



NEWS RELEASE

County Administrative Office

CONTACT:

David Wert

Public Information Officer

(909) 387-4717

dwert@sbcountry.gov

May 5, 2015

Virtual inspections are the County's next innovation

San Bernardino County's spirit of innovation, recognized in recent years with a record number of state and national awards, will soon make building inspections a whole lot easier for businesses and homeowners.

The county this week will become perhaps the first western U.S. jurisdiction to launch a virtual inspection program that will allow county building inspectors to review projects over the Internet.

"This is the kind of smart innovation that saves time, taxpayer dollars and improves customer service," said Board of Supervisors Vice Chairman Robert Lovingood, who represents the First District.

By downloading a special application, permit applicants will be able to show county inspectors their projects and exchange information using their smartphones or tablets. Traditionally, applicants have had to wait at their project sites for a building inspector to arrive during a window of time. Virtual inspections will take place at a precise time, eliminating the wait.

"Our customers deserve the best service we can provide," said Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos. "Eliminating wait times is a major improvement in how the county conducts building inspections."

The San Bernardino County virtual inspection program will be conducted on a pilot basis at first, only in the county's desert and mountain communities, and will focus only on the simplest of projects, including water heater installations and roof inspections.

The desert and mountain communities were chosen because they pose the greatest challenges in obtaining a sufficient wireless data connection for the program to succeed. The pilot program, which will last at least 90 days, will also test the accuracy of the project site verification process and the clarity of the video signals. The goal during the pilot is to conduct two to three virtual inspections per week.

"Using technology to make the County's inspection and permitting process more efficient will help residents and contractors save both time and money," said Second District Supervisor Janice Rutherford. "I look forward to seeing the results of this pilot project and to expanding the use of virtual technology to improve efficiencies throughout the County."



During the past four years, the County of San Bernardino has claimed more than 100 state and national innovation awards for developing or improving services for county residents and investors. The awards have recognized the county's efforts in emergency response, inmate re-entry, senior housing, public health, behavioral health, and economic development, to name a few.

This project helps fulfill several of the County's Board-adopted Goals and Objectives, including achievement of the Countywide Vision, www.sbcounty.gov/vision; Create, Maintain, and Grow Jobs and Economic Value in the County, Improve County Government Operations, and Operate in a Fiscally-Responsible and Business-Like Manner; and Ensure Development of a Well-Planned, Balanced, and Sustainable County.

Many of the county's other innovations are featured on CountyWire, <http://wp.sbcounty.gov/cao/countywire/>, under the category "Government Works."

"San Bernardino County has a solid record of innovation," Vice Chairman Lovingood said. "We will continue working to leverage technology and innovative thinking to deliver better results to taxpayers."