

**From:** [Delneo, Catherine \(LIB\)](#)  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Eureka Valley WIFI after-hours study absurdity  
**Date:** Thursday, August 5, 2021 3:28:27 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

---

Dear Mr. [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email and for taking the time to review the Library's 2017 study of after-hours WIFI at branch libraries.

In response to your email, the Library's Research Strategy and Analytics (RSA) team reviewed their findings again. They also went back and looked at additional data from 2017 to test the hypothesis that the driving factor in the rise of incidents within the 2-3 block radius of Eureka Valley / Harvey Milk Branch was that the WIFI was turned on after hours. If that were the case, then the data should reflect a consistent level of incidents in all weeks when the WIFI was on at the branch library.

While the San Francisco Police Department's Crime Mapping tool is no longer available, the Library's RSA team were able to find other police data on DataSF (<https://data.sfgov.org/Public-Safety/Police-Department-Incident-Reports-Historical-2003/tmnf-yvry>). They looked again at the map for the same vicinity around the branch. They looked at crime incidents in the 6 weeks preceding (2/3/2017 - 3/16/2017) and 6 weeks following (4/30/2017 to 6/10/2017) the test SFPL conducted on its WIFI signal back in 2017. They looked at alternating weeks to match the original study. The results showing the number of incidents during and after Eureka Valley's operating hours, with WIFI on for the entire period, are as follows:

| Feb 3 to Mar 16, 2017 | Incidents during branch hours | Incidents after branch hours |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Weeks 1,3,5           | 5                             | 8                            |
| Weeks 2,4,6           | 7                             | 14                           |
| Total                 | 12                            | 22                           |

| Apr 30 to June 10, 2017 | Incidents during branch hours | Incidents after branch hours |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Weeks 1,3,5             | 8                             | 8                            |
| Weeks 2,4,6             | 4                             | 5                            |
| Total                   | 12                            | 13                           |

They noted that there is a 75% difference in incidents during closed hours on alternating weeks between February 3 and March 15 and 62% during closed hours on alternating weeks between April 30 to July 10. The total number of incidents after hours was also 69% lower in the Apr-June period compared to the Feb-Mar period. Given that the branch's WIFI was on for the entire time, it does not seem reasonable to say that the WIFI is responsible for the fluctuations in crime in the area.

The RSA team determined that:

- It is not possible to ascertain if a rise or fall represents anything other than noise in the data.
- Crime fluctuated quite a bit in the vicinity of the branch regardless of whether Eureka Valley's WIFI is turned on or off.

The RSA team found that none of the data contradicts the findings reported in the initial memo: there are many other variables that contribute to rising and falling rates of crime in the area near the Eureka Valley branch. It is important to note that this same study was conducted simultaneously at branch libraries in other areas of the City, and that Library's RSA team did not find a causal relationship between WIFI and a rise in crime in the areas around these branches. The RSA team stands behind the findings of their original memo:

"The connection between Wi-Fi access and criminal activity is not readily apparent, as SFPL does not know who committed the crimes, if those persons accessed SFPL Wi-Fi around the time of the incident, or why having access to Wi-Fi would increase the probability of committing a crime. Other factors beyond the scope of this study, such as neighborhood use, proximity to major transportation corridors, general prevalence of crime in the neighborhood (beyond the immediate vicinity of a branch location), and social or economic problems need careful assessment before causal relationships can be established between public after-hours access to Wi-Fi and localized criminal activity."

The Library appreciates and shares your concern for public safety in the vicinity of the Eureka Valley Branch. We appreciate the help that neighbors of the branch provide at times the library is closed in reporting criminal behavior when our building is closed to the public, and we look forward to resuming seven day library service at the branch in the near future.

Sincerely,

Catherine Delneo

---

Catherine Delneo  
Chief of Branches  
San Francisco Public Library  
100 Larkin Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

cell: [REDACTED]

p: [REDACTED]

f: [REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED] Privacy - 7927.700 (formerly 6254(c))  
and Section 7927.705 (formerly 6254(k))

**Sent:** Friday, July 30, 2021 10:38 AM

**To:** Crumpacker, Charles (LIB) [REDACTED] Delneo, Catherine (LIB)

**Cc:** Burke, David (POL) <[REDACTED]>; Mandelman, Rafael (BOS)

<[REDACTED]>; Temprano, Tom (BOS) <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** Eureka Valley WiFi after-hours study absurdity

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Charles and Catherine,

[cc: Sup. Mandelman, Tom Temprano D8 Staff, David Burke D8 SFPD Liaison]

Hello, my name is [REDACTED] I live at [REDACTED] Some neighbors and I have been working with SFPD to "crime harden" our street after a slew of garage break-ins, vandalism, and even arson. In several of our neighborhood meetings, neighbors have voiced frustration with the Library being a "bad neighbor".

As I understand it, **a request was made quite some time ago to have the library turn off the WIFI when the library is closed.** I was reassured by a few neighbors that "a study was done and that the library confirmed there was no difference." But after we met with Ofc. Cathey and Ofc. Clendenen, I was inspired to put a little elbow grease into understanding the study so that I could help other neighbors understand why the library is so resistant to our requests.

After I received the attached study, I was simultaneously impressed by the effort to conduct the study rigorously where not even the branch staff would be aware of when the WiFi would be turned off (ensuring the experiment's integrity), but also horrified to see how the results were completely ignored, [ir]rationalized, and dismissed.

