

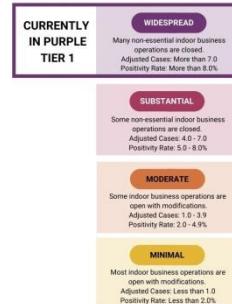
City Manager's Weekly Update

January 29, 2021

Bay Area Regional Stay Home Order Lifted, Santa Cruz in Purple Tier

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BLUEPRINT FOR A SAFER ECONOMY WEEKLY STATUS REPORT FOR 01/26/21

WHERE ARE WE IN THE TIERS?



THIS WEEKS METRICS:

	SC County Metrics	Data Trend	Substantial Tier Targets
Adjusted Cases	28.3 Daily new cases (per 100k)	↓ -11	4-7 Daily new cases (per 100k)
Positive Tests	7.8%* -2.5%	↓	5% - 8%
Weeks in Current Tier**	0 --		3
Weeks Meeting Lesser Tier Criteria	0 --		2

*If adjusted cases and positive test metrics fall into two different tiers, the county will be assigned to the more restrictive tier
**County must be in current tier for 3 weeks and have 2 consecutive weeks with metrics meeting lesser tier to advance

TIER 1 ALLOWS SOME INDOOR ACTIVITIES WITH MODIFICATIONS:

- Hair Salons and Barbershops
- All Retail with max 25% capacity
- Nail Salons & Personal Care Services
- Hotels and Lodging
- Shopping Centers (Malls, Destination Centers, Swap Meets) with:
 - Max 25% capacity
 - Closed common areas
 - Closed food courts

SOME OUTDOOR ONLY ACTIVITIES ARE ALLOWED INCLUDING:

- Restaurants (including bars, breweries, and distilleries providing meal service)
- Wineries
- Gyms and Fitness Centers
- Places of Worship
- Museums, Zoos, and Aquariums
- Movie Theaters
- Family Entertainment Centers
- Gatherings with maximum 3 households

Full list available on the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy website.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BLUEPRINT FOR A SAFER ECONOMY AT
Covid19.ca.gov/Safer-Economy

Produced and Distributed by the Economic Recovery Council of Santa Cruz County

PLÁN DE ACCIÓN PARA UNA COMUNIDAD MÁS SEGURA (NIVEL MORADO)

INFORME SEMANAL PARA EL 01/26/21

¿DÓNDE ESTAMOS EN LOS NIVELES?

ACTUALMENTE EN NIVEL 1 MORADO

GENERALIZADO

Varias actividades comerciales no esenciales en interiores están cerradas.

Casos Ajustados: Más de 7.0

Pruebas Positivas: Más de 8.0%

SUSTANCIAL

Algunas actividades comerciales no esenciales en interiores están cerradas.

Casos Ajustados: 4.0 - 7.0

Pruebas Positivas: 5.0 - 8.0%

MODERADO

Algunas actividades comerciales en interiores están abiertas con ciertas modificaciones.

Casos Ajustados: 1.0 - 3.9

Pruebas Positivas: 2.0 - 4.9%

MÍNIMO

La mayoría de las actividades comerciales en interiores están abiertas con pocas modificaciones.

Casos Ajustados: Menos de 1.0

Pruebas Positivas: Menos de 2.0%

LAS ESTADÍSTICAS DE ESTA SEMANA:

Datos del Condado SC	Tendencias de Datos	Metas de Nivel Razonables
Casos Ajustados	28.3 Casos nuevos diarios (por 100 mil)	↓ -11 4 - 7 Casos nuevos diarios (por 100 mil)
Pruebas Positivas	7.8%* -2.5%	↓ 5% - 8%
Semanas En Niveles Actuales**	0 --	3
Semanas Con Criterios de Menos Importancia	0 --	2

*Si los casos ajustados y los datos de casos positivos caen entre los diferentes niveles, el condado asignará el nivel más restrictivo

**El Condado debe estar en niveles actuales durante 3 semanas y tener 2 Semanas consecutivas con niveles de datos inferiores para avanzar

