



Fire Inventory Controls over Controlled Substances

Clarifying Policies and Separating Duties Would Further Improve Security

A Report from the City Auditor
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Public Safety, Finance and Strategic Support Committee

Agenda Item D-I

Background

- San José Fire Department has two controlled substances, morphine and midazolam, to provide ALS services.
- Main supplies are kept in a central safe before being distributed to apparatus.
- Each fire apparatus that provides ALS services carries these two controlled substances.

Audit Objective:

Assess the Fire Department's inventory controls over controlled substances.

Finding I: Policies require securing controlled substances on fire apparatus but should be clarified to reflect current practices

- We found no evidence of theft or tampering during our audits in summer 2025.
- Policies for controlled substances on fire apparatus require regular monitoring and physical security.
- Current practices in some areas should be formalized.

Recommendation: To improve controls over controlled substances on apparatus, Fire should:

- Revise its policy to reflect current practices for monitoring, storage, and handoffs.
- Update policies once biometric safes are purchased.

Finding 2: Separating the duties for central supply management would strengthen inventory controls

- We found no evidence of theft or tampering during our audit in summer 2025.
- Separating the duties of the Controlled Substances Program Manager would improve security of the central supply.
- Inventory reports, a biometric safe, and inventory counts would also improve controls.

Recommendation: To improve controls over central supply management, Fire should:

- Assign CSPM's supply management duties to separate staff.
- Increase management oversight and physical controls.
- Update policies to reflect current inventory practices.

Conclusion

The report has seven recommendations to improve the Fire Department's controls over controlled substances.

We would like to thank the Fire Department for their time and insight during the audit process.

The audit report is available at www.sanjoseca.gov/auditor

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