

## SSFL REALTOR SURVEY

The following survey was conducted by Tim Brehm of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory Community Advisory Group in October 2014 to determine what general knowledge local realtors have of Santa Susana Field Laboratory issues. Have they read about or studied the situation or are they following rumor and innuendo? In addition would they be interested in a meeting about the SSFL?

### Questions:

The following questions were asked of each of ten realtors:

1. Do you sell or represent properties in Simi Valley, West San Fernando Valley, Bell Canyon, or Hidden Hills?
2. Have you been following the news on developments at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory as to possible chemical and radioactive contamination to surrounding communities? Are you following the news of the controversy surrounding possible clean up measures that are being debated today?
3. If you have a client who is looking for a property in these areas and asks about SSFL concerns, what do you tell them? Do you refer them to any source of information or website such as [ssflcag.net](http://ssflcag.net)?
4. Have you been to any of the local meetings that feature the cleanup of the SSFL such as the recent community forum by West Valley neighborhood councils at Canoga Park High School?
5. If the SSFL-CAG provided a meeting for realtors on SSFL issues, would you be interested in attending?

### Some conclusions:

1. With the exception of realtors who live in Bell Canyon, most local realtors have very little to no knowledge of SSFL issues. None that I have interviewed had read or even heard of specific studies that dealt with contamination or water runoff issues.
2. Only one local realtor has been to any of the CAG meetings. None have attended meetings for the public such as the Canoga Park High School meeting.
3. Referring clients to reliable information has been a problem. None of the realtors had heard of our website: [ssflcag.net](http://ssflcag.net) Homeowner associations such as the Bell Canyon Association do not publish information useful to prospective residents or realtors. Many realtors tell clients to seek information by telling them to "google it".
4. Some realtors expressed concern that if they did investigate things on their own and found out some bad news they would be obligated to disclose such information to their clients under real estate disclosure laws. Some concluded that not knowing anything was a better way to go.
5. SSFL issues are beginning to scare some clients away, especially in Bell Canyon that seems to take the brunt of the bad PR.

6. Toxic waste and soil removal issues, although a hot topic with CAG members, is not a big issue with the public or even local realtors yet.
7. About half of the realtors interviewed would be interested in attending a CAG meeting for realtors only on SSFL issues.

### **Individual responses:**

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#### **Agent 1:**

1. Works out of Sherman Oaks office but does sales in Bell Canyon and West Hills.
  2. Does not follow the news on SSFL issues and admits that knows very little about it.
  3. Has had clients ask questions relating to SSFL and refers them to Google. Is not aware of any websites or blogs. Had a client who refused to buy in Bell Canyon because of SSFL issues.
  4. Has been to no meetings.
  5. Not interested in attending any CAG meetings as does not do enough business in the area to make it worthwhile.
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#### **Agent 2:**

1. Has sold properties in Bell Canyon, Simi Valley, and West Hills for the last 28 years.
  2. Used to be up to date on SSFL issues and has belonged to West Hills homeowner groups, but admits that has not followed SSFL events closely in recent years. Has read and takes note of the occasional newspaper article on SSFL.
  3. Does discuss standard disclosure forms with clients and refers further questions on SSFL to Google.
  4. Has been to no meetings.
  5. Would definitely go to any CAG meeting set up specifically for realtors on SSFL issues. Was very supportive of that idea.
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#### **Agent 3:**

1. A realtor who is a Bell Canyon resident and specializes in Bell Canyon properties but also does sales in West Hills.

2. Has followed SSFL issues very closely for many years and has looked at studies. Believes that Bell Canyon is an environmentally safe community to live in.
  3. She does give her opinion to clients and refers clients with further questions to check online. Is frustrated that communities such as Bell Canyon do not have any published fact sheets that discuss and answer questions that prospective residents may have on SSFL issues.
  4. Has been to a few CAG meetings.
  5. Would definitely be supportive of a CAG realtor meeting.
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**Agent 4:**

