

Citizens Guide to County Government



Sonoma County



Fiscal Year
2012-2013

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Susan Gorin, 1st District
David Rabbitt, 2nd District
Shirlee Zane, 3rd District
Mike McGuire, 4th District
Efren Carrillo, 5th District

www.sonoma-county.org

Prepared by the County Administrator's Office

Sonoma County, California



Efren Carrillo
Fifth District

Shirlee Zane
Third District



Susan Gorin
First District

David Rabbitt
Second District

Mike McGuire
Fourth District

You are welcome to attend the meetings of the Board of Supervisors, held most Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m. For specific dates and times of meetings please [visit the Board's Website](#).

Supervisors' Chambers
Sonoma County Administration Building
575 Administration Drive, Room 102A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
Phone (707) 565-2241

County Overview

Sonoma County, California, is a special place.

This informational brochure offers an overview on the County of Sonoma, including population characteristics, environment, and the various services and facilities provided to citizens.

Sonoma County is located at the threshold between the commerce-driven San Francisco Bay Area and the spectacular beauty of northern California. The county extends over 1,500 square miles with a diverse economy that includes a world class wine region, stunning natural resources, and dozens of tourist destinations. Sonoma County is home to 493,285 people, with approximately 33 percent of the population residing in Santa Rosa. That city was also recently named as one of the nation's "most livable communities" by Partners for Livable Communities. Residents all over Sonoma county enjoy a unique quality of life with access to cultural events, an academic community via CSU Sonoma State, economic opportunity, and low crime rates.

Governance

Sonoma County plays a dual role to residents, providing municipal services such as law enforcement and fire protection to unincorporated areas and providing the day-to-day operation of state and federally mandated programs. As a general-law county, Sonoma County abides by state laws that determine the number and duties of county elected officials. The county is divided into five districts that are approximately equal in population size. Each district has an elected Supervisor. District boundaries are adjusted every ten years following the release of federal census data.



Hood Mountain Regional Park

The Board of Supervisors is comprised of five members, one from each of the five districts, elected to four-year terms. The Board establishes policies concerning growth and development, and sets priorities for all activities within the county. In addition, they oversee the many departments and agencies of county government that provide county-wide services, health and welfare programs, elections, and public safety programs. The Board of Supervisors is also the governing body that provides municipal services to those unincorporated areas outside of cities.

The Board of Supervisors

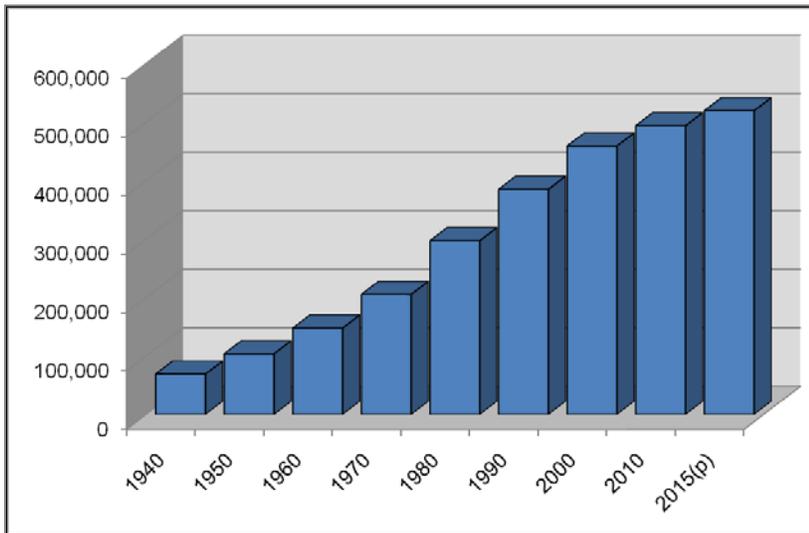
The Board of Supervisors appoints County Administrator who assists the Board in managing, directing and coordinating the operations of all county departments. The County Administrator also prepares the county budget and makes recommendations to the Board to promote economy and efficiency within the county.

The County Administrator

Population

Population Growth

Fueled by job growth and attractive quality of life, the population of Sonoma County has steadily increased over the last 10 years. Between 2000 and 2010, the population increased by 34,671 people, or 7.6 percent. Today there are 493,285 Sonoma County residents. The majority of new residents, 69 percent, live within the boundaries of Sonoma County's nine cities. The City of Santa Rosa has led this growth in total population, adding 15,841 residents, or 10.7 percent, over ten years to attain its current population of 163,436 people.



Between 1990 and 2000, Sonoma County's population increased by 70,392 persons, with an average annual growth rate of 1.9 percent. From 2000 to 2010, population in Sonoma County at an average annual rate of 0.7 percent. In 2015 the population is projected to be 519,042 residents.¹

¹ Source: [California Department of Finance \(DOF\) and the US Census](#)

Population Characteristics

Race/Ethnicity	% of Total (2011)
White*	65.7%
Hispanic	25.4%
Asian	4.1%
Black	1.9%
American Indian	2.2%
Other	1.0%
Total	100.0%

Source: [US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program](#)

Age Groups	% of Total (2011)	Projected % of Total (2015)
0-9 yrs.	11.9%	14.0%
10-19 yrs.	13.5%	13.5%
20-34 yrs.	18.9%	21.6%
35-44 yrs.	13.3%	10.2%
45-54 yrs.	15.6%	12.1%
55-59 yrs.	7.3%	6.9%
60-74 yrs.	12.8%	16.3%
75+ yrs.	6.7%	5.5%
Total	100%*	100%*

Source: [California Department of Finance and the US Census](#), Demographic Research Unit

Education Completed (25+ Years)	% of Total (2011)
Less than 9 th grade	7.8%
9 th -12 th grade, no diploma	6.6%
High school diploma/GED	21.0%
Some college, no degree	25.2%
Associates degree	8.5%
Bachelor's degree	20.4%
Graduate or professional degree	11.1%
Total	100.0%

