

Film Office sees record-breaking year

By Jana Adkins
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The Santa Clarita Film Office announced on Monday that 2011 was a record-breaking year for local filming. The office issued more permits and saw more film days in the city since its inception in 2002.

The office issued 359 film permits were issued for the year 2011, and the city's Film Office tracked 901 film days, surpassing the record set in 2007.

Benefitting the local economy, filming in the city of Santa Clarita contributed nearly \$19.4 million to local businesses as a result of spending by onsite production companies, representing a 7 percent increase over 2010.

"We are committed to doing everything we can to ensure that our city is a top choice in Hollywood, from facilitating one of the fastest and most affordable film permits in the 30-mile zone," said Santa Clarita Mayor Laurie Ender.

While Hollywood's 30-mile zone generally identifies movies studios and ranches near Hollywood, it also defines rates and work rules for union workers.

The city has actively worked to attract production projects to the area, officials said.

Film program

Recognizing the importance of filming activity to the local economy, the Santa Clarita City Council began offering the Film Incentive program, in 2009.

The city's program was created to retain and increase feature and television production in the city, and includes a subsidy of basic permit fees for locally based productions and those filming on location four or more times in the fiscal year.

"The film industry is hugely important for Santa Clarita, and we are thrilled to see the hard work pay off in bringing more filming to town," said Jason Crawford, marketing and economic development manager for the city.

The program provides jobs for residents and generates money for businesses, Crawford said. In fact, today, three different television shows are filming locally. "NCIS,' 'Switched at Birth' and 'Make It or Break It' are all filming around town, spending money at the location they have rented, employing 100-plus cast and crew each, and buying supplies at local stores like Home Depot, Target and Westfield," Crawford said. "Due to both strategy