1. Has represented properties in Simi Valley, West Hills, and Bell Canyon
  2. A former resident of Bell Canyon, used to follow SSFL issues especially in regards to water testing of Bell Creek. Since moving in 2004 has not kept up with the issues and is not familiar with cleanup proposals currently being discussed.
  3. If any client has questions or concerns, will refer them to the local homeowner association for information.
  4. Has been to no meetings.
  5. Would definitely be interested in attending a CAG realtor meeting.
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**Agent 5:**

1. Represents and sells properties in Simi Valley, West Hills, and Bell Canyon.
  2. Not following SSFL issues and has not read anything about it for years.
  3. Has not had a client express a concern but is always prepared to attach an addendum to any purchase agreement. This is a standard form from the California Association of Realtors that has a phone number where a client can call for more information on an area.
  4. Has been to no meetings.
  5. Might be interested. Call when such a meeting is scheduled.
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**Agent 6:**

1. Represents or sells properties in Simi Valley and West San Fernando Valley but primarily does Bell Canyon.
2. As an 18 year resident of Bell Canyon has followed SSFL news for years and is very concerned over the recent cleanup controversy and the DTSC proposed truck routes through Bell Canyon.
3. Has one client who is refusing to buy into Bell Canyon because of the possible truck routes of removed soil that would go through the canyon. Says that such news is “very off putting” to potential clients. Also believes that all of the cleanup controversy is attaching itself to Bell Canyon more than any other community. Has referred clients to the Bell Canyon HOA for further information.
4. Has been to some meetings in Bell Canyon including some CAG meetings, however has found some of those meetings “too scientific, too nitty-gritty” and has trouble discerning what conclusions presenters are making. Would like to have solid information out there that is explained in layman’s terms.
5. Would definitely attend any possible CAG meeting for realtors.

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**Agent 7:**

1. Represents properties in Simi Valley, West San Fernando Valley, and Bell Canyon.
  2. Although a 13-year resident of Bell Canyon, has not lately followed the SSFL cleanup situation.
  3. Whenever has a client who has questions or expresses concern over SSFL issues refers them to look online and do their own due diligence. Does not want to be liable for any misinformation or disclosure. Has lost 2 “good deals” with clients who finally refused to buy in Bell Canyon because of perceived soil contamination issues. These clients did not want their children growing up in an unhealthy environment and they feared getting cancer from contamination. Furthermore, has heard a number of real estate agents from several companies operating in Calabasas that do not recommend buying in Bell Canyon. “Don’t buy over there” and “it’s a health hazard” are commonly heard among Calabasas agents. Has heard these kinds of comments for years but this year it has increased.
  4. Has not attended any meetings on SSFL issues.
  5. Does not know at the current time.
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**Agent 8:**

1. Represents properties in Simi Valley, West Hills, but primarily works Bell Canyon.
2. Has read news articles but has not actually looked at the various studies that have been conducted regarding cancer rates, soils, and water contamination.
3. Has referred clients to the EPA website EPA.gov for further information on the subject. Is not aware of any other source of information.
4. Has not been to any local meetings but would like to go on a tour of the SSFL site.
5. Absolutely would go to a meeting for realtors on SSFL.

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**Agent 9:**

1. Represents West Valley, Bell Canyon, Calabasas
2. Has only read a few articles on the SSFL situation and admits that is not all that familiar with the history of the SSFL and has not kept up with recent developments.
3. Has represented 2 properties in Bell Canyon in the last year but has not had any questions asked by clients on SSFL issues.
4. Has attended no meetings.
5. Would absolutely attend a meeting for realtors on SSFL. She thinks that is an excellent idea.

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**Agent 10:**

1. Represents Simi Valley, West Hills, Calabasas, but specializes in Bell Canyon.
2. Has sold in Bell Canyon for the last 16 years and has followed a lot of the SSFL issues over the years. Has read official info from NASA and Boeing and has gone to some websites. Is up to date on cleanup issues at the site.
3. When asked about SSFL, feels sufficiently knowledgeable to discuss issues and direct people to links to studies on websites. Is disgusted with some local real estate agents that have denigrated the Bell Canyon area with comments and rumors that falsely depict contamination issues in the area. Says of these false rumors "it is a real issue" we need to address.
4. Has been to no meetings so far.

5. Doesn't know right now if would attend a CAG meeting for realtors. It would depend upon the issues or topics to be discussed.