From:	Gordon Piper
To:	kthomas@bentleyschool.net; neighbors safety hiller highlands; Klein, Heather; cuphotline@bentleyschool.net
Subject:	Monitoring of Homeless Encampment on Caltrans Property by Oakland Landscape Committee Chair
Date:	Thursday, September 26, 2013 8:56:24 PM
Attachments:	PRIDE Photos & Others 013.JPG PRIDE Photos & Others 012.JPG

I serve as the Chair of the Oakland Landscape Committee. Today I parked for about 10 minutes in front of the Firestorm Memorial Garden which the Oakland Landscape Committee has a permit from Caltrans for landscaping and which I have helped to maintain for many years. I serve on a City of Oakland advisory committee working with Caltrans that is addressing fire risk and landscaping issues in our community and on Caltrans right-of-way property. I parked by the Firestorm Memorial during non hours that are not set aside for students being picked up and was not violating the CUP of Bentley School, and was not on private property as reported by Bentley staff. I walked down the sidewalk and across the street to the location of a homeless encampment on Caltrans property that I had observed earlier this summer, and was checking on to see if the homeless encampment still there and might pose either a fire or vandalism/theft threat in our area. I found that even though I had reported the homeless encampment previously to Caltrans and City representatives, that there was still a homeless person sleeping in a homeless encampment in the midst of fire-prone eucalyptus trees and tall French broom shrubs on Caltrans property at the Berkeley/Oakland property line on the west side of Highway 13.

Attached is a picture of the homeless encampment site and the homeless person that I spoke with about this about not being an appropriate location for the person to continue residing on. The homeless encampment is one of several active homeless encampments in our community that I have recently observed and reported to City representatives. I will also be reporting the homeless encampment once more to Caltrans representatives and requesting that the encampment site be removed to reduce fire risks in our community. The second picture shows the vegetation surrounding the homeless encampment site less than a block from the Bentley School. There have been problems previously with homeless encampment in our area, and with homeless residents breaking into cars parked on Hiller Drive or other locations. It is important to continue the monitoring of these homeless encampments for safety reasons. I had no intention to alarm any one by parking for a short period next to the Firestorm Memorial Garden, which our Oakland Landscape Committee helps in landscaping and maintaining. Bentley School should inform their staff members who the permit holding organization is for this property is and regarding the issues related to fire safety and homeless encampments in our area.

Gordon Piper, Chair, Oakland Landscape Committee