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## **Burnt-Out Grant Hill Property Declared a Public Nuisance**

*Court appoints a health and safety receiver to abate dangerous conditions*

City Attorney Mara W. Elliott today announced that a health and safety receiver has been appointed to clean up a dangerous property near an elementary school in Grant Hill. The receiver is charged with ridding the four-unit property of squatters, securing the structures, and overseeing their demolition or rehabilitation.

The Court's action on April 19 is the result of more than a year of efforts by the City Attorney's Office and the Code Enforcement Division to get the property owner to evict the transients and bring the units into compliance with the California Health and Safety Code. The owner, Evelyn A. Candido, who lives in Jamul, had been served with several orders to vacate and secure the property, and to abate the public nuisance, but had taken no action.

Since November 2021, the property across the street from Kimbrough Elementary School has been the site of complaints from neighbors and school employees ranging from trespassing to domestic violence, disturbing the peace, and auto theft.

Police and firefighters have responded to approximately 75 calls at the property. At least 10 fires broke out between March 2022 and January 2023 – including five in a five-day period last fall.

**“This property has posed a health and safety hazard to elementary school children and the Grant Hill community for years,”** City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **“When the property owner refused to act responsibly, my office brought an enforcement action geared toward returning peace and tranquility to the neighborhood.”**

The property at 2845-2849 K St. was built in 1955 as a multi-unit residential development. Candido and her late husband purchased it in 1990. On Nov. 5, 2021, the City received a complaint from tenants of the property about uninhabitable conditions. A Code Enforcement inspection found that renters occupying three of the units were exposed to mold from a sewage leak and without heat, working toilets or running water, as both the electricity and water had been shut off.

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Soon after the inspection, the City sent Candido a Notice and Order to vacate the units, repair the buildings, and abate the public nuisance. When she failed to do so, the City paid relocation benefits to the tenants so they could move out.

Since then, transients have repeatedly broken into the units, and the repeated fires have left the structure in a highly dangerous condition, susceptible to collapse at any time. According to the complaint filed by the City Attorney's Office on April 4, San Diego Fire Marshal Anthony Tosca determined that the conditions at the property "pose a significant fire and life-safety hazard to the occupants, first responders, and the community."

The judge's order requires the receiver to vacate the property, fence and secure it, clean up the accumulated garbage, and hire a contractor to either demolish or repair the buildings. The court also issued a temporary restraining order to the property owner prohibiting her from maintaining a public nuisance and ordering her to appear at a court hearing May 26 to confirm the appointment of the receiver.

This case was handled by Deputy City Attorney Kristine Lorenz of the Nuisance Abatement Unit, under the supervision of Chief Deputy City Attorney Gabriela Brannan and Assistant City Attorney Paige E. Folkman.

The Nuisance Abatement Unit is devoted to aggressively enforce public nuisance, land use, and environmental laws in the City of San Diego. NAU works in partnership with City departments, Council Offices, community groups, and the police and fire department to proactively preserve and enhance the quality of life in our communities.

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