



Fee Hearing

Held by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
December 7, 2021

*To review and adjust fees of the
Environmental Health Division of Public Health*

The increased revenue from these fee adjustments will enable the Environmental Health Department to meet current operating costs in order to ensure adequate staffing to perform mandated services and better protect public health and the environment.





Organizational Structure of Environmental Health

Environmental Health (EH) is a division of the Public Health Department.

It is organized into four operational areas:

- Consumer Protection

- Hazardous Materials

- Land Use

- Office Management

EH Responsibilities: **Consumer Protection Team**

Staff are responsible for the permitting and inspection of:

- Retail Food Facilities and Cottage Food Facilities

- Food Handler Education and Certification

- Community Events and Farmers' Markets

- Body Art Facilities and Practitioners

- Organized Camps

- Detention Facilities (County Jail and Juvenile Hall)

- State Small Water Systems (5 to 14 connections)

- Pools and spas

- Foodborne Illness Investigations

- Complaint response and resolution

EH Responsibilities: Hazardous Materials Team

Staff are responsible for:

- Hazardous material spill response

- Permitting and inspection of underground storage tanks

- Permitting and inspection of hazardous waste generators

- Registration, permitting and inspection of solid waste facilities

- Oversight of solid waste facility closure

- Permitting and inspection of underground tank removal

- Permitting and inspection of monitoring well construction

- Permitting and inspection of monitoring well removal

- Complaint response and resolution

EH Responsibilities: Land Use Team

Staff are responsible for:

- Permitting and inspection of septic systems

- Permitting and inspection of water wells

- Proof of Water review and approval

- Review of building permits

- Review of land division and boundary adjustment applications

- Review of Coastal Development permits and use permits

- Review of Environmental Impact reports

- Sample collection for state ocean water monitoring program

- Sample collection for state shellfish poisoning program

- Complaint response and resolution

EH Responsibilities: **Office Management Team**

Staff are responsible for:

Communication with public

Billing

Records management

Revenue management and reporting

Reception, logging and assignment of complaints

Administrative support of technical staff

Environmental Health Response to COVID Pandemic

4.0 FTE spent on COVID

Beginning in March 2020 until July 2021, now 2.0

Over 20% of the Environmental Health staff

Source of EH Funding

EH operates on a Fee for Service basis

Revenue shortfalls must be covered by State Public Health
Realignment funds

Due to inadequate cost recovery, EH has required up to \$300,000
Realignment Dollars per year

Those Realignment funds are needed to support other Public Health
services

Most EH Fees Fail to Meet Cost Recovery

Many EH fees were last adjusted in 2010, but failed to achieve 100% cost recovery at that time

Food Facilities – 29 of 35 fees (83%) are unchanged since 2010

Domestic Water (wells) – 8 of 9 fees (89%) are unchanged since 2010

Septic Systems – 25 of 27 fees (93%) are unchanged since 2010

Land Use (building and coastal development permit reviews)
9 of 15 fees (60%) are unchanged since 2010

The cost recovery gap has widened since 2010 due to higher operating costs

Methodology Behind the Calculations

**Annual Salary + Benefits + Services & Supplies + A-87 =
Weighted Hourly Rate (WHR)**

WHR * Average Hours Spent on Fee Activity = Fee

The tool that we utilized was developed by the Auditor's office, and is what we have used in the past for prior fee revisions.

Methodology Behind the Calculations: Derivation of Cost Factors

- Annual Salary = Hourly Rate*2080
- Benefits = Total Dept. Budgeted Benefits/Total Dept. Budgeted Salaries
- Services & Supplies = Annual Salary*(Total Services & Supplies/Total Budgeted Salaries)
- A-87 = Annual Salary*(Cost Allocation Amount for Budget Unit/Total Budgeted Salaries)

Note: Cost Allocation Amount for EH is determined by the Auditor

Overview of this proposed fee adjustment

- 11 fees were eliminated.
- 13 fees were lowered due to increased efficiency of staff.
- Fee increases were capped at 50% of current value.
- 28 fees were lowered below actual costs in the following programs to lessen impact on regulated community:

Septic – 11

Domestic Wells – 6

Land Use/Planning – 3

Food – 6

Pools & Spas – 1

Solid Waste - 1

**Cannabis related fees were left unchanged
pending future changes to that program.**

Mendocino Fees Compared with Those of Neighboring Counties

Counties develop differing fee categories for their programs, making direct comparison difficult.

We identified those fees from Humboldt, Lake and Sonoma counties that directly matched those of Mendocino.

In the following slides we compare the fees of four major programs before and after the proposed adjustments.

County Comparison: Food Program

	Current	Proposed
Sonoma fees are:	128% higher	117% higher
Lake fees are:	19% higher	9% higher
Humboldt fees are:	40% higher	24% higher

County Comparison: Wells

	Current	Proposed
Sonoma fees are:	125% higher	65% higher
Lake fees are:	14% higher	20% lower
Humboldt fees are:	3% higher	26% lower

County Comparison: Septic Systems

	Current	Proposed
Sonoma fees are:	93% higher	58% higher
Lake fees are:	10% lower	27% lower
Humboldt fees are:	167% higher	142% higher

County Comparison: Body Art		
	Current	Proposed
Sonoma fees are:	206% higher	159% higher
Lake fees are:	130% higher	95% higher
Humboldt fees are:	84% higher	56% higher