EL NIVEL 1 AUTORIZA ALGUNAS ACTIVIDADES PARA CENAR EN INTERIOR CON CIERTAS MODIFICACIONES

- Peluquerías y Barberías
- Ventas al detalle con capacidad max de 25%
- Salones de Uñas
- Servicios de cuidado personal
- Hoteles y alojamientos
- Centros comerciales (malls, centros de destitución, feria) con:
 - Max capacidad de 25%
 - Áreas comunes cerradas
 - Capacidad reducida en los "food courts" (ver restaurantes)

ALGUNAS ACTIVIDADES EN EXTERIOR ÚNICAMENTE SON AUTORIZADAS INCLUYENDO:

- Restaurantes (Incluidos Bares, Cervecerías y Destilerías donde se provee comida)
- Bodegas, Viñedos
- Gimnasios y centros de ejercicios
- Lugares de Culto
- Museos, zoológicos, y acuarios
- Salas de cine
- Centros de Entretenimiento Familiar
- Reuniones con máximo de 3 hogares

La lista completa está disponible en el sitio web del plan de acción estatal para una economía más segura.

MÁS INFORMACIÓN SOBRE EL PLÁN DE ACCIÓN PARA UNA ECONOMÍA SEGURA AL:

Covid19.ca.gov/Safer-Economy

Producido y distribuido por el consejo de recuperación económica del condado de Santa Cruz

With the Regional Stay at Home Order rescinded statewide as of January 25, all counties are now under the rules and framework of the [Blueprint for a Safer Economy](#) and color-coded tiers that indicate which activities and businesses are open based on local case rates and test positivity. Santa Cruz County remains in the most restrictive tier, purple Tier 1, which allows outdoor dining, hair salons, personal services, and some other operations closed under the stay home order to resume. [View the full list of what is allowed under each tier here.](#)

This week's COVID-19 status report shows a decline in adjusted cases to 28.3 and test positivity rate of 7.8%. For more information about the State's Blueprint for a Safer Economy [click here](#). For information about vaccine distribution please [visit the County's website here](#).

Cruzhacks 2021

The annual Hackathon hosted by UCSC took place virtually January 15th-17th with a record number of attendees. Over 575 individuals participated from 185+ school, across 25 different countries.

Attendees formed groups and developed projects in a number of categories, although many students submitted projects in the “Tech Cares” category which focuses on Health, Justice, and Environmental Impact to Action.

The Economic Development Department’s flagship program, Choose Santa Cruz, is a long time sponsor of this great event. Choose Santa Cruz is proud to support creative ideas to solve real world problems. Below is a sampling of winning projects:

- [SmallTalk](#) (*MLH - Best Use of Google Cloud Platform*): An app designed for building conversational skills with daily missions centered on meeting new people and learning more about those around us.
- [Med-Chain](#) (*Tech Cares - Health Hacks*): Aids doctors and medical organizations to visualize data points (which are readily available) in a better and interactive way, which will help the institutes in better decision making for the current as near-future situation.
- [Justify.ai](#) (*Tech Cares - Justice Hacks*): Generates simplifications of legal English and contract clauses in plain English terms which are much easier to understand.
- [Honeycomb - Shop Greener](#) (*Tech Cares - Earth Hacks: Environmental Impact-to-Action*): A Chrome extension that finds green alternatives to products on Amazon by combing through the consumer's currently viewed product page.

All projects can be viewed [here](#).



California Small Business Covid-19 Relief Grant Program Application Second Round Opening February 2

California Relief Grant Program

ADMINISTERED BY **lendistry**

The State reports more than 300,000 applications were successfully completed for the first round of the California Relief Grant Program. Application approval notifications were sent out Friday, January 15 through Friday, January 22 and funds will be disbursed over a 45-day verification period beginning Friday, January 22. A second round of applications will open at 8 a.m. Feb. 2 and will run through 6 p.m. Feb. 8. Applicants who submitted all necessary documents in the first round and met eligibility requirements, but did not receive a grant, do not need to reapply; their applications will be rolled over for consideration in the second round. Learn more about the program at www.careliefgrant.com. For one-on-one assistance with the application please contact our local Santa Cruz Small Business Development Center at www.santacruzsbdc.org or (831) 479-6136.

