property without the consent of the property owner or the occupant's permission

To find out more about signs, including how to calculate the area of an individual sign, go online to **www.el-cerrito.org** and click on "Municipal Code," or call the Planning Division at **215-4330**.



Develop a Home Fire Escape Plan!

F YOU ATTENDED Tri-City Safety Day at the El Cerrito Plaza in September, you may recall the white "Safety House" Trailer, an interactive exhibit that teaches young children what to do in case of fire. The Fire Department encourages all residents to make evacuation plans for their homes, and to make sure everyone in the household knows how to get out quickly. For more information or assistance with setting up an evacuation plan, please read the step-by-step article in the Fall/Winter issue of the City of El Cerrito Recreation Brochure or contact the El Cerrito Fire Department at 215-4450.

City of El Cerrito City Hall 10890 San Pablo Ave. El Cerrito, CA 94530 PRSRT STD U.S. POSTAGE PAID OAKLAND, CA PERMIT #3729

El CERRITO POSTAL PATRON





EL CERRITO CITY COUNCIL		
Mayor Janet Abelson		
Mayor Pro Tem Ann Cheng		
Councilmember William C. Jones, III		
Councilmember Greg Lyman		
Councilmember Sandi Potter		

CITY WEBSITE	www.el-cerrito.org	
CITY HALL	(All area codes 510)	
10890 San Pablo Ave.		

10890 San Pablo Ave.	
City Management City Clerk City Council City Manager	215-4305 215-4305 215-4300
Administrative Services Employee Services Finance	215-4315 215-4310
Economic Development Economic Development Housing Redevelopment	215-4362 215-4358 215-4380
Environmental & Development Services Building Code Enforcement Planning Environmental Services	215-4360 215-4374 215-4330 215-4350
Recycling Center 7501 Schmidt Lane	215-4350
Public Works Corporation Yard Engineering Maintenance	215-4369 215-4382 215-4369

Street Paving

219-4155

Community Center 7007 Moeser Lane

Recreation Department 559-7000 Swim Center 559-7011

The Open House Senior Center 6500 Stockton Ave.

Senior Services 559-7677

Public Safety Building, 10900 San Pablo Ave.

Emergency* 911
Police/Fire/Medical Dispatch 237-3233
* Cell phone users should call dispatch in an

emergency for direct local response.

Fire Administration 215-4450

Fire Administration 215-4450 Police Administration 215-4400

City Hall Holidays (office closed): Veterans Day - November 11 Thanksgiving - November 25 and 26 Christmas/New Years - Dec 24-31

City Council regular meetings: October 4 and 18 November 1 and 15 December 6 and 20

City Council meetings are held at City Hall, 10890 San Pablo Ave. Regular Council meetings are broadcast live on Comcast Cable channel 28 and are also available live online. To watch the meeting online, go to www.el-cerrito.org and click on the "Streaming Media" button. Schedules are subject to change; please check the website for updates. Download the City Council meeting agenda packet from http://www.el-cerrito.org/archive. Agendas are available at least three days prior to each meeting.

YOUR OPINION COUNTS!

Cast Your Vote in November

IMPORTANT ELECTION DEADLINES

- Monday, October 18: Last day to register to vote in the November, 2010 election.
- Tuesday, October 26: Last day for the County to receive your Vote By Mail Ballot Request through the mail. A registered voter in California must make the request in writing, state his/ her residence address, indicate the date of the election, the address of where he/she would like the ballot mailed to, and sign the request.
- **Tuesday, November 2:** Election Day. Polls open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

If you have moved, changed your name or changed your political party, you will need to re-register to vote. Pick up a voter registration form from the Contra Costa County Election Department, City Hall, Post Offices, or the DMV.

Do you know the location of your polling place? It may have changed. To check, call the Contra Costa County Election Department in Martinez at (925) 335-7800, the City Clerk at 215-4305, or online at www.cocovote.us/PrecinctFinder.aspx for information. Questions regarding voter registration, vote by mail ballots or disabled voter access should also be directed to the County Election Department.