

**CITIZENS'
ECONOMY
& EFFICIENCY
COMMISSION**
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
1964-2003

April 29, 2003

Chairman

Robert H. Philibosian

Mr. Eric C. Shen
890 San Simeon Road
Arcadia, CA 91007

Vice Chair

Tony Lucente

Dear Mr. Shen:

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Tony Tortorice

In response to your e-mail to Supervisor Antonovich concerning the lights being left on in the Hall of Records, the Economy and Efficiency Commission has reviewed the lighting conditions within this building and has found that the circumstances as you described them have proven to be correct.

Investigation

This conclusion was confirmed by a Commission requested survey of the level of lighting throughout the night by the Office of Public Safety (OPS). This survey was conducted during the early morning hours from March 8th to March 13th. The Office of Public Safety concluded that "The results (of the survey) indicate that most of the lights in the Hall of Records are being left on throughout the night."

As a result of both your concerns and the OPS survey, this office contacted representatives of the Internal Services Department (ISD), the department responsible for the building's lighting, to further investigate the causes of this situation. During a walkthrough of the building it was reported that the Hall of Records was equipped with a system designed to automatically control the lights within zones in the building. Several building occupants interviewed during this walkthrough confirmed that the light did not go off and to do so necessitated that the circuit breaker be thrown. In the course of this investigation it was also discovered that external building lighting was being left on during the day.

Request for ISD Review

To resolve the question of the operation of the automated lighting system, this office requested ISD to inspect it to insure that it was operating in the manner for which it was designed. Upon further inspection the ISD reported that the lighting was not automated, as was originally reported, but rather was on a simple on/off system.



Corrective Actions

The ISD has reported that the lighting system that is currently in place has been now programmed to shut off the lights between 6:00 pm and 5:30 am. Lights that are needed by personnel that are staying late to work or by maintenance personnel will have to be manually turned on by using an override switch. This override switch has a 2 hour timer on it which, after a warning, will shut the lights off. Personnel will have to use the override to turn the lights on again. The proper implementation of this procedure should resolve lights being left on unnecessarily.

Further Commission Recommendations

To advise you of further actions that have been taken as a result of your inquiry and to insure that all recipients of this correspondence are aware of the Commission's recommendations, we have included additional recommendations that have been developed as a result of this investigation.

Recommendation 1

During the Commission walkthrough of the Hall of Records it was discovered that several areas of the building, particularly the "stack" areas in the back of the building, lacked emergency lighting. It was reported by building occupants that during a recent power outage that not only was there no emergency lighting, but that there were limited flashlights available. In one reported instance, the office occupants have personally purchased emergency lighting for their spaces to avoid a repeat of this situation. In addition, the practice of using the circuit breaker to shut off the lights, as noted above, is a safety concern for the individuals involved in this practice as well as possibly causing difficulties for safety personnel if they had to enter the building in an emergency situation.

Since the Commission does not possess the expertise to adequately evaluate the need for such items as emergency lighting, the Fire Prevention Division of the Los Angeles County Fire Department was notified of the Commission's concerns in this area. After another walkthrough of the building with a fire prevention inspector, he has taken action to formally inform the County of several safety violations. He has also stated that he would coordinate further inspections with the Los Angeles City Fire Department, in whose jurisdiction the building resides.

It is recommended that the Economy and Efficiency Commission follow-up in the next several months to insure that the appropriate actions have been taken.

Recommendation 2

To insure that the occupants of the Hall of Records fully understand the working of the lighting system, it is recommended that the building manager issue a memo to each occupant explaining how the system works and pointing out the location of the override switch for their area.

Recommendation 3

To insure that the actions that are taken in this matter are adequate in meeting the reduction in lighting and the needs of the building's occupants, it is recommended that the Commission review the lighting situation in the Hall of Records within 2 months of the implementation of the new lighting procedures.

Page 3
April 29, 2003
Subject: Mr. Eric C. Shen

In conclusion, the Commission and the County appreciates the concerns that you have expressed involving the lighting at the Hall of Records. As a result the County will not only be able to save energy costs, but will also improve the safety and working conditions of its employees. You are to be commended for you efforts on the behalf of the County.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Philibosian
Chairman

CC: Supervisor Antonovich
Chief Bayan Lewis, Office of Public Safety
Mr. Orin Jones, ISD
Chief Jesus Burciaga, Los Angeles County Fire Department