PPP Program Reopens With Additional Funding

The U.S. Small Business Administration, in consultation with the U.S. Treasury Department, reopened the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan portal to PPP-eligible lenders with \$1 billion or less in assets for First and Second Draw applications on Jan. 15. The portal fully opened on Jan. 19 to all participating PPP lenders to submit First and Second Draw loan applications to SBA.

SBA granted dedicated PPP access to Community Financial Institutions (CFIs) which include Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs), Certified Development Companies (CDCs), and Microloan Intermediaries as part of the agency's ongoing efforts to reach underserved and minority small businesses. SBA will continue its emphasis on reaching smaller lenders and businesses by opening to approximately 5,000 more lenders, including community banks, credit unions, and farm credit institutions. Moreover, the agency also plans to have dedicated service hours for these smaller lenders after the portal fully re-opens next week. [Learn more](#).

If businesses are in need of PPP funding but do not have a relationship with a bank that is offering the program please reach out to Business Liaison Rebecca Unitt at runitt@cityofsantacruz.com to be connected with our partner lender National Development Council for support in applying for funding.

Arts & Culture Development | Ed Launching “City Arts Of Recovery Design” (CARD) Pilot Grant Program

At its January meeting, the Arts Commission approved the pilot program now called the City Arts of Recovery Design (CARD) Pilot Grant Program. The inspiration for the grant program comes from the City of Santa Monica's Economic Recovery Task Force recently launched pilot program called the Art of Recovery. Santa Monica's program was developed as a means to harness the creativity and vitality of the arts community to contribute to the economic, community, and health recovery of their City. At the Sept. 14, 2020 Arts Commission meeting, staff shared information about the Santa Monica program and how it could potentially be adapted and implemented on a pilot basis in Santa Cruz so that available arts funds could be effectively programmed to support recovery in Santa Cruz. The three main priority funding themes of the CARD program are (1) Economic Recovery, (2) Restorative Justice, and (3) Public Health & Safety.

The Santa Cruz County Arts Council will provide outreach and both applicant and administrative support. The City Arts program will recruit the review panel members representing arts, business, City, and community interests.

The CARD pilot grant program will be implemented in two phases. A first phase will be the issuance of a Call for Letters of Intent. The LOIs will be competitively reviewed by the program review panel. Grants of \$1,500 will be awarded to top applicants. During the second phase of the program both City Arts staff and the Arts Council will work with applicants in group settings and individually to develop the applicants' LOIs into full project grant proposals and to match the applicants with potential project partners, local businesses, and City priority locations.

Final project grant proposals will subsequently be presented to the Arts Commission for funding consideration. These proposals will be prioritized based on the funding that is available, the capacity

of the staff to manage the grants, and the alignment with City projects. Up to \$30,000 (for a maximum of 20 proposals) will be allocated from the City Arts program management project budget to fund the \$1,500 grants for the selected Letters of Intent applicants. The grant funding in the second phase of the program will be awarded based on percent for arts fund balances that will be available (Water, Storm Water, Parking, Refuse, General CIP) and on available funding for the City Arts programs. It is also possible that the grant proposals will be submitted to external organizations for partial or complete funding.

Equity, inclusivity and environmental justice consideration:

The launch of a grants pilot program in collaboration with the Arts Council will leverage the resources that organization has available to support a City program. The Arts Council has professional staff with multi-lingual resources and experience and commitment to conduct outreach to underrepresented artists and organizations in direct alignment with City Arts commitment to equity, inclusivity and environmental justice.

A major consideration in the launch of this pilot program is to promote a broader applicant pool for funding by the City Arts Programs and to give the Arts Commission a portfolio of grant applications to consider at one time. In the past, it has been challenging to issue Calls for Proposals for each of the individual City Arts Programs. With limited staff time, it was primarily the Unsolicited Proposals which were funded, meaning that those who already knew to apply to the City for funding were the most likely to be funded. Watch for outreach communications to the art and business communities to begin in February.