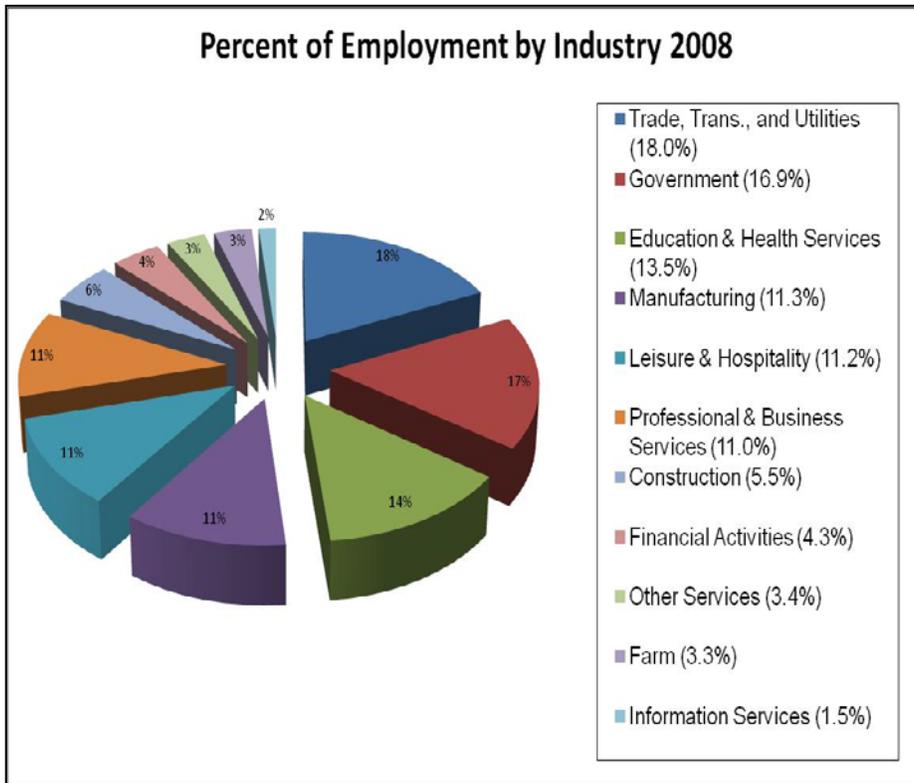
Source: [US Census, American Community Survey 2011](#)

The percent of Sonoma County residents over the age of 25 with college degrees has risen over the past five years.

According to the US Census, more than 31 percent of Sonoma County residents over the age of 25 possessed a bachelor's degree or higher education in 2011, compared to the state average of 29 percent.

Economics and Employment

Projections from the State of California’s Employment Development Department show that the Professional and Business Services industries will grow more than any other industries in the county between 2008 and 2018, with approximately 16,700 new jobs over ten years. This sector includes administrative and support services, management of companies and enterprises, and scientific/technical services. Total employment is expected to increase 9.0 percent during this time. ² In addition, the county remains an attractive option for small and medium sized businesses and corporations looking for new or expansion sites.



The Trade, Transportation, and Utilities sector currently the largest employing sector in the county, followed by Government and Education & Health Services. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities industries include wholesale trade, grocery stores, and more. This industry will continue to increase total employment through 2018, along with all other major industries in Sonoma County.

Median Household Income

1979 (from 1980 Census)	\$20,607
1989 (from 1990 Census)	\$36,299
1999 (from 2000 Census)	\$53,076
2009 (from 2010 Census)	\$63,274

Source: [US Census, American Community Survey 2009](#)

The median household income for Sonoma County residents has consistently been higher than the averages for California or the United States over the past 10 years. ³

The number of Sonoma County residents living below the poverty line was lower than both state and national averages. The U.S. Census reports that 10.3 percent of all families in Sonoma County lived below poverty line in 2010.

² Source: [Employment Development Department](#)

³ Source: [US Census, American Community Survey 2009](#)

Percent Below Poverty Line

	<u>Sonoma Co.</u>	<u>California</u>
2004	8.1%	13.3%
2005	9.1%	13.3%
2006	9.9%	13.1%
2007	8.9%	12.4%
2008	10.9%	13.3%
2009	9.3%	14.2%
2010	10.3%	15.8%

Source: [US Census, American Community Survey 2010](#)

Recent data provided by the US Census reveals that the percent of Sonoma County residents who live below the poverty line increased in 2010, following the general statewide trend, but fell 1.6 percent in 2009. Official poverty calculations assume that a family earning a given income is equally well-off anywhere in the country; however, due to the above-average costs of living in Sonoma County, the Public Policy Institute of California estimates the adjusted poverty rate for Sonoma County is significantly higher.

Per Capita Personal Income

	<u>Sonoma Co.</u>	<u>California</u>
2004	\$40,400	\$36,904
2005	\$42,345	\$38,767
2006	\$45,960	\$41,567
2007	\$47,929	\$43,402
2008	\$47,755	\$43,852
2010	\$45,020	\$43,647

Source: [US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis](#)

The per capita income in Sonoma County was \$45,020 in 2010. This was 3 percent higher than the California average of \$43,647, and 19 percent higher than the national per capita income of \$40,166. Sonoma County's per capita income is the 12th highest of California's 58 counties.⁴

Unemployment Rates

	<u>Sonoma Co.</u>	<u>California</u>
2003	5.50%	6.80%
2004	5.00%	6.20%
2005	4.50%	5.40%
2006	4.00%	4.90%
2007	4.30%	5.30%
2008	5.70%	7.20%
2009	9.70%	11.40%
2010	10.3%	12.4%
2011	9.8%	10.6%

Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

While unemployment rates for Sonoma County have increased over the past few years, County unemployment rates have stayed below average unemployment rates for the state. Since 2010, unemployment levels have decreased, and the county has recovered over 17,000 of the 25,000 jobs lost since 2008. Statewide unemployment increased 4.6 percent, representing a total of 774,000 jobs. Despite job losses, Sonoma County boosted its total number of firms by 4.6 percent in 2008.

