

TUSTIN



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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT: TUSD'S LAWSUIT AGAINST CITY HAS COST TAXPAYERS ALMOST \$1 MILLION

TUSTIN, Calif. – Last spring Tustin Unified School District (TUSD) sued the City of Tustin to avoid following state and federally mandated environmental laws. To date, TUSD has spent about \$600,000 in an effort to avoid complying with federal and state environmental mandates, forcing the City of Tustin to spend approximately \$350,000 defending itself.

“Unfortunately TUSD has put out another news release filled with half truths and misinformation on the subject of its lawsuit against the City of Tustin. TUSD can try and deflect its non-compliance and refusal to be good stewards of the environment, but the bottom line is that they, like every other developer or public agency, has to comply with the law,” said Interim City Manager Bill Huston. “In the meantime, because the District decided to sue rather than comply with the law, \$1 million which could have been spent on more teachers and police officers making Tustin a better place right now, has been wasted on attorneys fees. That would make a real difference.” The penalty for non-compliance of water pollution and runoff laws is fines that could cost the City of Tustin \$10,000 a day.

By law, since 2004, the City of Tustin has been charged with enforcing water pollution and runoff laws on behalf of the State of California. Recently, the following public agencies and private developers have complied with the same mandates that

City of Tustin 300 Centennial Way, Tustin, CA 92780

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TUSD has refused to follow on these projects:

- Rancho Santiago Community College's Sheriff Training Facility.
- South Orange County Community College's ATEP facility.
- Orange County Social Services Tustin Family Campus.
- City of Tustin's new library.
- City of Tustin's Pasadena Avenue Water Well.
- Lennar's Columbus Grove neighborhoods.

The City does not want to interfere with the educational process of children in Tustin. It has never taken any actions that have delayed the construction at either Heritage School at Tustin Legacy or Tustin High School.

TUSD has acknowledged its responsibility to comply with these laws and has applied to the Regional Water Quality Board for a permit to enforce the water pollution and runoff laws on behalf of itself. The City supports TUSD's belated efforts to finally comply with environmental laws.

"It is outrageous that \$600,000 of District funds, that could have been spent in classrooms and \$350,000 of City funds that could have been spent on police or parks have gone to attorneys," said Mayor Jerry Amante. "TUSD, when will you dismiss your lawsuit and follow the law?"

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