Housing Development & Preservation | Habitat For Humanity Accepting Applications For Homeownership

Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay sells affordable homes to low-income households within Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. Approved homeowners qualify for a monthly housing payment (mortgage, property tax, insurance, HOA fee—if applicable) equal to 30% of their gross monthly income. Since 1989, they have built 55 homes in the Monterey Bay region, and have partnered with the City of Santa Cruz in the My House My Home program.

Habitat for Humanity is currently accepting applications for homeownership at Rodeo Creek Court in Live Oak. For more information and to access the application, please visit their website here: <https://www.habitatmontereybay.com/homeownership>.

Eviction Moratorium Extended

On Monday, Jan. 25, Governor Gavin Newsom, Senate President pro Tempore Toni Atkins and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon issued a joint statement on the extension of the eviction moratorium to protect Californians impacted by COVID-19.

They announced an agreement to extend the eviction moratorium in California through June 30, 2021, protecting tenants and small landlords from losing their housing as the nation continues to confront the pandemic. They also stated they are moving forward as quickly as possible to deploy California's

share of the latest federal stimulus bill, to ensure that up to \$2.6 billion in renter aid is administered quickly, equitably and accountably.

These critically needed federal funds, targeted to the most at-risk households with unpaid back rent, will help tenants stay afloat during and after this pandemic. Income-qualified tenants and their landlords can choose to receive direct rental assistance in exchange for forgiving prior rental debt.

Details of the Eviction Protections:

SB 91 (companion bill to AB 80 in the Assembly) was passed through the legislature and is expected to be signed by the Governor. The following is a summary of the details from the bill.

Eviction Protections under AB 3088-extended:

- SB 91 extends the Tenant Relief Act of 2020 (AB 3088) from Jan. 31 through June 30, 2021
- Residential tenants only
- No tenants with COVID-19 related hardships may be evicted prior to June 30, 2021 if they pay at least 25% of the rent due from March 2020 through June 30, 2021 (and return declaration of hardship)
- Anti-foreclosure Protections for Small Landlords

Eviction Protections under AB 91:

- SB 91, extends the moratorium on residential evictions for non-payment of rent through June 30, 2021
- Also contains a \$2.6 billion appropriation of federal rent relief funds
 - \$1.1 billion directly to local jurisdictions (above 200K population) and statutory changes necessary to implement a \$1.5 billion Rental Assistance Program for all eligible recipients as part of the 2020 Budget Act

Rental Assistance Program Funding Under SB 91:

- Allocation of Funding: Santa Cruz County will receive a funding from the state proportionally allocated based on population, to be implemented locally
- HCD will allocate funds by February 19 (County will submit application to receive funds by 2/12)
- 65% of funds must be obligated by June 2, 2021
- 100% of funds must be expended by August , 2021
- If County elects not to receive funding, HCD will contract with a vendor to implement program
- Use of funds for implementation:
 - Round 1: Expressly targets assistance for eligible households under 50% AMI
 - Round 2: Communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, as determined by HCD
 - Rounds 3: Eligible households not otherwise prioritized to expressly include households under 80% AMI

Rental Assistance Program Funding Uses:

- Eligible Uses:
 - Rental arrears (limited to 80% owed over specified time period)
 - Prospective rent payments (priority-not to exceed 25% of monthly rent)
 - Utilities
 - Other expenses related to housing authorized by Federal law.
- Landlord Participation:
 - Landlord must agree to forgive remaining debt owed and release any and all claims for nonpayment for specified time period.
- Landlord Non-Participation
 - Provides rental arrears funding directly to tenants up to a maximum of 25% owed for the specified period to comply with the legislation requirements and protections (April 1, 2020-March 31, 2021).
- Other Provisions:
 - Exempts from income for tax purposes/eligibility
 - For taxable years before January 2025, forgiven tenant rent liability shall not be considered gross income
 - Imposes a moratorium on actions seeking to recover rental debt until July 1, 2021

Additional Tenant Protections-Federal:

- CDC Order is in effect through March 2021, but is less protective than California's eviction protections under AB 3088 (and now SB 91) and all back rent is due at expiration of order -end of March 2021, unless extended.
- National Mortgage Settlement and tenant legal defense investments
- Strengthened foreclosure protections
- Help stabilize small property owners
 - Prohibits discrimination by housing provider of outstanding COVID-19 related rental debt

Commercial Protections:

- June 23, 2014 Council adopted Emergency Ordinance 2020-14-Extending Moratorium Preventing Residential or Commercial Evictions for Non-Payment of Rent as a Result of Economic Losses Related to the Coronavirus Pandemic through August 13, 2020, or for so long as authorized by Governor.
- Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-80-20, extending this authorization for commercial evictions through March 31, 2021.

