

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Santa Cruz Fire Department includes four fire stations, one lifeguard headquarters, one administrative building, and an emergency operations center. Frontline apparatus includes four Type 1 engines, one Type 3 engine, and one ladder truck. Staffing includes 72 full-time equivalent personnel, including firefighter / paramedics, fire engineers, fire captains, battalion chiefs, division chiefs, fire prevention, training, and administrative staff. Additionally, the department employs about 70 seasonal lifeguards as well as six temporary workers.



Emergency Services Provided:

- ✔ Structure Fire Suppression
- ✔ Wildland Fire Suppression
- ✔ Emergency Medical Services
- ✔ Hazardous Materials Response
- ✔ Marine Rescue Services
- ✔ Technical Rescue

Contact Us:

- ☎ 831-420-5280
- 🌐 www.santacruzca.gov/Government/City-Departments/Fire-Department

Stations:

- 1 711 Center St.
- 2 1103 Soquel Ave.
- 3 335 Younglove Ave.
- 4 701 Chinquapin Rd.

Administration

Building:

- 📍 230 Walnut Ave.

Lifeguard Headquarters:

- 📍 #21 Municipal Wharf

Core Services

- The Operations Division provides 24/7 response to all 911 requests within the City, UCSC Campus, and Paradise Park. In addition, it responds to mutual aid requests on the North Coast and other areas within the county and state.
- The Prevention Division provides plan review, permits, safety inspections, construction inspections, vegetation management, fire investigations, and public education
- The Office of Emergency Services provides 24/7 support to the City Emergency Operations Center in the event of an emergency and coordinates City disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts. The Office advances community resilience through deliberate planning, regular training, and cross-agency collaboration.
- The Marine Division provides year-round service with one Marine Captain and three Marine Safety Officers and daily lifeguard services from Memorial Day weekend to the weekend of Labor Day and provides public outreach throughout the year
- The Administration staff support the services provided by the Fire Department

FY 2026 Accomplishments

FY 2026 Accomplishments	<i>Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency</i>	<i>Strong Businesses and Vibrant Downtown</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Homelessness Response</i>	<i>Public Safety and Community Well-Being</i>	<i>Natural and Built Infrastructure</i>	<i>Thriving Organization</i>
Implemented an AquaEye sonar device for the Marine Safety Division to enhance ocean search and rescue operations 📍❤️					X		X
Enhanced lifeguard personal protective equipment to reduce job related skin cancer risks 📍❤️					X		X
Established an apparatus replacement program fund to sustainably fund high value fire apparatus 🌲⚖️❤️	X	X		X	X	X	X

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Completed successful implementation of new Records Management System ImageTrend to meet new nationally recognized NERIS requirements 📄❤️	X				X		X
Completed apparatus renumbering project that aligns with new Santa Cruz County Fire Chiefs numbering system to improve communication on the emergency scene and enhance data collection in the Records Management System 📄❤️	X				X		X
Prioritized and provided strategic health & wellness programs to the department including VO2 Max evaluations, Kangen water filtration system, upgraded Plymovent exhaust system, post incident detoxification sauna, and removal of carcinogen and pathogen retaining building materials 📄❤️					X		X
Implemented enhanced and comprehensive annual medical/physical program that provides compliance with nationally recognized safety standards, early detection of occupational cancers and cardiovascular disease, and improved firefighter safety and operational readiness 📄⚖️❤️	X				X		X
Enhanced interagency coordination through expanded participation in monthly working-group meetings focused on evacuation, emergency transportation, care and shelter, and coastal infrastructure protection 📄🌳⚖️❤️	X	X		X	X	X	X
Increased community emergency preparedness through outreach events, increased alert system registrations, weather radios distribution, and sharing emergency alerts and public information 📄🌳⚖️❤️	X	X		X	X	X	X
Sustained and expanded commitment to dynamic training program with a focus on high-rise building fire suppression, active attacker, lithium-ion battery fires, rescue, and other new hazards to meet the evolving threat landscape 📄❤️		X			X	X	X

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Improved Emergency Operations Center (EOC) readiness by updating staff training requirements, updating the City's Emergency Operations Plan, and establishing regular check-ins with County EOC staff 🌲 ⚖️ ❤️	X	X			X	X	X
Promoted and trained two additional full-time Marine Safety Officers ❤️					X		X
Developed and trained Marine Safety Rescue Diver Response Team ❤️					X		X
Developed and established a clear mission and vision statements for the Fire Department ❤️					X		X
Secured backup satellite communications to support City emergency operations including with 3 mobile units for situational flexibility 🌲 ⚖️ ❤️	X				X		X

FY 2027 Goals

FY 2027 Goals	<i>Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency</i>	<i>Strong Businesses and Vibrant Downtown</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Homelessness Response</i>	<i>Public Safety and Community Well-Being</i>	<i>Natural and Built Infrastructure</i>	<i>Thriving Organization</i>
Develop construction designs, and identify funding for a new Lifeguard Headquarters facility 🌲 ⚖️ ❤️	X				X	X	X
Strengthen regional coastal resilience by improving marine response coordination, shared resources, and interoperable capabilities through regular meetings 🌲 ❤️					X		X
Transition all department policies and standard operating procedures to digital format with Lexipol 🌲 ❤️	X				X		X