⁴ Source: U.S. Department of Commerce

Agriculture and Tourism

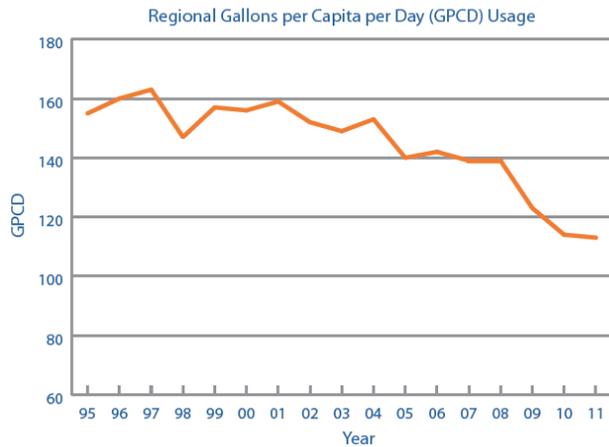


Agriculture and tourism are two major drivers of Sonoma County's economy. Agricultural production was \$581 million in 2011, with the two largest categories being wine grapes (\$347.1 million) and livestock and poultry products (\$138.7 million). Total grape tonnage was 166,619 tons.⁵ Demographic trends suggest healthy long-term prospects for the Sonoma County wine industry.

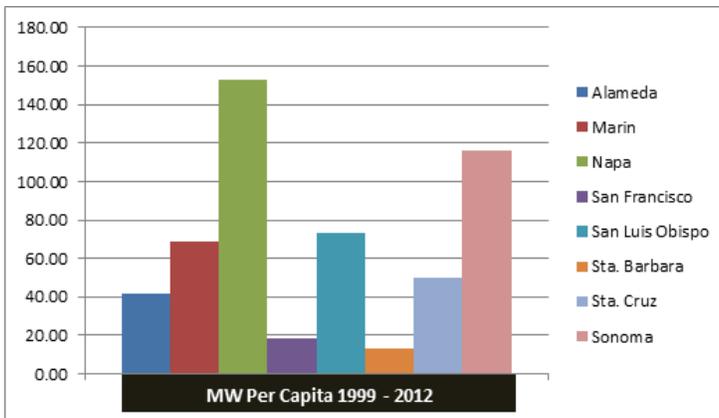


More than 7 million visitors come to the county each year to taste the wine and experience the natural beauty and recreation opportunities in Sonoma County. The tourism industry generates over \$1.3 billion annually, which translates into approximately 17,000 jobs from visitor spending. As California's economic situation worsened, however, fewer people came to Sonoma County. Hotel occupancy rates in fell 56 percent during 2009, but have since rebounded.⁶ Tourism marketing is supported by a non-profit agency formed in 2005, the Sonoma County Tourism Bureau.

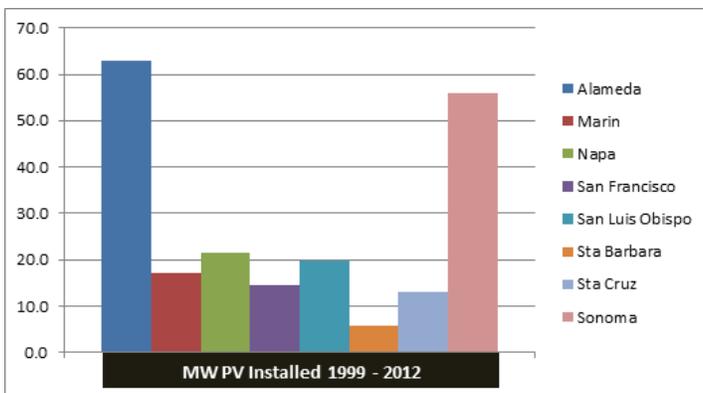
The Environment



Efforts to conserve and recycle water have been intensified in recent years, and over the past 12 years total water usage has increased by just 6 percent, while the county population increased by 13.5 percent in the same period. From 1998 to 2010, water conservation and recycling increased from 3.7 percent to 25 percent, and usage per person has continued to drop. 23,696,000 gallons of water per year are being saved by local businesses through sustained reduction programs where rebates are provided for implementing process changes and equipment upgrades resulting in measurable water use efficiencies.⁷



Ranking third lowest in non-residential consumption per capita among similar counties, Sonoma County continues to perform well in energy conservation. The advent of several incentive programs, begun in January 2010, and revised building codes should expedite reductions in coming years.



Sonoma County remains a leader in renewable energy, boasting 33 Megawatts of capacity which includes solar, wind, geothermal and biogas generation sources. According to Solar Sonoma County, Sonoma County installed 19 solar energy systems per 100,000 residents in August 2010, over five times more than the statewide average of 3.6.

⁷ SCWA [Saving Water Partnership](#)

PROJECTS FUNDED	
Residential	Commercial
1750	57
Total Contracts Funded \$59,756,859	
Jobs Created/Retained	730
Percent of Projects Completed by Local Contractors	86%

Air quality levels (2001) by days:	
Good	326
Moderate	39
Unhealthy for sensitive groups	0
Unhealthy	0

Sonoma County continues to lead the way in renewable energy, demonstrating more capacity than many nearby and comparable counties. Unique incentive programs in Sonoma County, such as the Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP), have helped bolster the existing California Solar Incentive and Self-Generation Incentive Program rebates. Additionally, PG&E has a plan to develop and purchase power from up to 500MW of solar PV facilities. PG&E currently estimates that it met approximately 19.4% of its 2011 retail sales from approved renewable sources.

The Environmental Protection Agency monitors air quality across the country, assigning one of four ratings to each day. The EPA reported on 365 days in Sonoma for 2011. Overall, Sonoma County’s air quality was healthy, with 326 days of “good” air quality and 39 days classified as “moderate.” Sonoma County had zero days where the air quality was classified as unhealthy. In a 2010 Bay Area Pollution Summary, Sonoma County had zero days where pollution levels exceeded the state standard, a result that was much lower than the Bay Area average.⁸

Sonoma County Regional Parks

Number of Parks	52
Developed Acreage	777
Undeveloped Acreage	57,203
Trails (miles)	175
Park Users (annual)	5,603,743
Vet/Community Bldgs.	8
Events (annual)	4,788
Attendance	312,570



West County/Joe Rodota Regional Trail

Source: [Sonoma County Regional Parks](#)

⁸ [Environmental Protection Agency, BAAQMD](#)
Citizen’s Guide to County Government

Land Use

Sonoma County encompasses more than 1 million acres of land and water, rich in scenic beauty, and with an array of parks, recreational facilities, campsites and lakes. Open space and agricultural land accounts for a great majority of Sonoma County acreage. The county has approximately 123,070 acres of surface water area, of which 8,580 are bay waters.

