



## SCOTTS VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT

ONE CIVIC CENTER DRIVE • SCOTTS VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 95066 • PHONE (831) 440-5670 • FAX (831) 438-6930

CHIEF OF POLICE  
STEVE WALPOLE

May 20, 2019

Karen Smith, MD, MPH  
Director and State Public Health Officer  
California Department of Public Health  
Office of AIDS  
P.O. Box 997377, MS 0500  
Sacramento, CA 95899-7377  
[SEPAApplication@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:SEPAApplication@cdph.ca.gov)

Dear Director Smith,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the application from the Harm Reduction Coalition of Santa Cruz County to operate a Syringe Exchange Program in Santa Cruz County. I believe, along with every law enforcement leader in our county, that this type of program should be managed by the County Health Department which has a proven track record and is accountable to the people through the oversight of the County Board of Supervisors.

The applicant is a new third party group, whom I am sure is well meaning, but has done none of the important outreach to provide information to our local community. We already have a robust needle exchange program in this county and we have serious concerns about starting a new, unsupervised distribution location in the nearby Felton Covered Bridge Park. This area is used by many City of Scotts Valley residents who bring their children to the park to play or attend community events. These types of syringe exchange programs should be near locations where drug counselling and health services are provided as opposed to rural playgrounds where children congregate.

The Santa Cruz County's Department of Public Health already distributes more than 60,000 syringes a month in our county. The potential health risks associated with putting even more needles into our environment, by an unregulated and unsupervised group, far outweighs any potential positive health impact this program could have in our community. I urge you to deny this application so better options can be explored to combat this terrible drug epidemic which our communities now face.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Walpole".

Steve Walpole  
Chief of Police  
SCOTTS VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT  
Acting City Manager  
CITY OF SCOTTS VALLEY