

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

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***** **PRESS RELEASE** *****

December 2, 2009

Subject: Jesusita Fire Investigation

This press release is an effort by the District Attorney's Office to provide an update to our community about the progress of the investigation into the cause of the Jesusita fire.

The Santa Barbara Sheriff's Department, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department, the Santa Barbara City Fire Department and Cal-Fire, in addition to all of the other public safety agencies that assisted during the emergency, are all to be commended in the work they did to keep our community safe. Further, they should be thanked for all of the follow-up work they did in investigating the cause of the fire.

The multi-agency investigation report regarding the cause of the fire, consisting of hundreds of pages, was complex, in-depth and detailed. The numerous reports were submitted to the District Attorney's Office for review a number of weeks ago. Like every other major investigation which is presented to this office for review, this matter was given to several of the District Attorney's Office's most senior deputies to read and evaluate. That evaluation is nearing completion.

The thorough review of the investigation reports by experienced prosecutors is required for the determination of whether or not sufficient evidence exists to file charges. Justice requires no less.

The District Attorney's Office will soon finish with its careful and considered evaluation of this matter. When that review is completed, which will most likely occur next week, a comprehensive analysis of that review and its results will be immediately shared with the community.

The District Attorney's Office shares in the sense of urgency in the completion of this investigation and review. This office also shares in the sense of loss suffered by many members of the Santa Barbara community and is mindful of the community's need for answers regarding the origin of this fire.