

SIFPD Briefing Sheet: Cal Fire Travel-Time Billing Issue (Tecopa)

Purpose of This Briefing

To explain why SIFPD is being asked to send a request to Cal Fire regarding **travel-time charges** for Tecopa's annual fire inspections.

Key Facts

- Tecopa hotels had their **first-ever Cal Fire inspections** this year.
- One lodging operator received a **\$720 invoice**, most of which was **travel time from Los Angeles Area**.
- Cal Fire **acknowledged in writing** that the current travel-time billing method is **not fair practice**.
- Despite this, they said they **cannot correct the invoice**.
- Cal Fire claims travel time is "divided among all inspections done that day," **but only two inspections were scheduled**, and **the inspector said he must return home every day**, making full grouping impossible.

Why This Matters for SIFPD

- Tecopa will now have **yearly inspections**, meaning this issue will return annually.
- The **travel portion only** is the problem — not inspection fees.
- The current billing method will **always create inconsistent and unpredictable travel charges** for local businesses.
- SIFPD has the standing to request clarification, so our community receives **fair and transparent billing**.

What Is Being Requested

SIFPD is being asked to:

1. Send a letter to Cal Fire requesting a **clear, written explanation** of how *travel time* will be calculated and billed for Tecopa inspections.
2. Request that **any current disputed travel charges be paused or adjusted** until this clarification is provided.
3. Support the principle that remote communities should not pay travel charges under a method Cal Fire agrees is problematic.

What Is *Not* Being Asked

- SIFPD is **not** being asked to intervene in a personal dispute.
- SIFPD is **not** being asked to confront Cal Fire.
- SIFPD is **not** being asked to oppose inspections or safety standards.
- SIFPD is **not** being asked to take on any ongoing burden.

This is a **one-time administrative clarification request**.

Suggested Board Motion

“Motion: That SIFPD send a letter to Cal Fire requesting written clarification of the travel-time billing method for Tecopa's annual fire inspections and request a pause/adjustment of disputed travel charges until this clarification is provided.”