



## **Big Increase in the Number of City Employees Making Big Bucks**

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***By Elex Michaelson***

San Diego City Councilman Carl DeMaio released a report today that showed the number of city workers earning \$100,000 or more per year increased by 44 percent last year.

According to DeMaio, 1,255 city employees made \$100,000 or more in 2008, compared to 874 the prior year.

Almost 12 percent of all city workers earn six figure salaries, according to DeMaio's report.

"It's outrageous that in the middle of a budget crisis and talk about various tax increases, the city of San Diego has increased salaries for city workers -- so much so that the number of people earning \$100,000 or more has jumped by 44 percent in the past year alone," DeMaio said in a statement.

He said the biggest problem is overtime pay. "They're learning to use the system to almost double the salary. In most cases, they increase their earnings by 50, 60, 70 percent from their base salary."

One of the biggest overtime recipients--firefighters. He pointed to one example, "He's earning over 190K to be a fire captain--when there are 200 of them in San Diego. Is that sustainable? No. Is that a problem? Yes."

But Donald Cohen, the executive director of the Center on Policy Initiatives, said DeMaio's thinking is short sided. "The reason they are making over 100K is that we don't have enough people to put out fires, so we have to keep them and pay them overtime."

He continued, "San Diego has the lowest number of police and fire per capita of any major city in this country, that is our problem. We would not be paying overtime if we had enough people to put out fires and to solve crimes."

To read both Cohen and DeMaio's reports for yourself, click on the adjoining links.