



# Service Matters

## How Are We Prepared? Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Unveiled

“Disasters will humble you quickly,” Henry Renteria, Director of the State Office of Emergency Services, reminded 200 public servants and business leaders in his opening remarks about state disaster response and emergency preparedness at ABAG’s Fall General Assembly “*Taming Natural Disasters*.” Panelist Chris Wills, Supervising Geologist for California Geological Survey (GIS), reinforced the likelihood of disasters, simply stating, “Geologic hazards related to earthquakes, major storms and fires are a natural part of the California landscape.” Ana-Marie Jones of CARD (Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters) put it more colorfully, saying, “California is considered the Disneyland of disasters.”



Henry Renteria, Director, State of California, Governor’s Office of Emergency Services

These were just a few of the remarks made by speakers during ABAG’s Fall General Assembly (GA). The GA was part of the two-day Pacific Security Expo co-sponsored by ABAG, the Bay Area Economic Forum (BAEF), and BASIC on October 5th and 6th at the Oakland Marriott City Center. Elected officials and staff, national and state disaster experts, and business and community leaders in homeland security and natural disaster response and mitigation explored two major challenges — *Leveraging Regional, State and Federal Resources* for homeland security and *Taming Natural Disasters*. More than 70 expert speakers in 20 conference sessions examined state and regional preparedness, counter terrorism and homeland security funding, new disaster forecasting, transportation and utilities disaster mitigation, as well as vulnerabilities of food supply protection, health care response, seaport and cargo security, and communications.

One theme informed all presentations and discussions both days: *regional* hazard mitigation and emergency response plans are crucial. It was universally agreed that disaster planning and risk reduction need to go beyond local jurisdictional boundaries. Speakers demonstrated that regional coordination and cooperation are key to maximizing funding dollars brought into the region and crucial to maximizing readiness and resources before, during, and after a disaster to reduce risk and impact.



Scott Haggerty, ABAG President and Supervisor, County of Alameda, opens the General Assembly

### Hazard Mitigation Plan For Review/Comment

The Fall GA, in part, commemorated the 15th anniversary of the Loma Prieta Earthquake. **Jeanne Perkins**, ABAG Earthquake Program Manager, unveiled for review and comment a



“Multi-Jurisdictional Local Government Hazard Mitigation Plan.” The plan is the result of a grant from the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency through the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. Available for review on ABAG’s website, the Bay Area’s proposed hazard mitigation plan satisfies the requirements of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA), which stipulates that local jurisdictions must have a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan to be eligible to receive FEMA hazard mitigation funds.

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## Are we Prepared? & November—Be Sewer Smart Month

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The goal is to create a more disaster-resistant region by reducing the potential loss of life, property damage, and environmental degradation from natural disasters, while accelerating economic recovery from disasters.

State of California Insurance Commissioner **John Garamendi** made a special announcement during the General Assembly. Commissioner Garamendi outlined his ideas for the creation of a national “natural disaster insurance program.” He said that a new solution is needed to replace what he calls the “Air Force One” insurance policy, where the President declares a region a disaster area and sends millions of dollars in relief for rebuilding efforts, with that money coming from taxpayers.

“Natural disasters can and do strike anywhere. It makes sense to find a more efficient, effective solution under an insurance policy that would spread the risk and share the cost of rebuilding after these devastating forces of nature,” he said.



John Garamendi, State of California Insurance Commissioner

**Funding of Emergency Response and Planning Suzanne Mencer**, Executive Director, Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness in the Department of Homeland Security, spoke about “Leveraging Regional, State and Federal Resources” for homeland security efforts. During the Homeland Security Conference on the first day, Mencer described federal *Homeland Directive 8*, which addresses the funding focus by asking “How is preparedness measured, what are the gaps, and what’s needed that hasn’t been provided.” She characterized the resulting federal funding and assistance to jurisdictions as a



GA Transportation, Utilities, and Disaster Mitigation Panel: (Left to Right) Alameda Mayor Beverly Johnson, BART General Manager Thomas Margro, Metropolitan Transportation Commission Director Steve Heminger, and East Bay Municipal Utility District Board of Directors President Frank Mellon

“tiered approach to needed equipment, training, personnel, and the threats and vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure.” Luncheon keynote speaker on Tuesday **Michael Morehart**, Section Chief of Terrorist Financing Operations, in the FBI Division of Counter Terrorism in Washington provided a detailed overview of terrorist response planning and federal priorities.

