



CITY OF EL SEGUNDO
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of El Segundo Suspends Its Residential Sound Insulation Program

The City of El Segundo today announced that it was suspending its program, which uses grant funding to sound insulate residential homes in the City. The suspension will involve laying off seven City employees. The City will focus its efforts on obtaining reimbursement from the federal government for funds already spent.

“Suspending our residential sound insulation program is a step we do not take lightly, but it is a necessary and fiscally prudent move at this time,” said Suzanne Fuentes, mayor of the City. “We fully recognize the noise impacts of LAX are continuing and significant, and once we have worked through the reimbursement issues, we will consider the right path to sound insulate the remaining eligible homes in the City.”

The Residential Sound Insulation Program (RSI) uses funds from Los Angeles World Airports (which operates LAX) and from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to insulate homes from the effects of noise from LAX, which is immediately adjacent to the City. Under RSI rules, the City contracts to have the homes insulated, pays the contractors and then seeks reimbursement with secured grants from the FAA.

Since the beginning of the RSI Program in the mid-1990’s, the City has sound-insulated over 1,900 residences. Newly applicable rules require any other homes to be insulated first be tested to ensure they will sufficiently benefit from the work.

The employees who received their notices are primarily in the RSI construction and design staff, plus an employee who served as the program’s homeowner coordinator.

Since 2014, the FAA has tightened its oversight of the City’s RSI Program and similar programs nationwide, leading to long delays in reimbursement for the City. The City has worked diligently with the FAA to obtain reimbursement, but currently has \$2 million in outstanding reimbursements. For a City the size of El Segundo, this is a significant burden.

“Unfortunately, in the last couple of years, we’ve found it difficult to work within new FAA rules and FAA interpretations of existing regulations, and this has essentially brought new work under our program to a standstill,” noted Greg Carpenter, the City’s City Manager. “We cannot continue to employ people if there is no construction in the foreseeable future, so suspending the program while we work through these issues is the only reasonable path forward for us.”

Once the reimbursement issues are resolved, the City will have options on restarting the Program. It can attempt to continue to manage the program internally, as it has done since its inception (albeit with the new FAA rules and interpretations). Or, the City can decide to turn the Program over to LAWA, which will then take on the responsibility of insulating the remaining eligible homes in the City.

For additional information, please contact the program office at (310) 524-2352 or JONeill@elsegundo.org.

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