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Iconic Simmons Christmas Lights Show Goes Dark This Holiday Season

*One of the Largest, Award-Winning Residential Light Displays in United States
Has Been Cancelled Due to Issues From Local Municipality*

CATHEDRAL CITY, CA (November 29, 2016) – The Simmons Family’s Dancing Christmas Lights Show, located at 68000 Estio Road, between Avenida Maravilla and Vista Chino in Cathedral City, California – has been cancelled for the 2016 holiday season due to an ongoing dispute with the City of Cathedral City. The lights show, named "Best Christmas Lights Display in America" by The Early Show on CBS in 2010, is just blocks away from Minerva Road’s infamous "Candy Cane Lane" and has become an iconic and well-loved area landmark during this festive time of year receiving more than 50,000 visitors.

"The bottom line is that there will be about 70,000 fewer holiday meals for hungry families this holiday season now that our lights show is going dark, and this is unacceptable," says Michael A. Simmons, lights show creator. "Since 2007, monetary donations from the public have provided hundreds of thousands of meals for hungry families in the Coachella Valley via FIND Food Bank. In addition to our own costs to keep the lights maintained and powered on, the City has now asked us to request and pay for entertainment/event permits, to foot the bill for traffic enforcement, and to reimburse them for trash cleanup. We simply cannot afford to meet these unexpected requirements. Otherwise, the City has threatened to fine us daily. So for 2016, we are forced to shut down operations."

The synchronized Christmas lights show, which appeared in a Season 1 episode of ABC's "The Great Christmas Light Fight" in 2013, is made up of more than 200,000 eco-friendly LED lights and special effects, with 3,500 computer-controlled lighting/animation channels, and eight miles of cabling. Highlights have included a 24-foot mega tree, leaping light arches, shooting stars, dozens of strobe lights, and much more – all synchronized to a play list of holiday music broadcasted via a short-range FM radio transmitter on 107.5 FM called the "The Icicle."

"All of our lighting equipment is UL 508 approved, and all electrical has been installed, tested, and certified by California licensed Electrical Contractors," Simmons adds. "We have recently been subjected to unwarranted and unnecessary electrical and safety inspections by the City, and we truly believe that the City’s Code Enforcement is overstepping their authority in violation of Cathedral City’s Municipal Code and other state and federal laws. The City is violating my Fifth and Fourteenth Amendment rights afforded to me by the U.S. Constitution. The homeowners of Minerva Road’s *Candy Cane Lane* have never been asked by the City to file or pay for permits, etc. in the past 25-plus years, but yet the City is singling me out and demanding me to do so, amongst many other unreasonable demands."

In 2010, the Simmons family established its own fundraising program called "Shine the Light on Hunger" to benefit FIND Food Bank, which provides food to more than 100 local non-profit agencies, and on average, feeds more than 80,000 hungry people each month.

For more information on the Simmons Family’s Dancing Christmas Lights Show, visit the website www.MyDesertLights.com. To schedule an interview with Michael A. Simmons, call (760) 537-0037 or email info@mydesertlights.com.

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