<u>Type of Use</u>	<u>% of Total Acres</u>
Commercial & Industrial	5.05%
Residential	25.84%
Agricultural*	60.96%
Government	8.00%
Recreation	0.02%
Other	0.13%

*Includes active and inactive agricultural lands, agricultural preserves and open space contracts.

Roadways in Sonoma County

<u>Maintained by</u>	<u>Bridges</u>	<u>Road/Highway Miles</u>
City	111	955
County	351	1,382
State	113	592 (342 within State Parks)
Federal	0	10.5

Source: [Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works, CalTrans](#)

Sonoma County Government Services

Government Services Sonoma County is comprised of 26 distinct departments that provide a wide array of services to residents. From law enforcement to road maintenance to promoting economic development, the county works to improve the lives of residents within the county boundaries. As agents of the state, counties are also responsible for administering many of the State's health, welfare and criminal justice programs.

Health and Human Services

Health Services

565-4700

The Department of Health Services provides treatment for individuals with alcohol, drug and tobacco addiction, mental health programs (which include 24-hour out-patient care and crisis services), as well as information and education to reduce illness and disease in the county. The department also oversees public health nursing, reproductive health clinics, and services to investigate, treat and control highly communicable diseases. Oversight of emergency medical services and payments to the County Medical Services Program for indigent health care are handled by Health Services. The department also offers public health nuisance abatement services, as well as hazardous materials and consumer protection programs.

Human Services

565-5855

The Human Services Department determines eligibility for various federal state and local aid programs. Programs include: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), MediCal, General Assistance and Food Stamps, employment services, case management of abused, abandoned or neglected children; foster care and emergency placement services. The Human Services department also coordinates services for adults and senior citizens including, Adult Protective Services, In-Home Supportive Services, hot meals programs, and services for veterans.

Department of Child Support Services

866-901-3212

The Department of Child Support Services coordinates the county's Child Support Enforcement Program, which is part of a nationwide effort to collect child support from parents and reduce public assistance costs. The Department of Child Support Services seeks and enforces court orders for both welfare and non-welfare cases.



Public Protection

Funding of Sonoma County public protection programs continues to be one of the highest priorities for the Board of Supervisors. The primary purpose of public protection agencies is to provide a secure environment for persons and property.

The District Attorney is an elected official responsible for prosecuting all public offenses in Sonoma County. The District Attorney initiates proceedings for the arrest of any person charged with a crime in Sonoma County and acts as an advisor to the county Grand Jury. In addition, the District Attorney oversees an Environmental Law and Consumer Fraud division, which handles civil and criminal enforcement in those matters.

[District Attorney](#)
565-2311

The Probation Department is an arm of the Superior Court of California charged with community protection through monitoring and rehabilitating adult and juvenile offenders. Probation is responsible for investigation, supervision, control, and reform of people granted supervised probation. In addition to probation services, the department is responsible for operations at the three county juvenile detention facilities, which include Juvenile Hall, the Sierra Youth Center, and Probation Camp. Probation also oversees the Supervised Adult Crew Program, which operates out of the camp facility.

[Probation](#)
565-2149

The Public Defender has a legal mandate to represent any person charged with a criminal or juvenile offense if they are not financially able to hire private counsel. The Public Defender also represents qualified individuals in probate and welfare cases.

[Public Defender](#)
565-2791

The Sheriff-Coroner is an elected official responsible for law enforcement, crime prevention, and related emergency services to the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County, as well as the cities of Windsor and Sonoma. The Sheriff-Coroner is also responsible for the operation of the County's two adult detention facilities, and for providing security to the courts.

[Sheriff-Coroner](#)
565-2511

Other County Services & Agencies

In addition to the county departments and services previously described, the following list identifies other county departments' services and responsibilities.

[Agricultural Commissioner](#)

565-2371

The Agricultural Commissioner is responsible for promoting and protecting the agricultural industry in Sonoma County, and protecting the environment. The department is also responsible for protecting the health and safety of agricultural workers, maintaining the accuracy of weights and measuring devices, and preservation, licensing, and control of all wildlife and livestock in the county.



[County Clerk/Recorder/Assessor](#)

565-1877

These three positions (County Clerk, Recorder and Assessor) are filled by one elected position called County Clerk/Recorder/Assessor.

[County Clerk](#)

565-3800

The County Clerk is an elected official responsible for issuing marriage licenses, filing fictitious business name statements, processing notary bonds, handling environmental documents, filing conflict of interest reports, and performing civil marriage ceremonies.

[Registrar of Voters](#)

565-6800

As the Registrar of Voters, the County Clerk conducts all elections in Sonoma County, updates and maintains the voter registration file, verifies petitions, and files campaign statements.

[Assessor](#)

565-1888

The Assessor is responsible under State law for the valuation and appraisal of all property in Sonoma County for taxation purposes.

[Recorder](#)

565-2651

The County Recorder is responsible for filing and maintaining public documents associated with land transactions, such as deeds, security agreements, liens, and maps, as well as recording and maintaining vital statistics, such as births, deaths, and marriages.

[Auditor-Controller](#)

565-2631

[Treasurer-Tax Collector](#)

565-2281



The Auditor/Controller/Treasurer-Tax Collector is an elected official and the chief financial officer for the county. The Auditor oversees all accounting functions for agencies under the control of the Board of Supervisors and for districts whose funds are kept in the County Treasury. In conjunction with the County Administrator's Office, the Auditor's office is responsible for compilation, publication and control of the county's budgets. The department is also responsible for payroll, maintenance of the tax rolls, auditing of funds kept in the County Treasury, calculation of tax rates, and distribution of tax receipts. In addition, the department is responsible for billing and collection of property taxes, and assessments.

The Sonoma County Economic Development Board promotes the startup and expansion of Sonoma County businesses through referral services as well as the development and dissemination of economic data for Sonoma

[Economic Development](#)

565-7170

County. On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, the Economic Development Director is charged with coordinating and analyzing economic data on issues impacting Sonoma County. The Economic Development Board also runs the Film Program and the county-wide Tourism Program.

This department administers the Emergency Management Division, the Hazardous Materials Program, and The Fire Services Division of Emergency Services.