Other major findings announced and reviewed during the GA and Pacific Security Expo included new forecasting models, new hazard assessment tools and methodologies that USGS is developing and testing, homeland security collaborations, communication tools, and successful mitigation projects throughout the region and state.

For complete information on ABAG’s Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Effort, including interactive hazard mapping and risk assessment, go to <http://quake.abag.ca.gov/mitigation>.



Pacific Security Expo Attendees

## ABAG Proclaims November “Be Sewer Smart, Backup Prevention Month” – Public Education Campaign Launched



A web-based public education campaign has been launched by ABAG for the second year to reduce the frequency and severity of sewer backups throughout the Bay Area. As part of this region-wide campaign, November has been proclaimed “**Be Sewer Smart: Prevent Sewer Backups**” month. Cities and counties across the Bay Area are participating and will also proclaim locally that November is “Be Sewer Smart” month.

The campaign is important because sewer backups are a leading cause of loss for ABAG member communities and

for homeowners. The Be Sewer Smart campaign is designed to reduce these losses by raising public awareness about backups and demonstrating how to prevent them. In 2003, the first year of the campaign, more than three million area residents were reached with Sewer Smart information, 6,000 homeowners received and completed online risk assessment tests, and hundreds of backup-prevention devices were distributed to homeowners in participating communities. This helped **decrease** sewer claims regionwide.

Sewer cont. on page 3

## A Legacy of Service—ABAG’s Executive Director Announces Retirement



In December an era of public service and achievements will end at ABAG and a new chapter will begin. Dr. Eugene Y. Leong, ABAG’s Executive Director, is retiring after 30 years of service. As Executive Director for the past decade, Gene has overseen the agency’s regional planning studies, information and service programs, and intergovernmental coordination activities. Prior to becoming Executive Director, Gene was ABAG’s Deputy Executive Director and Director of Environmental Quality and Energy Resources. His entire public service career has been with ABAG.

Gene is leaving behind a true legacy of innovative service. While the vast majority of councils of government (COGs) focus primarily on regional planning, Gene has been instrumental in establishing and promoting ABAG’s major service programs, which include:

- ABAG’s web presence in early 1994—abagOnline (the first COG online in the country, as well as only ISP for local governments)
- A \$35 million self-funded, risk sharing general liability and property insurance program for 32 Bay Area cities—the largest such pool in northern California
- Several financial service programs which have issued more than \$3 billion in tax-exempt financing for local governments and non-profit agencies throughout the Bay Area and California
- Pooled natural gas and electricity purchasing programs for 64 local agencies in northern California in response to California’s utility deregulation legislation
- Internationally funded training programs to countries

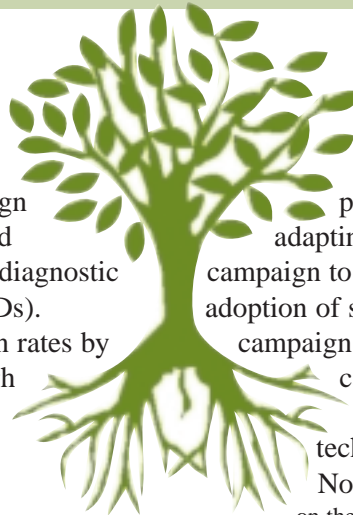
such as China, Taiwan, Japan, Mexico, Canada, Australia, Romania and Turkey, and specialized online training programs reaching students in every state in the country.

Recognized for his insight into regional governance and his environmental quality expertise, he has authored numerous reports and technical articles and made many presentations at national and international conferences. Prior to joining ABAG, Gene worked for several engineering consulting firms. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan and UCLA, where he received his doctorate in Environmental Science and Engineering in 1974.