Library

VetNow: A New Job Seeking Resource for Veterans

Veterans and their family members have a new resource through the public library. Our [Veterans Information Page](#) now includes [VetNow](#). This tool has many valuable resources for job seekers including: Live Job Coaching, a Resume Lab, and a Live Veteran Navigator. The Live Veteran Navigator connects Veterans with experts on VA benefits, job coaching, and community resources.

All you need to access this resource is your Santa Cruz Public Libraries Card and Library Card Pin Number. You can find VetNow on our [Website](#) at santacruzpl.org. If you need help please give us a call on our telephone information line at 831-427-7713.

Park and Recreation

Arana Gulch Experimental Outplanting of Santa Cruz Tarplant



The Parks & Recreation Department's Open Space & Greenways team, in collaboration with the Arana Gulch Adaptive Management Working Group, the UCSC Greenhouse, and UCSC volunteers, has successfully implemented an experimental outplanting of 400 Santa Cruz tarplant. Santa Cruz tarplant (*Holocarpha macradenia*) is an endangered plant species endemic to Northern California and ensuring its persistence is a key goal of the Arana Gulch management plan. An additional 400 tarplants are scheduled to be planted in February. The short-term goal of this experimental outplanting is to identify the best outplanting methods. The long-term goal is to increase the seedbank of the tarplant at Arana to a level that will ensure a high probability of

persistence for 100 years, or in perpetuity. This planting is something of a landmark in that it exceeds the targeted population goal for the Santa Cruz tarplant management program.

The City's contracted biologists will monitor the tarplant, and have implemented several experimental treatments: mowing, sheet mulching, grazing, and no treatment. The questions we hope to answer are whether or not planted seedlings survive to reproduce with no management, if mowing is an effective management strategy, how plants survive under grazing pressure, and if sheet mulching improves seedling survival and reproduction.

A huge thank you to everyone involved!



Planning and Community Development

831 Water Street Pre-application/823, 831, 833, 905 Water Street: A community meeting was held on January 27 to allow for the community and applicants to discuss a potential mixed-use development project involving 151 apartments above ground floor commercial space and subterranean parking, located at the northwest corner of Water Street and North Branciforte Avenue. The applicant is currently proposing to provide as much as 51% of the units as affordable to households earning between 30% and 80% of the area median

income. While the project is still being reviewed as a Pre-application and a formal application has not yet been submitted, the preliminary plans have garnered significant community interest.

The community meeting that was held this past week is the first of two that will occur during the Pre-application stage for this project and the next community meeting will be duly noticed with mailed postcards, website postings, and on-site postings at least two weeks in advance of the meeting date as per the adopted Community Outreach Policy. The community meeting was held via Zoom, an online platform that allows for members of the community to join the meeting by phone or internet, and Spanish translation was provided but not requested by any members of the public. While the number of participants varied throughout the meeting, the highest point of attendance appeared to be 284 participants. The applicants provided a brief overview of the project and allowed for the meeting to extend an hour past the anticipated end time for additional public comment. It was also at this meeting that city staff announced that we had recently become aware of the applicant's intent to utilize the streamlining provisions of Senate Bill 35 (SB35) for the development and that, if eligible, the project may not be subject to any public hearings. City staff announced that the Pre-application is still under review to confirm eligibility under SB35 and noted that we will try to have more information at the next community meeting.