The Emergency Management Division coordinates planned responses to potential county-wide emergencies and disasters. This division handles all training and education outreach related to disaster plans, registers disaster service workers, coordinates CPR classes, and inspects dam areas.

The Hazardous Materials Program issues waste generator permits, underground tank permits and inspections. They are also the lead agency responding to hazardous material spills.

The Fire Services Division of Emergency Services is included in the enterprise agency descriptions on page 18.

[Fire and Emergency Services](#)
*Emergency Management &
HAZ MAT*
565-1152

The Local Agency Formation Commission, or LAFCO, is an independent agency under state law, responsible for changes in organization of cities and special districts. The group oversees annexations, new district formations, and incorporations of land. Staff services are provided by the County Administrator's Office.

[Local Agency Formation
Commission](#)
565-2577

This department is responsible for reviewing plans, issuing building permits, and providing construction inspection services in unincorporated areas of the county. Permit & Resource Management is also responsible for enforcing zoning ordinances, the Subdivision Map Act, and the Public Health Code where it applies to land use issues. All applications for projects involving plan amendments, zone changes, subdivisions, use permits, and zoning permits are processed in this department.

[Permit & Resource Management](#)
565-1900

Regional Parks
565-2041



The Regional Parks Department handles all planning, maintenance, renovation, and operation of the county's many parks and recreation areas, including the planning and execution of new facilities. In addition, the department is responsible for the maintenance of grounds at all county facilities, as well as the operation of veterans' buildings, marinas and launch sites. County parks offer access to activities such as camping, swimming, mountain biking, horseback riding, picnicking, hiking, fishing, playgrounds, sports fields, tennis courts, and basketball courts.

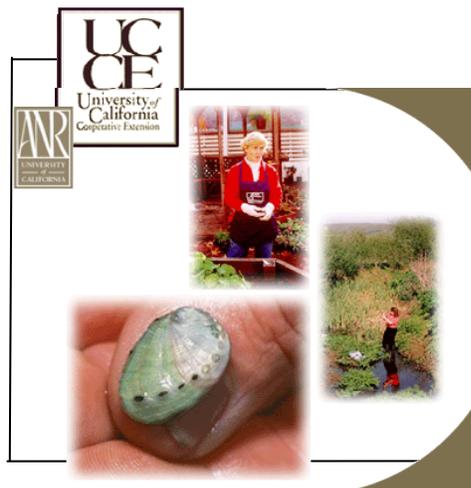
Transportation and Public Works
Roads & Special Projects
565-2231

The Roads Division of Transportation and Public Works provides road engineering, construction and maintenance of all county roads. It also contracts or administers contracts to provide public utility services. The Special Projects Division provides for start-up costs for potential new districts and small water system improvements..



UC Cooperative Extension
565-2621

The UC Cooperative Extension program provides Farm and Home Advisor services through an agreement between the county and the University of California. The University provides research and education professionals, while the county provides support staff and operational appropriations.



The following Departments service the internal functions of the County

The County Administrator's Office (CAO) acts as the agent of the Board of Supervisors in managing, directing, and coordinating the operation of all departments under the Board's control. The CAO is responsible for a variety of activities including proposing and implementing Board policies; acting as the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors; preparing and managing of the county's budget in coordination with the Auditor-Controller. The CAO also oversees and prepares of the county's Capital Improvement Program, and manages the county's Emergency Services function. The CAO appoints the General Services, Fire Services, and Information Systems directors.

[County Administrator](#)
565-2431

The Clerk of the Board of Supervisors is responsible many support functions provided to the Board of Supervisors, including maintenance of all Board records and agendas, preparation of the Board's budget, and recording minutes of all Board sessions.

Clerk of the Board
565-2241

County Counsel represents the county in litigation and provides legal representation and advice to the Board of Supervisors, county departments and agencies.

[County Counsel](#)
565-2421

General Services manages the county's property including buildings, vehicles, and equipment. General Services provides janitorial maintenance, real property leasing and facility debt service, as well as fleet acquisition and maintenance.

[General Services](#)
565-2977

Information Systems is responsible for the management and maintenance of computer systems, telephone systems, two-way radio and emergency 9-1-1 systems, and other specialized electronic systems used by the county. In addition, the department provides reproduction and graphics services, courier mail service for all county departments, and systems training to county employees.

[Information Services](#)
565-2911

The Human Resources Department provides recruitment, selection and job evaluation services and training programs to all county departments, and provides the lead role in negotiating and administering employee relations agreements with recognized county employee organizations. The department also coordinates the county volunteer and intern programs, houses the county Affirmative Action Coordinator and staffs the Sonoma County Civil Service Commission. Human Resources also manage insurance programs such as general liability, the county health plan, workers compensation, long-term disability, and property damage.



[Human Resources](#)
565-2331

Enterprise Agencies and Special Districts

Enterprise department budgets are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business, that is, expenditures are offset by user fees and charges for services. Special Districts are generally organized to perform one or more special functions such as street lighting, waterworks, parks, and fire protection. The Board of Supervisors retains fee rate authority over these departments and agencies.

Community Development Commission 565-7500

This county agency is responsible for the administration and operation of housing and community development programs, including the Housing Authority, which administers various rental assistance programs to very low income households, the Community Development Division, which administers block grants and provides services to the homeless, and the Redevelopment Agency, which manages improvements in the Roseland, Sonoma Valley, and Russian River project areas.

Emergency Services Fire Services 565-1152

The Fire Services division coordinates fire service in the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County (County Service Area No. 40) and enforces fire prevention county-wide. Fire services also administers contracts to fire response agencies, non-profit corporations, and the Department of Forestry. Fire Services provides personnel for emergencies and hazardous materials clean-up, and administers the volunteer fire program

Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District 565-7360

In November 1990, Sonoma County voters created the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District as a result of the public's concern over the urbanization and the displacement of agricultural land and open space in Sonoma County. The District acquires conservation easements through voluntary transactions with landowners. The District also purchases land outright from willing sellers, typically for parks, recreation, or other open space purposes. Properties are protected according to the *Acquisition Plan 2000*, which categorizes acquisitions into four groups: Agriculture, Greenbelts, Natural Resources, and Recreation.



The Sonoma County Fair & Exposition, Inc. operates the fairgrounds facilities year-round and during the county fair, and also provides administration for those facilities.

