NEWS

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New county iPhone app allows residents to combat blight

Residents armed with iPhones are now the County of San Bernardino's newest weapon against graffiti, illegal dumping, and blight.

The county's Code Enforcement Division has unveiled its new "SBcode" iPhone application, allowing residents with iPhones to point, click and send photos of graffiti, illegal dumping and other code violations to San Bernardino County Code Enforcement officers.

Board of Supervisors Vice Chair and Fifth District Supervisor Josie Gonzales advocated strongly for the use of this responsive technology to help thwart blight in the county's unincorporated communities.

"The SBcode app empowers iPhone users to be part of our countywide clean-up efforts," Gonzales said. "Residents providing us with this real-time information enable our Code Enforcement officers to respond faster, speeding up our abatement activities and sending a clear message to vandals that graffiti and illegal dumping activities will not be tolerated in our neighborhoods."

"SBcode" is a free application developed by Graffiti Protective Coatings and can be downloaded directly from the iPhone App Store by simply searching the keyword "SBcode". Once installed, users can open the application and follow the prompts to take a photo and submit the violation. Using the iPhone's built-in global positioning system (GPS), the application will attach a location to the picture and send the complaint to a Code Enforcement Officer for investigation.

"The County is exceedingly proud of the forward thinking staff that continues to utilize the expanding technology available in order to better respond to residents," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Gary Ovitt.

The "SBcode" application was developed at no cost to the county and will simplify the complaint reporting process for many residents while increasing the efficiency in which violations are addressed. A version of "SBcode" for Android users will soon debut, and the county is looking into developing versions for other operating systems as well, such as BlackBerry.

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