**The "findings" section asserts no relation between WiFi access and criminality** across three branches (Eureka, Mission Bay, and Glen Park):

Criminal activity in the localities of the branches does not appear to be influenced by 24/7 Wi-Fi access. No consistent patterns emerged between the three branch locations that suggest correlations between SFPL Wi-Fi access and localized criminal behavior.

**But** as I read the study, the data doesn't support this.

**For weeks in which the WiFi was ON while the Eureka Branch was closed, crime was more than DOUBLE!**

The study admits this:

**The number of incidents reported at Eureka Valley more than doubled during the weeks when after-hours Wi-Fi was turned on** (57.9% of all immediate vicinity incidents at Eureka Valley when the branch was closed and Wi-Fi was on, compared with 26.3% for weeks when Wi-Fi was off)...  
(cont.)

But then goes on to do something incredibly unscientific in "considering" several assertions not supported by the facts of the study:

(cont.) ...but there are several other factors to consider:

1. Reported criminal activity near Eureka Valley is consistently higher than the other locations. Of the three branches assessed, crime in the immediate vicinity of Eureka Valley accounted for 86.4% of total immediate vicinity crimes, and 60.8% of crimes outside of the immediate vicinity. The neighborhood appears to have a crime problem irrespective of Wi-Fi access.
2. A total of 526 unique devices accessed Eureka Valley Wi-Fi after-hours during this experiment while SFPD responded to 16 incidents during those closed hours. Even if all of those people accessed SFPL Wi-Fi on those nights, that would account for just three percent of the total after-hours devices accessing Wi-Fi. Sample sizes of criminal activity are very low in this experiment and could be generally random in nature.
3. The connection between Wi-Fi access and criminal activity is not readily apparent, as SFPL does not know who committed the crimes, if those persons accessed SFPL Wi-Fi around the time of the incident, or why having access to Wi-Fi would increase the probability of committing a crime. Other factors beyond the scope of this study, such as neighborhood use, proximity to major transportation corridors, general prevalence of crime in the neighborhood (beyond the immediate vicinity of a branch location), and social or economic problems need careful assessment before causal relationships can be established between

public after-hours access to Wi-Fi and localized criminal activity.

Let's take these 1 by 1:

1. Yes, the data does show that criminal activity is higher in our area. But the study's method ensured that the weeks with WiFi-OFF were both RANDOM and BLIND. Meaning that **if WiFi had no effect, and we really just had "higher crime" we'd expect to see similar crime on OFF weeks and ON weeks. But that's not the case.** What the study demonstrates is that **when the WiFi-OFF is turned off after hours, crime is reduced in our area.** The study's findings get around admitting this by saying there was "no consistent patterns emerged between the three branch locations" which is an erroneous justification considering that it's IMPOSSIBLE to reduce after-hours crime at branches that currently enjoy NO CRIME! I'll ask, when this study was commissioned, was it a stated goal to find a consistent pattern across all branches before taking action at any branch? Or is this a rationalization made by staff?
2. If the study was commissioned knowing that we'd be willing to tolerate some correlated-crime in order to advance the Library's mission, can someone please tell me the acceptable ratio stated before the study was conducted? Or am I correct in reading that the study was commissioned, and when the results were not acceptable to the writer, they found reasons to justify keeping the WiFi on? I'll ask another way, how few devices must access WiFi in order for the library to deem their mission less important than reducing the crime by half?
3. This, by far, is the most unscientific consideration. **This point suggests that showing correlation (the only thing the study was designed to do) was never enough for the author. The author wanted more, the author wanted "causal relationships". The inclusion of this statement shows the absolute waste of money such a study was - to endeavour to apply good science to a real problem reported by neighbors - and its subsequent relegation to the trash heap.** Why commission a study to determine correlation, if it'll only be thrown out for not proving cause?

The results of this study show that the WiFi should be turned off after hours. Or, perhaps stated differently, if the Library will not turn off the WiFi despite the evidence, the Library should not ignore the correlation between its actions, and the effects it has on us neighbors: the Library should be a good neighbor and provide security personnel at all times while WiFi is on.

I've brought my outrage/criticism to you all, because if I were in your shoes, I would be absolutely embarrassed to be associated with such a study publicly. But if the Library will not rectify the several year old mistake, I'll be taking this to the neighbors.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Burke, David (POL)** [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, Jul 13, 2021 at 4:40 PM

Subject: Library contacts' email

To: [twmetz](#) [REDACTED], [cmcleod](#) [REDACTED]

Privacy - 7927.700 (formerly 6254(c)) and Section 7927.705 (formerly 6254(k))

Tom:

This is the email for Cathy Delneo, the SFPL Chief of Branches:

[REDACTED]

Casey Crumpacker, Eureka Branch Manager's email is:

[REDACTED]

Dave



David Burke

SFPD Public Safety Liaison, District 8

[REDACTED]

# Redaction Log

| Reason  | Page (# of occurrences) | Description  |
|---|-------------------------|--|
| Privacy - 7927.700 (formerly 6254(c)) and Section 7927.705 (formerly 6254(k)) | 2 (1)<br>5 (2)          | Due to privacy concerns, personal information, such as personal phone numbers, cell numbers and email addresses, has been redacted from the documents that we are making available to you. We redacted this personal information pursuant to Section 7927.700 (formerly 6254(c)) and Section 7927.705 (formerly 6254(k)) of the California Public Records Act and Article 1, Section 1 of the California Constitution. |