

## FINAL REPORTS

# USE OF COASTSIDE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT STATIONERY

[Summary](#) | [Background](#) | [Findings](#) | [Recommendations](#) | [Responses](#)

### **Summary:**

In two instances, individuals on the Coastside County Water District Board, using district letterhead, corresponded with other governmental agencies taking positions that had not been adopted by the district.

The grand jury finds that this represents a situation of possible implied misrepresentation. The Coastside County Water District should adopt a policy that if an individual uses district stationery to present views not adopted by the entity's board, the author should at the earliest opportunity in the letter state that the views and positions presented are those of the author and not those of the entity.

[Top of this page](#)

### **Background:**

The grand jury received copies of two letters written in May and June of 2000 on Coastside County Water District letterhead by individual district board members to other governmental agencies. There is not a specific statement in the letters whether the views stated are the positions of the district board or those of the individual board member. The general manager of the district advised the grand jury in writing that the communications in the letters were not authorized by the district board.

[Top of this page](#)

### **Findings:**

The grand jury finds that the two letters written on Coastside County Water District stationery by individual board members express only the individual's and not the district's views. As there is no statement in the letters clarifying whether the views are those of the author or the district, the letters present a situation of possible implied misrepresentation.

[Top of this page](#)

### **Recommendations:**

#### **Recommendation 2.18**

The Coastside County Water District should adopt a policy that if an individual uses district stationery to present views not adopted by the entity's board, the author should at the earliest opportunity in the letter state that the views and positions presented are those of the author and not those of the entity.

### **Recommendation 2.19**

The 2001-2002 grand jury should follow up with other governmental entities to see if they have policies concerning the use of their letterhead stationery.

[Top of this page](#)

### **Response from Coastside Water District**

#### **Recommendation 2.18**

"The Coastside County Water District should adopt a policy that if an individual uses district stationery to present views not adopted by the entity's board, the author should at the earliest opportunity in the letter state that the views and positions presented are those of the author and not those of the entity."

#### **Response:**

The District accepts this recommendation and in fact, the Board adopted such a policy at the September 12, 2000 Board of Directors meeting. Following this meeting, District letterhead bearing individual director names was distributed to the directors who requested a personal supply of District letterhead. The Board believes that by adopting this practice, a director who wishes to communicate positions or perspectives on District-related matters will be able to do so as a director without creating confusion as to whether he/she is implicitly speaking for the Board. Furthermore, all directors, in future District-related correspondence, will state at the earliest opportunity in a letter, that the views and positions presented are those of the author and not those of the District.

[Top of this page](#)