



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### BOARD TO CONSIDER FIRE PROTECTION OPTIONS

On Oct. 22, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors will consider a report on Santa Cruz County fire protection and emergency medical response services.

Through a contract with CAL FIRE, County Fire provides year-round fire protection and emergency response services throughout County Service Area 48, which includes unincorporated areas of Bonny Doon, Davenport, Loma Prieta, Corralitos, Las Cumbres and the wider South Skyline area. County Fire has held a series of neighborhood meetings in those areas to hear residents' concerns and answer questions regarding fire protection services, emergency medical services and 9-1-1 response times.

CSA 48 fire protection services face challenges, including 25 percent fewer firefighters on staff today than 10 years ago, a declining number of volunteer firefighters and a 22 percent increase in emergency calls. Engines also operate at below recommended staffing levels, which can impact fire response services.

One option is to hold a vote by property owners on whether to implement an assessment under Proposition 218 to increase fire protection and emergency response services. If the Board of Supervisors approves this option, a mail vote would take place within 45 days of any Board action.