Reflecting back recently Gene said, “I have counted it my honor and privilege to have served at ABAG all these years; all the staff and elected officials that care so much for the Bay Area and improving the quality of life for its residents have been wonderful to work with.” Regarding the future, Gene’s plans for the next phase of life’s journey include “more time with the family, including my two grandchildren, travel, working on my golf handicap, getting back into tennis and some teaching” (at Cal State Hayward’s Graduate School of Public Administration). He has assisted the ABAG Administrative Committee in its search for a successor, who will be recommended to the Executive Board at their meeting on November 18th. A farewell reception to commemorate Gene’s retirement will be given on **Friday, December 17th** at the MetroCenter (for details, please contact Marci Loss at [MarciL@abag.ca.gov](mailto:MarciL@abag.ca.gov) or 510-464-7920).

### *Sewer cont. from page 2*

Following the success of the first-year campaign, the 2004-05 campaign is timed to coincide with the start of the rainy season and ending in spring. The Be Sewer Smart campaign features a combination of broadly disseminated Web-based information and self-administered diagnostic tests, and free backup prevention devices (BPDs). Specially negotiated inspection and installation rates by licensed contractors are being provided through plumbing associations, where appropriate. Available information has also been expanded to include a fall planting guide and advice for home buyers/sellers to help avoid problems associated with blockages and damage caused by roots in



sewer lines. Industries like nursery and garden centers and home inspectors have been added to the campaign partnership program. City and county partners will be adapting special handouts provided through the campaign to encourage their homeowners’ awareness and adoption of sewer maintenance practices. A special campaign launch press event and reception featuring campaign partners and experts on the sewer lateral inspections and backup prevention technical matters will be announced in November. Visit [www.sewersmart.org](http://www.sewersmart.org) for information on the program, risk issues, partners and backup prevention tips, or contact Marcus Beverly, PLAN Director, at 510/464-7969.



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

## November 2004

Nov. 9 10:00 a.m.  
ABAG POWER Board of Directors  
MetroCenter, Auditorium

Nov. 18 3:30 p.m.  
Legislation & Governmental  
Organization Committee Meeting  
MetroCenter, ABAG Room 106B

Nov. 18 5:00 p.m.  
Finance and Personnel Committee  
MetroCenter, ABAG Room 106B

Nov. 18 7:30 p.m.  
Executive Board Meeting  
MetroCenter, Auditorium

Nov. 19 10:00 a.m.  
ABAG/MTC Joint Policy Committee  
MetroCenter, Room 171

Nov. 29 9:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.  
ABAG/CALFED Task Force Meeting  
MetroCenter, Room 171

## December 2004

Dec. 1 1:00 p.m.  
Regional Planning Committee  
MetroCenter, Auditorium

Dec. 14 9:00 a.m.  
Projections 2005 Conference  
MetroCenter, Auditorium

Dec. 17 4:30 p.m.  
Retirement Reception for Eugene  
Leong, ABAG Executive Director  
MetroCenter, Auditorium (Reservations Required)

### Local Government Energy Partnership (LGEP)

Currently enrolling local government agencies to receive **free** informational and technical energy efficiency assistance from ABAG program.

The cities of **Berkeley, Dixon, Hillsborough, Livermore, Millbrae, Pleasanton, San Carlos, Santa Rosa, and Sebastopol, and the counties of Contra Costa, Monterey, and Sonoma** have enrolled in the LGEP program.

For more information, visit <http://www.abag.ca.gov/lgep> or contact Gerald Lahr at **510-464-7908** or [jerryl@abag.ca.gov](mailto:jerryl@abag.ca.gov).



## SAVE THE DATE

### ABAG Short Term Economic Trends Conference 2005

January 27, 2005

9 a.m. - Noon  
MetroCenter Auditorium

## Notable Numbers

### 26 million

vehicles consume more than 15 billion gallons of gasoline and more than 2 billion gallons of diesel, making California the second largest consumer of gasoline in the world.

### 99%

of California's fuel needs are supplied by petroleum.

### 49%

of Bay Area carbon dioxide emission is attributed to transportation.

### 8.5 to 18° F

is the estimated Bay Area summer temperature increase that is predicted if higher carbon dioxide emission continues through the end of the century. This global warming trend can be lessened with reduced emissions.

### 3.5 to 9° F

is the estimated summer temperature increase in the Bay Area predicted if emissions are significantly reduced, almost 50% lower than the higher emissions scenario.

*The California Energy Commission and research by Norman Miller, Hydrometeorologist, U.C. Berkeley National Laboratory*

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