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Sent: Monday, August 3, 2026 3:43 PM
To: Zulema Higgins <zhiggins@cityofsebastopol.gov>; City Council
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Subject: Public Comment

FIRE Risks in Sebastopol

Because the City has neglected our water systems for well over 20 years, the whole city is being put at risk in multiple ways, some conceivably catastrophic.

The Grand Jury report specifically states: **“The systems demonstrate the accumulated problems from deferred maintenance. The lack of capital investment in equipment improvements puts the City at risk of water supply failure or flooding in the streets. Many of the pipes in the system are beyond their expected life, some are over 100 years old.”**

“A loss of service to a potable water main also leaves a section of the city without water at a pressure to fight a fire – that is only a risk unless it happens when there is a fire, then it is a disaster.”

What this means to the average citizen is that IF there is a fire in Sebastopol, we don't know if the system is going to work because there is no redundancy that a Pleasant Hill Loop would fix. The Loop is not scheduled until 2029 or 2030. So, we'd all better hope there is no fire until then.

From the Grand Jury: **“Pleasant Hill Loop: This is a critical safety element lacking in the water system. Redundancy is common to any well-engineered system, particularly for health or safety related systems. In good practice, fire/potable waters system main lines are loops so that an individual break or leak can be isolated, and water is still available to users, fire hydrants, etc. Currently there is a section of the water system that is not looped and a rupture in this line, be it a leak or a rupture caused by a seismic event, could leave more than half the city without water pressure to fight a fire for as long as it takes to repair the rupture. This could be catastrophic”**

I encourage the council to vote to hold the city accountable and return the \$350,354 that was illegally charged to rate payers by the city attorney. By taking this money and putting it toward the Pleasant Hill Loop would be a good start.