Visit www.cityofsantacruz.com/831water

The most prevalent comments and concerns raised by the community were as follows:

- neighborhood compatibility - such as height, size, and general architecture,
- the design does not reflect the historic design of the Villa de Branciforte area,
- solar impacts on adjacent residences,
- excessive traffic on already congested surrounding intersections,
- excavation may disturb or uncover historic artifacts,
- the project should be LEED certified,
- general support of an affordable housing development but at a reduced scale,
- separate buildings for low income and "workforce" tenants; and
- concerns with high groundwater at this location that may be overlooked if measured during a drought year.

A number of community members spoke in support of the development, including but not limited to some who support the affordable housing but not the design or massing of the buildings. One resounding request was a desire for the developers to work with the community to develop the site. The city's next steps are to: evaluate these comments with the applicants, review the project for eligibility to utilize SB 35, complete the Pre-application comment letter to the applicant (which will also be posted to the city's website), and coordinate a second community meeting. Mike Ferry is the Planner for this project.

STAY INFORMED – 831 WATER STREET Pre-Application

To stay up-to-date on this proposal and the next community meeting visit www.cityofsantacruz.com/831water and sign-up for e-notifications in the STAY INFORMED portion of the webpage. Comments and questions about the proposed project can also be submitted online at any time.

2390 Delaware Avenue/Antonelli Pond: On Jan. 13, the Planning Department received an application from the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County for a new accessible walking path and associated improvements around Antonelli Pond. The application also proposes to expand the park host site use to year-round use. The park host site is currently approved at being in place six months per year and has been successful at reducing unwanted activities at the pond. The project requires approval of a Special Use Permit, Design Permit, Historic Alteration Permit, Coastal Permit, and Watercourse Development Permit and may need permits from federal and state agencies to complete work below the top of bank of the pond. The required CEQA document will be determined upon further review of the application. The applicant will be required to hold a community meeting early in the review process and the project will require a recommendation by the Historic Preservation Commission and final action by the Planning Commission at noticed public hearings. Clara Stanger is the planner for this project.



Police

Santa Cruz Police Department Crime Statistics for 2020

SCPD release year-end totals for Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR). SCPD is pleased to report the end of year statistics reflects that overall crime is down. The crime rate range is within expected average values based on FBI Part 1 reported offenses for the past five years.

While many factors can contribute to crime rates within a community, SCPD would like to thank our community members and hardworking officers for contributing to our low crime rate through the combined efforts of enforcement, education, and prevention.

	2019	2020	Percent Change
Homicide	0	3	N/A***
Rape	29	33	14%
Robbery	89	76	-15%
Aggravated Assault	272	198	-27%
Violent Crime Total	390	310	-21%
 Violent Crime Rate Per 1,000 Residents*	 5.9	 4.8	 -18%
 Burglary	 348	 267	 -23%
Larceny	2363	1734	-27%
Auto Theft	221	236	7%
Property Crime Total	2932	2237	-24%
 Property Crime Rate Per 1,000 Residents*	 44.1	 34.7	 -21%
 Arson	 34	 45	 32%

measurement based on an estimated 66,424 population in the City of Santa Cruz.

**Santa Cruz Police Department
2020 Uniform Crime Report
[2020 UCR Crime Statistics for City of Santa Cruz](#)**

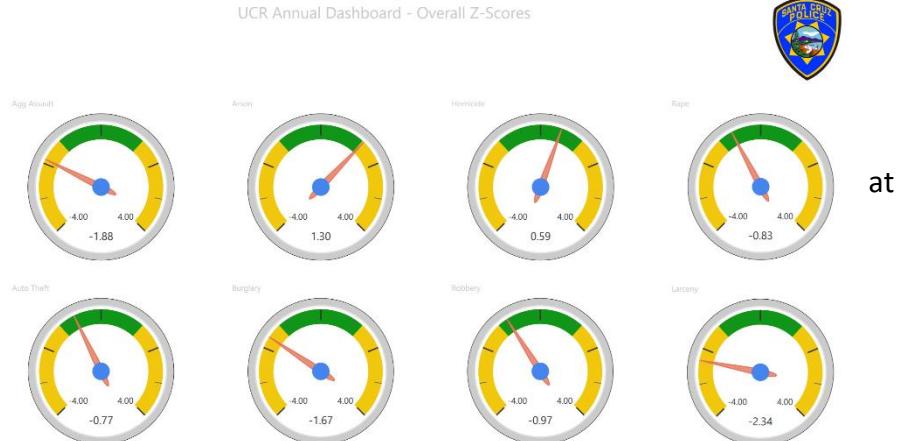
[2020 Overall Z-Scores UCR Dashboard](#)

