



# Official Notice and Ballot Information Guide Santa Cruz County Mosquito & Vector Control



Mosquito, Vector and Disease Control

## Proposed Ballot Assessment

**SINCE 1993, THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY MOSQUITO & VECTOR CONTROL DIVISION (“Vector Control”) has helped protect public health** by providing mosquito and vector management services to Santa Cruz County. These services are funded through benefit assessments ranging from \$18.69 to \$24.26 annually for single family homes. Unfortunately, these funds have not kept pace with the rising costs of operations, materials, and responding to emerging threats. Vector Control has relied on reserves each year to carry out its mission.

**WHY DID YOU RECEIVE THIS BALLOT?** This ballot allows property owners in Santa Cruz County to vote on an additional annual benefit assessment of **less than \$1 a month for single-family homes** to fund

Vector Control’s countywide program. The vote will determine dedicated funding for mosquito and vector control services. If approved, funds will be reserved for these activities and may not be used for any other purpose.

**WHY SHOULD YOU VOTE?** Under California law, only returned ballots will be counted. **This is your chance to help decide whether a new benefit assessment should be approved** to maintain and improve Vector Control’s services in Santa Cruz County. Vector Control does not receive any other funding from the County.

### PLANNED SERVICES

***Rapid response** to public service requests related to mosquitoes, rodents, ticks, and other vectors.*

***Monitoring** native/invasive mosquitoes and the diseases they carry.*

***Testing** mosquitoes, ticks, and other vectors for diseases.*

***Inspections** and advice to manage rodent infestations.*

***Engaging the community** through education to promote vector safety and disease prevention.*

**dengue fever** In Southern California, raising concerns that it will spread. These developments underscore the importance of maintaining and improving mosquito surveillance, rapid response capabilities, and community education to protect public health in Santa Cruz County.

**EMERGING THREATS** Each year, mosquitoes cause hundreds of thousands of deaths globally, and vector-borne disease threats are increasing closer to home. In 2022, the **invasive mosquito *Aedes aegypti***, which can transmit dengue, Zika, and other viruses, was detected in Watsonville. Additionally, for the first time in state history, *Aedes aegypti* is responsible for **20 confirmed cases of**

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## WHAT DOES THIS ASSESSMENT

**DO?** If approved by property owners, this assessment would provide funding to maintain and improve mosquito and vector control services in Santa Cruz County. **It would support essential public health programs** by continuing efforts to monitor native and invasive mosquito populations and the diseases they may carry; test mosquitoes, ticks, and other vectors for harmful illnesses; and inspect properties while offering guidance to help manage rodent issues. The assessment would also maintain and improve Vector Control's ability to respond quickly to public service requests related to mosquitoes, rodents, and other vectors; and support community education aimed at preventing vector-borne diseases and promoting overall public health within the County of Santa Cruz.

## HOW MUCH IS THE PROPOSED ASSESSMENT?

The proposed annual increase for your property(ies) is printed on your ballot included with this notice and information guide. The typical base annual assessment for single family homes is **proposed to be \$11.99 per year** in Zone A. Some parcels are in Zone B, which receives a

## WHAT IS A VECTOR?

Vectors are animals and insects – mosquitoes, ticks, rodents, and more – that spread disease or cause discomfort. Santa Cruz County Mosquito & Vector Control uses **Integrated Vector Management**, combining public education, science-based strategies, and environmentally responsible control methods, to reduce health risks.

You can help by:

- **Eliminating standing water** in containers, plant trays, and yard features to prevent mosquito breeding.
- **Trimming vegetation** and clearing clutter to reduce shelter for rodents and ticks.
- **Securing trash and compost** to avoid attracting pests.
- **Sealing entry points** in buildings, vents, and crawl spaces to keep rodents and insects out.
- **Checking for signs** of pests—like mosquito larvae, rodent droppings, or ticks in outdoor areas.

How we can help:

- We offer **free mosquito-eating fish** for ponds and troughs.
- We conduct **free inspections and consultations**.
- **We respond to reports** of mosquito activity or other vector concerns.



slightly reduced level of mosquito surveillance services; therefore, parcels in Zone B are assessed at \$11.69 per year. Other property types will vary based on their use, size, and specific benefit received from mosquito and vector

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control services. If this proposed assessment is approved, the total amount that would be raised for fiscal year 2026-27 is approximately \$1,118,297. These funds can only be used for mosquito and vector control services within Santa Cruz County.

