

This letter is to address a complaint I would like to file regarding a recent promotion at [San Joaquin County Mosquito and Vector Control District](#). The purpose of this complaint is to bring attention to the following violations of company policy and to bring awareness of these violations to the [Grand Jury](#). Other Complaints may be filed to other agencies as well.

The simple and obvious fact is that Deanna Hopkins was not the most qualified applicant, at least not by the known standards of ability and experience. The district has a long history of improper promotion actions. If there are questions regarding past improprieties Don Meidinger, Ed Greenmeyer, Larry Frasier and Vicki Bridgewater the wife of deceased retired supervisor Duane Bridgewater may offer testimony.

There was a time when Vicki Bridgewater was assigned a seat as a board member of the San Joaquin County Mosquito & Vector Control District. When management recognized the relationship between husband and wife, Duane Bridgewater the employee of SJCM&VCD and Vivki the newly assigned board member, the assignment was immediately terminated by John Stroh using the Policy conflict of interest as the reason. Duane expressed anger at this decision. Anger management was mandated as a result.

The District Policy provides clear justification for this complaint. Policy Title: Nepotism, Policy Number: 2230 the following clauses stipulate proper hiring practice:

2230.10 In order to avoid improprieties and **conflicts of interest**, no applicant of a position will be employed by the district if a member of the immediate family is already employed.

2230.11 Immediate family means spouse, brothers, sisters, mother, father, children, grandparents, and corresponding “in-law” and “step” relations.

2230.30 The person interviewing applicants is responsible for informing them of this policy when they submit applications indicating a family relationship with a current employee.

The fact that Deanna Hopkins and Norm Hopkins are married and both employees of the District is already a concession that violates the policy. Her recent elevation to the position of Assistant Supervisor creates a situation where the potential for improprieties and conflict of interest is even greater, as now Mrs. Hopkins is now in a position where she could directly supervise her own husband. But concessions have been made to accommodate their personal needs.

A second issue arises with this appointment. Many other applicants from within the department applied for the position. Two of the applicants met the full requirements for the position as an assistant supervisor. They had the education and field experience needed to provide full guidance to the field technicians who are underneath them. One applicant had 26 years of field experience; the other had 15 plus a few units shy of his BA degree.

While Mrs. Hopkins did receive some additional training via weekend seminars, training which was not offered to other employees who served the district. Deanna has had only three years total field experience as a pesticide applicator and has been out of the field for 7 years working as a lab technician.

This is a concern, because as a supervisor, she is the person who field technicians must turn to if they have questions about the various duties handled by the techs. She has no experience with the weed abatement program or experience with the Archer computer program used by the technicians; she will also have to receive additional training with pesticides as she has been out of the field for 7 years. The qualified applicants have all the field experience necessary to slide right into the position without any training, with the exception of human resource training, which is training that Mrs. Hopkins would also require.

I am deeply concerned. I believe that the field technicians have the right to expect the assistant supervisor who oversees their day-to-day operations to be fully knowledgeable regarding the work that they do from day to day. They also have the right to have a resource they can turn to when they face a challenge in carrying out their duties. This appointment fails to provide the kind of work environment that supports the safety of District employees and the safety of [San Joaquin residents](#) as well. I believe the District is opening themselves up to possible legal issues when Deanna comes home to her husband and breeches employees' personal information. Employees of the District have a right to have their personal information protected. This is not only a right it is the law.

I want someone to investigate how a husband and wife can compete against one another in the same test and interview process, as that is what took place in this promotion process.

I also want the idea recognized that this husband/wife team Deanna Hopkins, Norm Hopkins have played a pivotal role in perpetuating the [hostile work environment](#), by blackballing Mary Iverson along with myself. Now, Deanna Hopkins who made it a daily choice to ignore me on a daily basis will now be assisting in supervising directly over me.

The Grand Jury needs to look at Deanna and Norm Hopkins interviews

by the Grand Jury. Did the two of them perjure their testimony? Did they withhold information from the Grand Jury? Did they inform management of what was supposed to be their obligation to keep the content of their interviews confidential? These are questions that need to be looked into. Once again John Stroh is not abiding by the districts own rules. From here on all employees will have to suffer because of the accommodation of a relationship that by the Districts own standards should not even exist.