



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### BOARD APPROVES MEASURE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday voted unanimously to place a local measure on the June ballot allowing half of all disposable to-go cup fees collected in unincorporated areas of the county to be used for clean water protection, waste reduction, wildfire prevention, trash and litter clean up, maintenance of parks and public areas, environmental programs, and other general services.

Originally approved in 2019 but suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic, the fee is scheduled to go into place July 1. Aimed at encouraging the use of reusable cups to help reduce litter and preserve landfill capacity, the entire 25-cent fee is currently kept by retailers.

If the new measure is approved by voters, no additional fees would be collected. Instead, the proposed new rules would allow the County to receive half of the existing fee to fund a variety of services. The other half would be kept by businesses to cover the cost of collecting and accounting for the fees.

Funding from the measure could be used to protect clean drinking water sources, water quality and marine life; reduce pollution, trash and plastics entering local waters and beaches; help prevent wildfires; clean up trash and litter including in storm drains, on local streets and in public areas; clean and maintain local beaches, parks and natural areas; and provide environmental education and other general services.

Santa Cruz County is a national leader in efforts to protect the environment. It was one of the first jurisdictions to adopt curbside recycling and has passed laws to ban plastic to-go bags; prohibit polystyrene, plastic and other non-recyclable food packaging; prevent single-use disposable toiletries in local hospitality establishments; and create programs to safely dispose of pharmaceuticals and sharps among other measures. It has also adopted a Zero Waste Plan, available at <https://dpw.santacruzcounty.us>.

For more, visit [ProtectOurCoast.us](https://ProtectOurCoast.us).