



**60**  
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Today is Wednesday  
9/20/2006

Front Page / Home

News

Sports

Business

Features

Focus On...

Local Commentary

Newsmaker

**ESCAPE** / Entertainment

Obituaries

Your Schools

S.C.V. History

Contact Us

Subscription Services

Classifieds

Valley Homes

See Display Ads

SCV Publications

City / Community

Weather Forecast

Freeway Conditions

Earthquake Activity

Calif. Power Outlook

Sex Offender Locator

November Voter Guide

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Two or more kids in the car, fighting

Eating

Talking on a cell phone

Watching television

Putting on makeup

Driving while angry

Driving while sleepy

Playing loud music

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## City Rallies Support Against Cemex

**By Christi Anne Corpus**  
Signal Staff Writer

Saturday September 16, 2006

At the recent League of California Cities' 108th annual conference, several city officials expressed support for Santa Clarita's ongoing fight to stop a mine that would operate about a mile from some Canyon Country homes.

"The other cities were very sympathetic to us, especially when they saw that a federal agency could come into any city and allow a project that could adversely impact the traffic, air quality and the health of their families," Councilwoman Marsha McLean said.

Mexico-based Cemex Inc. has plans to begin operating a 69-million ton sand and gravel mine in Soledad Canyon in 2008.

Officials from 478 California cities attended the four-day conference in San Diego, titled "All Politics is Local," which allowed city officials from throughout the state to network, attend informative workshops and discuss state issues.

McLean, Councilman Bob Kellar, City Manager Ken Pulskamp and several Santa Clarita representatives attended the conference, bringing with them a two-sided flier illustrating the potential hazards of the Cemex mining plan.

"The fliers showed the impact of adding 1,200 trucks a day to an already impacted freeway system, as well as the environmental impacts on the Santa Clara River and on air quality," McLean said.

Efforts at the conference were one of the city's more recent attempts to challenge the international cement giant's plans to develop its concrete aggregate mining project, which city officials and environmental activists say could have severe environmental and traffic effects over the next 20 years.

The city has been locked in a years-long legal struggle with Cemex to keep it from operating the mine, for which the company has federal mineral rights.

"The representatives will go back to their councils and try to get resolutions approved to support our efforts," McLean said. "It will take some time."

Santa Clarita representatives hope that once these councils pass resolutions of support, they will contact state and federal representatives and encourage them to establish legislation similar to U.S. Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon's HR5471, introduced earlier this summer.

Titled the "Soledad Canyon Mine Leases Adjustment Act," this bill would cancel the Cemex leases - providing the company with other mining options instead - and prohibit the federal Bureau of Land Management from re-leasing the land except at "historic levels," defined in the bill as roughly 300,000 tons of aggregate produced for sale per calendar year, city council officials said.

"We simply want the mine to operate at a historical level," McLean said. "We're not saying 'no mining,' but mining within reason."

The city will try to arrange a follow-up gathering with the 88 cities in Los Angeles County sometime in the near future, said city spokeswoman Gail Ortiz.

"We received positive feedback from cities at the conference who were empathetic to our situation," she said. "We'll see how well we do in L.A. County before reaching out to additional counties and cities in California."

"The city is trying to be cooperative with Cemex and come up with a compromise, but that's not happening," McLean said. "So now we're trying to get as much support as possible. The more support you get, the more it brings this issue to the forefront."

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