

Santa Cruz County 2003 Health Almanac

Environmental Health

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Agencies and Information Sources

Santa Cruz County (SCC) Health Services Agency - <http://www.santacruzhealth.org/>

The Health Services Agency (HSA) exists to protect and improve the health of the people in Santa Cruz County. The Agency provides programs in Environmental Health, Public Health, Medical Care, Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment, and Mental Health.

California Department of Health Services - <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/default.htm>

To Protect and Improve the Health of All Californians

California Health Interview Survey - <http://www.chis.ucla.edu/index.html>

The California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) is the largest state health survey conducted in the United States. Every two years, CHIS plans to collect information on the health and health care needs of California's diverse population.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/default.htm>

CDC's Mission is to promote health and quality of life by preventing and controlling disease, injury, and disability.

Environmental Health Services

Mission: to protect, preserve and enhance the public health and safety and the environment through the delivery of effective environmental health inspection, consultation and education, enforcement, monitoring and oversight services to the citizens of and visitors to Santa Cruz County and its citizens.

Environmental Health Services is a division of the Public Health program of the County's Health Services Agency. The office employs over 38 staff, including California Registered Environmental Health Specialists, water quality specialists and aides, program administrators and analysts, and support and technical staff. The State of California mandates and delegates to local health departments the responsibility for environmental health programs. Legal authority for county environmental health programs comes from the California Health and Safety Code, California Code of Regulations, and local ordinances and regulations.

State-mandated programs include the control of retail food establishments, public swimming pools, organized camps, housing, and surveillance of public swimming beaches. State programs delegated at local option include employee housing inspections, medical wastes, and regulation of small public water systems. County ordinances and regulations pertaining to well construction, individual water systems, individual sewage disposal systems (septic systems and septic tank pumping) and surveillance of fresh water swimming areas are also enforced. Environmental Health enforces State and local laws for hazardous materials and wastes countywide. Environmental Health also administers County Service Area 12, which provides programs for improved septic system management throughout the County, with a special focus on implementing the State-approved San Lorenzo Wastewater Management Plan. Environmental Health provides support and staff to the Hazardous Materials Advisory Commission, various water quality protection programs, and the County Water Resources Management Program.

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Example workloads and services provided in fiscal year 1997-98 include: 4128 inspections of retail food facilities, issuance of 606 septic system permits, analysis of 2300 water quality samples from the ocean and streams, and investigation of 978 complaints of environmental health hazards.

Environmental Health is organized into four major program areas: Land Use, Water Quality Protection, Consumer Protection, and Hazardous Materials/Wastes.

The majority of the revenues for the conduct of environmental health programs is from permit fees and service charges, accounting for 72% of the office's budget. Grants and contracts with other agencies provides 4% of the budget. The County General Fund provides the remaining 18% of activities of Environmental Health.

Air Quality

(All figures are for U.S.)

Percent of Persons in Counties Meeting Air Quality Standards, All Pollutants: 76.5% (1998)

Percent of Persons in Counties Meeting Ozone Standards: 79.5% (1998)

Percent of Persons in Counties Meeting Carbon Monoxide Standards: 95.9% (1998)

Percent of Persons in Counties Meeting Particulates (PM-10) Standards: 97.3% (1998)

Percent of Persons in Counties Meeting Sulfur Dioxide Standards: 100% (1998)

Percent of Persons in Counties Meeting Nitrogen Dioxide Standards: 100% (1998)

Percent of Persons in Counties Meeting Lead Standards: 98.3% (1998)

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/environ.htm>

Water Quality: See <http://sccounty01.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/eh/index.htm>