


Office of the City Manager

August 27, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Dee Williams-Ridley, Interim City Manager

Subject: Department of Homeland Security/Department of Energy
Helicopter Flights over Berkeley

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is partnering with the Department of Energy (DOE), including Lawrence Berkeley National Lab (LBNL), to implement a research program designed to improve the U.S. government's ability to detect nuclear and radiological material. Specifically, the research program is designed to improve aerial radiological detection, i.e., equipping helicopters with sensors to detect radiation on the ground. The research program is called the Airborne Radiological Enhanced-sensor System program.

As part of the program, DHS/DOE will conduct an Aerial Radiological Survey over San Francisco, Pacifica, Berkeley and Oakland, CA areas from September 1 - 6, 2015. This Survey will be a continuation and repeat survey of the areas previously flown in August 2012. In 2012, Berkeleyside did a brief story on the flights in response to questions from their readers: <http://www.berkeleyside.com/2012/08/29/low-flying-helicopters-over-berkeley-are-measuring-radiation-levels/>.

To ensure that Councilmembers and City staff are aware of the flights and thus able to respond to any questions as they arise, DHS/DOE is drafting a news release and will provide a link to that release with contact information for a project spokesperson. Once that information is available, it will be provided to Councilmembers and appropriate staff. Please direct any questions from the media or from residents to the DOE/DHS project spokesperson and copy Matthai Chakko.

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The flight schedule is as follows:

Date	Day	Morning/Afternoon	Location
9/1/2015	Tuesday	Morning	Downtown San Francisco
9/1/2015	Tuesday	Afternoon	San Francisco Presidio
9/2/2015	Wednesday	Morning	Berkeley
9/2/2015	Wednesday	Afternoon	Berkeley
9/3/2015	Thursday	Morning	San Francisco Presidio
9/3/2015	Thursday	Afternoon	Pacifica
9/4/2015	Friday	Morning	San Francisco - Twin Peaks & Noe Valley

Note that the flights are highly weather dependent and can only be flown in clear conditions.

Please forward this information to any additional staff that may receive questions on this from media or the community. For additional questions, contact Timothy Burroughs.

cc: Gil Dong, Interim Deputy City Manager
Mark Numainville, City Clerk
Matthai Chakko, Public Information Officer
Ann-Marie Hogan, City Auditor
Timothy Burroughs, Chief Resilience Officer