[Sonoma County Fairgrounds](#)
545-4200

The Sonoma County Library works with the nine cities of Sonoma County to provide library services throughout the county. There are currently ten regional libraries, two rural library stations, and the Santa Rosa-Central Library. Almost three million items are checked out annually.

[Sonoma County Library](#)
545-0831

In addition to Roads and Special Projects, this Department provides road construction and maintenance services and directly provides contracts for various public utility services. The Refuse Division conducts integrated waste management for the disposal and recycling of solid waste. The Transit Division operates and maintains public transit and para-transit. Airport Division operates and maintains the Sonoma County Airport. The Air Pollution Control District works to prevent air pollution from “stationary sources.” The Water System Division provides water services for five County Services Areas under the control of the Board of Supervisors. The Lighting Districts Division maintains lighting services for 19 districts.

[Transportation & Public Works](#)
565-2231

The Sonoma County Water Agency is responsible for providing clean water and sanitation services to most cities within the county. The agency also oversees design, construction and maintenance of flood control facilities, as well as operations and maintenance at Spring Lake Park.

[Sonoma County Water Agency](#)
526-5370



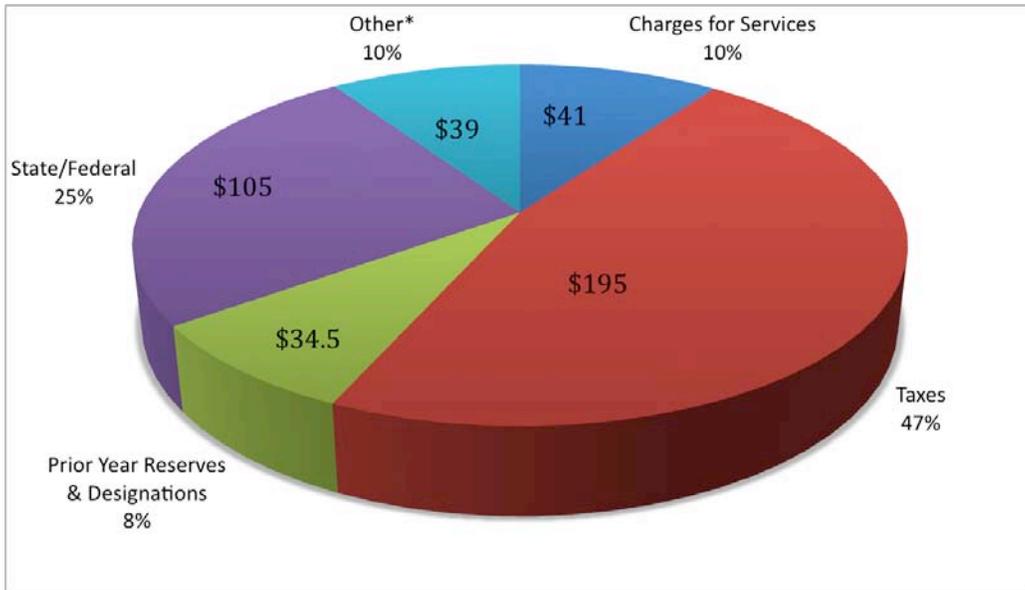
The Budget

Financing the County General Fund Budget

County operations are financed through multiple sources of revenue. The following chart diagrams the amount of funding by major sources and funding from each source as a percent of the total for the General Fund:

RECOMMENDED BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 12-13 (IN MILLIONS)

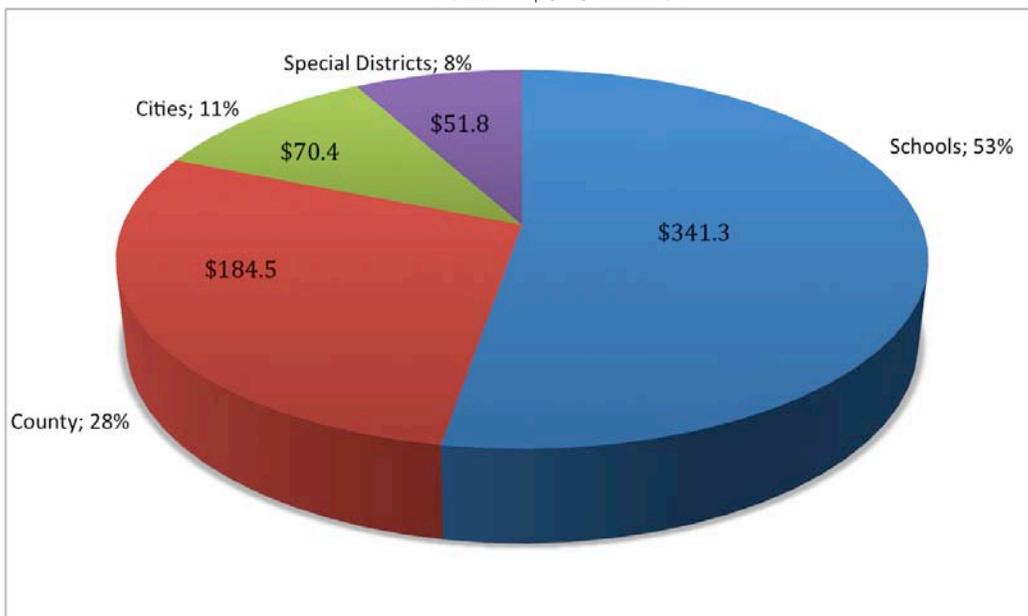
Total = \$414.5 million



* Includes Licenses/Permits/Franchises (\$14.1), Fines/Forfeitures/Penalties (\$7.3), Miscellaneous Revenues (\$4.7), Use of Money (\$9.6), and Other Financing Sources (\$3.6).