**WILL THIS ASSESSMENT INCREASE?** After the 2026-27 fiscal year, the maximum allowed assessment rate will only be adjusted for inflation by an amount equal to the change in the Northern California (San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward) Consumer Price Index (CPI), not to exceed 3% per year. In the event that the annual change in the CPI exceeds 3%, any percentage change in excess of 3% can be cumulatively reserved and can be added to the annual change in the CPI for years in which the CPI change is less than 3%. The actual assessment rate will not be raised automatically. The updated proposed budget and assessment rate will be reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Supervisors at a public meeting to ensure that assessment revenues keep pace with the costs of providing mosquito and vector control services. This helps maintain effective disease surveillance, rapid response, and environmentally responsible pest management in Santa Cruz County.

**HOW WAS THE ASSESSMENT DETERMINED?**

The annual cost of mosquito and vector control services is allocated based on the special benefit each property receives, as outlined in the Engineer’s Report. Assessments are determined by factors such as property type, size, and proximity to

mosquito breeding areas. Single family residential properties serve as the baseline, while multi-family, commercial, industrial, and agricultural properties are assessed based on their land use and expected service levels. The Engineer’s Report provides a detailed breakdown of the assessment methodology, budget allocations, and parcel-specific charges. This report is available for review at the Santa Cruz County Mosquito & Vector Control Division, 640 Capitola Rd, Santa Cruz, CA 95062.

**ARE THERE PUBLIC SAFEGUARDS?** If approved, funds from this assessment can only be used to maintain and improve mosquito and vector control services in Santa Cruz County. These funds will be placed in a dedicated account that cannot be used for other purposes. Vector Control’s revenues and expenditures will be reviewed annually and presented at a noticed public hearing before the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.



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# Santa Cruz County Mosquito & Vector Control Proposed Ballot Assessment

**HOW DO I VOTE?** To complete the enclosed official ballot, mark the oval next to either “Yes” or “No,” sign the ballot, fold it in half, and place it in the pre-printed, postage-paid return envelope provided with your ballot. You may also hand deliver your ballot by the end of the public input portion of the Public Hearing on November 4, 2025, at the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors meeting, 701 Ocean Street, Room 525, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. **Only official ballots that are signed and marked with the property owner’s support or opposition will be counted.** If you lose or require a replacement ballot, or want to change your vote, please call (831) 454-2590. See the enclosed ballot for additional instructions. Ballots are weighted according to each property’s proposed assessment amount and will be tabulated accordingly. The assessment will not be imposed if, upon the conclusion of the public hearing, weighted ballots submitted in opposition exceed those in favor. If at least 50% of the weighted ballots are in support, the assessment may be levied for fiscal year 2026-27 and may continue in future years as directed by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors.

**PUBLIC HEARING** A public hearing **will be held on November 4, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.** before the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors at the Board Chambers, located at 701 Ocean Street, Room 525, Santa Cruz, CA. You are welcome to attend the public hearing. Tabulation of the returned ballots will commence after the close of the public input portion of the hearing, and the

**results of the tabulation will be announced at the continuation of the public hearing scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2025** at 9:00 a.m. at the Board Chambers. Under **Government Code §53759.1 and §53759.2 (AB 2257)**, you may find more information about the proposed assessment here: [mvc.santacruzcountyca.gov/Transparency/ProposedNewBenefitAssessment2025.aspx](https://mvc.santacruzcountyca.gov/Transparency/ProposedNewBenefitAssessment2025.aspx). If you wish to object to this assessment on the grounds that you allege it does not comply with the California Constitution, please submit a written objection to the Santa Cruz County Mosquito & Vector Division by **October 10, 2025**. Please do not include your objection with your ballot. The objection must specify the grounds on which you are alleging noncompliance with the California Constitution. Include an address where we can respond to your concern(s) in writing. If you fail to submit a timely objection in writing, you will be barred from legally challenging the assessment.

## QUESTIONS?

For questions about the proposed assessment, contact Amanda Poulsen at (831) 454-2590 or visit [mvc.santacruzcountyca.gov](https://mvc.santacruzcountyca.gov)

## PUBLIC MEETINGS

### SEPTEMBER 8, 2025

Community Room

500 Westridge Dr , Watsonville 6-7 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

Community Room

701 Ocean St, Santa Cruz 6-7 p.m.

Both Meetings will also be held on Zoom.us

Meeting ID: 770 569 1302

Passcode: 875941

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