[SCPD Quarterly & Yearly Uniform Crime Report](#)

UCR data serves as a general indicator of criminality in the nation by tracking eight crime categories. The Crime Rate Index* is a

Z-Score analysis, providing an insight into how these statistics compare over a nine year period (2012-2020). Z-Scores are based on standard deviation from the mean, and help SCPD determine if these crimes are above or below the average for the City of Santa Cruz.

SANTA CRUZ POLICE
TRANSPARENCY | Learn more
www.SantaCruzPolice.com,
 where our crime statistics,
 policies and community
 programs are available.



Public Works Engineering

Congrats to our Engineering team! Our River Street and Water Street Overlay Project has been recognized with a 2021 Award of Merit for Transportation Projects Less than \$5 Million by the American Public Works Association, Monterey Bay Chapter. The project rehabilitated pavement for improved commuting and business access along these busy corridors. It improved traffic safety with green bike lanes and green protected buffered bike lanes with bollards and bike boxes. [Read more](#).



Resource Recovery

The Recyclist 4th Quarter Analytics for our [What Goes Where](#) Resource Recovery webpage show that we had 6,662 views with the top five views going to beverage containers, scrap metal, propane tanks, clothing and textiles and mattresses.



The impounded RV storage area continues to draw vandalism into the landfill. Last weekend, after breaking into the RVs, individuals broke into the Household Hazardous Waste Facility causing several thousand dollars in damage including broken locks, stolen tools, a drum of hazardous waste and a drum of discarded ammunitions. Neighbors on Dimeo Lane are also complaining of damage and break-ins.

Water

This week was all about preparing for and responding to storms. You may recall that an atmospheric river that hit Santa Cruz in 2017 caused major damage to our infrastructure, taking months to repair. With the additional threat of wildfire debris flows with this storm, it was all-hands-on-deck to monitor weather, prep for possible power outages, monitor sources and water quality, and maintain access to facilities. Thankfully (so far) we haven't had any real storm drama.

Speaking of storms, the Water Commission will receive the initial water supply outlook during their meeting Monday night. This "first look" at the water supply situation for the season is always a tough call due to timing. This year is no different. Up until this week's storm, the water year had been tracking only a bit better than 2014 in terms of cumulative San Lorenzo River discharge and precipitation - meaning dry, very dry. However, in this new era of weather whiplash we know that things can change quickly with a couple of big storms. Given how dry it has been up till now, it will take a fair amount of rain for the watershed to produce runoff; we typically need about a foot of rain before the ground becomes saturated enough to produce runoff. Hopefully this week's storm and the rain forecast for next week will provide enough rain to saturate the ground and start producing runoff into Loch Lomond.

As expected, we observed elevated color and turbidity in our water sources related to the storm, especially in San Lorenzo River and Laguna Creek. The storm increased interest and several questions from the community on whether we have detected any "fire-related contaminants" in our water sources. It's difficult to determine if our increased source water monitoring is showing effects from the CZU Wildfire, or if this is normal first flush/rain event behavior. We plan to continue to closely monitor our source water and upper watersheds to determine long term affects from the wildfire, and will provide a summary of the results once analysis is complete. Stay tuned for an update, but in the meantime, the picture below provides a good visual of the storm samples we collected yesterday. The highest color and turbidity was detected at the SLR Felton Diversion and Tait St Intake. We are very fortunate that during big storm events like this we can rely on Loch Lomond and Liddell Spring as they are our cleanest water sources.



Water sources from left to right are: SLR Felton Diversion, SLR Tait St. Intake, SLR at Highlands Park, Laguna Creek, Upper Laguna at Ice Cream Grade, and Loch Lomond (Newell Creek).