PROPERTY TAX DISTRIBUTION FY 12-13

Total = \$648 million



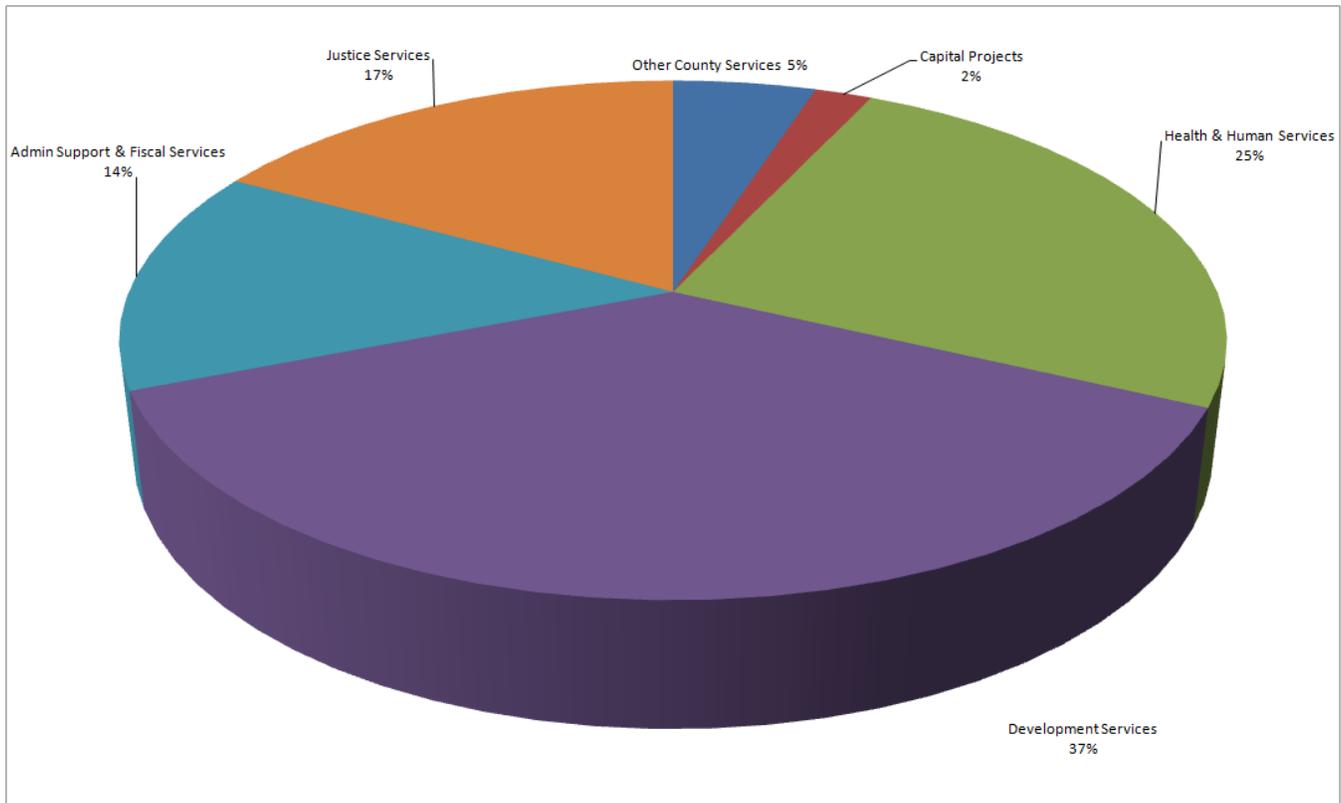
Appropriations

An appropriation is the authorization by the Board of Supervisors to make expenditures and incur obligations for specific purposes. This chart represents authority given for spending in fiscal year 12-13, divided by function.

TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS BY FUNCTION

2012-2013 (in millions)

Total = \$1.28 billion



*Administrative Support & Fiscal Services also includes Non-Departmental, which contains revenues and expenditures not allocated directly to departments, and Risk Management, the county's self-insurance funds, which are already reflected in department charges. Without these budget units, Administrative & Fiscal Services would represent 6.4 percent of the total.

Budget Impacts

Legal Mandates

A large portion of the county’s budget covers programs or services required by state and federal law. The Board of Supervisors has little discretion or control over these costs and/or level of services.

Court Orders

In addition to mandates, federal or state courts may issue an order or ruling which requires the county to finance a particular program or service. The service then becomes a mandate for county funding.

Appropriations Limit (Gann Limit)

In 1979 the voters of California approved Proposition 4, which established appropriation limits. This initiative, now article XIII B of the State Constitution, limits annual authority to spend “proceeds of taxes” by the state, counties, cities, public schools, and special districts. The appropriation limit is adjusted annually for changes in inflation and population. The voters may approve an override to increase the appropriation limit for up to four years.

Revenue Limits

Proposition 13 of 1978 and Proposition 62 of 1984 limit the ability of local government (including counties) to raise taxes without a vote of the people. Proposition 13 requires two-thirds approval by the voters to raise special taxes, and Proposition 62 requires a majority vote to raise general taxes. Proposition 13 affirmed the state’s authority to redistribute taxes collected among local entities. Starting in fiscal year 1992-93 the state shifted \$2.5 billion of revenue from counties and other local governments to offset the states reduction of financial assistance to public schools. The County of Sonoma’s transfer is approximately \$73 million annually.

Proposition 172

In 1993, the voters approved continuation of a state wide one-half cent sales tax and dedicated the revenue to public safety purposes. This partially mitigated the effects of the loss of the state transfer of property tax revenue from local governments to balance the State budget. However, Prop 172 revenues are not available to fund services other than public safety.

Salaries and Benefits

Characteristic of any service provider, labor costs account for a large portion of operating costs. The county serves over 493,470 residents, and staff costs for services account for more than 55 percent of the budget. Changes in benefit costs and the collective bargaining process largely determine level of salary and benefit appropriations. Twelve separate unions and employee organizations represent Sonoma County employees.

Full-Time Equivalent Positions	FY 06/07	FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY10/11	FY 11/12
	4,176	4,279	4,230	4,042	3805	3652

Historical Comparison

Inflation impacts the purchasing power of the dollar, and changes in population affect revenues and demands for services. The following graphs and tables present budget data for general and special fund activity over a thirty-six year period.

Inflation increased 434 percent from fiscal year 70-71³ to fiscal year 07-08, and population increased over 100 percent during the same time period as shown in the table below.

Fiscal Year	70/71	80/81	90/91	00/01	09/10
	Inflation Rate	0.00%	112.37%	236.86%	343.81%
Population	206,500	301,400	389,500	461,464	493,285
% Change in Population	0.00%	47.11%	90.11%	125.15%	138.87%

Expressing expenses, revenues and taxes in constant dollars adjusts for the impact of inflation. When the constant dollar formula is applied to the subsequent years' dollars using the Consumer Price Index (CPI)⁴, the result is the effective comparison of revenues, expenditures and taxes. To compare the cost per person, the constant dollar is divided by the population for that year.

