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April 30, 2011

Mr. Moe Kumre  
Weed Abatement Coordinator, Santa Clara County  
1553 Berger Drive; Building 1  
San Jose, CA 95112

**Subject: Conduct of weed inspections**

**References:**

[1] L. Earnest, "Scheduling of weed inspections," letter to Kevin O'Day (Santa Clara County Dept. of Agriculture & Environmental Management), Nov. 22, 2010.

[2] K. O'Day, letter to L. Earnest, Jan. 20, 2011.

Dear Mr. Kumre:

Thanks for your recent note warning that you again plan to start weed inspections today, even though this calendar-based approach makes little sense. Because of recent rains the weeds are still green and growing fast, just as they were on May 12, 2010, when you declared that I had failed to cut them in time and fined me \$298. I do plan to cut them this year when they start drying out, as I have done consistently for the last 45 years, but if you pull another shenanigan as you did last year then you and those who have authorized your profitable program will hear more from me.

In response to my complaint last year [1] your boss was kind enough to send me a photo (attached) showing my green crop of growing weeds. He tried to cover for you by saying you "found high weeds that had begun to turn brown, as seen in the enclosed inspection photo" [2]. However, as can be plainly seen in the photo, those weeds were very green and growing well.

When I first moved here I hired a contractor to disk the lower part of my property but left the upper part untouched because it was too steep to disk and besides there was no home directly uphill from me then. However a few years later that contractor died in a tractor rollover accident elsewhere when he tried to disk a lot that was too steep and a house was then built on the lot above mine, so my son then got a hand-controlled power mower to do the entire lot. We found, however, that the mower easily jams on tall green weeds, so we could not have mowed by May 12 last year and if we had it would have been necessary to repeat it a few weeks later, which made no sense.

I have never tried to negotiate the inspection date with you and do not plan to do so in the future. All I ask is that when you send an inspector here that he use his eyes rather than the calendar to determine whether we have failed to mow the weeds in time.

Respectfully,

Les Earnest

Cc: Kevin O'Day, Director, Dept. of Agriculture and Environmental Management  
Liz Kniss, Santa Clara County Supervisor  
Los Altos Hills Fire Commission  
Ginger Summit, Mayor, Los Altos Hills