Fiscal Year	70/71	80/81	90/91	00/01	09/10
	Expenditures In Constant \$ Per Capita	\$250	\$170	\$211	\$253
Revenues In Constant \$ Per Capita	\$259	\$171	\$190	\$234	\$383
Taxes In Constant \$ Per Capita	\$85	\$56	\$66	\$48	\$72

After applying the CPI index formula and population growth to the 70-71, 80-81, 90-91, 00-01 and 07-08 fiscal years, the result shows that expenditures and revenues have gradually increased from FY 80-81 to FY 07-08 and remain close to FY 70-71. Tax revenue has remained below the FY 70-71 in all subsequent years, primarily due to the shift of property tax revenue to schools.

The following table represents actual dollars budgeted for the same time period.

Fiscal Year	70/71	80/81	90/91	00/01	10/11
Total Budget Expenditures	\$51,248,749	\$105,666,789	\$276,204,539	\$517,736,368	\$1,176,355,387
Total Budget Revenues	\$53,103,397	\$106,017,004	\$248,233,043	\$478,697,031	\$1,044,749,725
Total Budget Tax Revenue	\$17,405,989	\$34,715,965	\$85,637,873	\$97,980,879	\$198,738,965

Note: Total budgeted revenues include total taxes. The table represents the budgeted expenditure, revenue and taxes at the time. The type and scope of services have changed during the period as well as the amounts and sources of revenue. However, responsibility for many new mandated programs have been added, and some services funded previously through general purpose revenues are now entirely supported by fee revenue (enterprise funds).

³ 70-71 is used as the base year for comparison. Each subsequent year is compared to the base year.

⁴ Source: CPI statistics from [U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

The Budget Process

County budgets must be balanced, meaning expenditures must equal revenues. In addition, voters must approve spending obligations beyond one fiscal year. The proposed budget must be approved by July 20 and the final budget adopted by September 30 as required by State law.

The Budget Calendar

January	The County Administrator sends budget instructions to departments. A budget workshop is held, and departments begin preparing budget requests for next fiscal year.
February	The departments submit estimates of current year expenditures and revenues to the County Administrator, including current and proposed programs or changes for the following fiscal year.
March	The Board of Supervisors conducts a Budget Policy Workshop giving direction to the County Administrator's Office on budget goals and policies.
March to May	Budget requests are reviewed and analyzed by the County Administrator, and meetings are held to discuss budget requests, and financing limits. Departments amend their requests and the County Administrator prepares the final recommendations for a balanced budget based on the latest available information. The County Administrator, in consultation with the departments and the Auditor-Controller, makes necessary adjustments to bring proposed total expenditures in line with total anticipated revenues.
May	The proposed budget document with supporting information is presented to the Board of Supervisors. The proposed budget is approved by the Board and becomes the legal authority to continue services until the final budget is adopted. Copies of the proposed budget are available for the public.
June	The Board of Supervisors conducts public budget hearings. The calendar for these hearings is published in the local newspapers. Dates and times are available at the Office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors or the County Administrator's Office.
June	The Board formally adopts the final budget including changes made during the budget hearings.

The final adopted budget may be amended during the year for unforeseen revenue and expenditure changes. The Board of Supervisors can consider proposals for amendments at the weekly Board meetings. Requests for additional services and/or program improvements are also considered when new or additional revenue is received. A 4/5 vote is required to appropriate unanticipated revenue or to transfer funds from the contingency budget. Other transfers or reductions in appropriations may also be considered, which would require a 3/5 vote.

Each quarter, county departments submit an accounting of current activity and an estimate of ending balances in light of this activity. The County Administrator's Office analyzes the data, identifying variances and guiding departments to necessary adjustments.

At year-end uncommitted funds or revenue received in excess of budgeted amounts are included in the carry-over balance for the next fiscal year.

Further Information

The following publications are available to supply further information to the public:

<u>Name of Publication</u>	<u>Summary of Contents</u>	<u>Originating Department</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
<u><i>Citizens Report</i></u>	Fiscal Year Finances	<u>Auditor-Controller/ Treasurer-Tax Collector</u>	565-2631
<u><i>Parks Map & Guide</i></u>	Parks, Camping, Marinas	<u>Regional Parks</u>	565-2041
<u><i>Boards, Commissions, Committees, Councils and Task Forces</i></u>	Lists Each Group and its Members	<u>Board of Supervisors</u>	565-2241
<u><i>Human Services & Divisions</i></u>	Services Provided by the Human Services Dept.	<u>Human Services</u>	565-5800
<u><i>Agricultural Crop Report</i></u>	Horses, Crops, Livestock, and Poultry	<u>Agricultural Commissioner</u>	565-2371
<u><i>Health Services Resource Guide</i></u>	Services Provided by the Dept. of Health Services	<u>Health Services</u>	565-4700
<u><i>Economic Development Board Profile</i></u>	Demographics and Statistics about Economy and Social Trends	<u>Economic Development Board</u>	565-7170



Sonoma County Administration Building

Other Resources

U.S. Department of Census	(301) 736-4636	www.census.gov	<i>For More Information on Population</i>
California Department of Finance	(916) 445-3878	www.dof.ca.gov	
Sonoma County Department of Health Services	(707) 565-4400	www.sonoma-county.org/health/	
Economic Development Board	(707) 565-7170	edb.sonoma-county.org	<i>For More Information on Economics and Employment</i>
Sonoma County Job Link	(707) 565-5550	www.joblinksonomacounty.org	
California Employment Development Department	(916) 262-2162	http://www.labormarketinfo.eed.ca.gov/	
U.S. Dept. of Commerce	(202) 482-2000	http://www.commerce.gov/	
California Department of Finance	(916) 445-3878	www.dof.ca.gov	
Sonoma County Regional Parks	(707) 565-2041	http://www.sonoma-county.org/parks/	<i>For More Information on the Environment</i>
California State Parks	(916) 653-6995	www.cal-parks.ca.gov	
Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District	(707) 565-7360	http://www.sonomaopenspace.org/	