FY 2027 Goals	<i>Fiscal Sustainability and Transparency</i>	<i>Strong Businesses and Vibrant Downtown</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Homelessness Response</i>	<i>Public Safety and Community Well-Being</i>	<i>Natural and Built Infrastructure</i>	<i>Thriving Organization</i>
Develop and implement an Explorer Program to mentor local youth and encourage engagement in the fire service profession 🏆❤️					X		X
Implement a department Drone program to support emergency response operations, training exercises and event support ❤️	X				X		X
Update emergency planning documentation: Coastal Incident Response Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, Training and Exercise Annex, Disaster Cost Recovery Annex, Care and Shelter Annex 🌲🏆❤️	X	X		X	X	X	X
Plan for and identify funding sources to address deferred facilities maintenance projects ❤️	X				X		X
Explore lifeguard service expansion opportunities within the County ❤️	X				X		X
Partner with HR to initiate annual skin cancer screenings for all operational staff 🏆❤️					X		X
Establish regional coastal safety and resilience program including acquisition of a fire boat program and ongoing coordination with outside partners to support regional emergency response 🌲🏆❤️	X				X	X	X
Promote, train, and recruit new lifeguards ❤️					X		X
Develop enhanced Marine Safety programs and training, including a Swift Water Response Team and Technical Rope Rescue Training ❤️					X		X
Negotiate and implement new service contract and Fire Station #4 facility lease with UCSC 🏆❤️	X				X		X
Research shared service and consolidation opportunities within the County 🌲🏆❤️	X				X	X	X
Continue to develop succession planning for anticipated staffing attrition throughout the department, including leadership development training for battalion chiefs, captains, and other line staff 🏆❤️						X	X
Complete First Responder Fee study and City ordinance for cost recovery in high-risk rescues and explore implementation options ❤️	X					X	X
Outfit and deploy transport capable Rescue Unit ❤️	X				X		X

Workload Indicators

Workload Indicators	Strategic Plan Focus Area	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Goal
# of fire investigations conducted 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	29	27	36	35	35
# of construction project plan check reviews conducted 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	1,039	816	919	950	950
# of construction project inspections 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	324	387	445	450	450
# of life safety consultations provided 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	489	555	593	600	600
# of lifeguard contacts with the public 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	158,092	221,347	218,710	244,000	250,000
# of 911 calls for service 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	9,784	9,438	9,070	9,500	10,000

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	Strategic Plan Focus Area	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Goal
% of state-mandated fire inspections conducted within the required timeframe 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	74%	80%	100%	100%	100%
% of fire investigations conducted within the required timeframe 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
911 calls for service responded to within 8 minutes 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	89%	89%	90%	100%	100%
CruzAware Registrations 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	-	-	3,870	4,600	5,000
Average Turnout Time: Fire 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	1:31	1:28	1:14	1:15	1:20
Average Turnout Time: Medical 🧡	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	1:04	1:06	1:12	1:13	1:00

Performance Measures	Strategic Plan Focus Area	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Goal
NOAA Weather Radios Distributed 🏹❤️	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	N/A	N/A	N/A	254	400
Community Outreach Events / Building Emergency Preparedness 🏹❤️	Public Safety and Community Well-Being	N/A	N/A	10	12	15

Staffing

Positions	FY 2024 Amended*	FY 2025 Amended*	FY 2026 Amended*	FY 2027 Proposed	FY 2027 Change
Administrative Assistant I/II	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Administrative Assistant III	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Chief of Fire Department	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Deputy Fire Marshal	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Fire Battalion Chief	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	-
Fire Captain	16.00	16.00	16.00	16.00	-
Fire Division Chief	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	-
Fire Engineer	15.00	15.00	15.00	15.00	-
Fire Prevention Inspector II	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Fire Prevention Technician	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-
Firefighter	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	-
Marine Safety Officer	1.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	-
Principal Management Analyst	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	-
Total	70.00	70.00	72.00	72.00	-

* "Amended" refers to the FTE count as of the adopted budget of the indicated fiscal year, plus any adjustments authorized by City Council within the course of the year

Budget Summary - Fire

		Fiscal Year 2026			Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed*	
		Fiscal Year 2025 Actuals*	Adopted Budget*	Amended Budget*		Year-End Estimate*
EXPENDITURES BY CHARACTER:						
Personnel Services		23,925,768	25,073,000	25,362,633	24,266,820	26,247,041
Services, Supplies, and Other Charges		4,418,007	5,075,278	5,212,161	5,419,461	4,793,893
Capital Outlay		123,447	-	149,472	156,123	115,000
Total Expenditures		28,467,222	30,148,278	30,724,266	29,842,404	31,155,934
EXPENDITURES BY ACTIVITY:						
Fire Administration	2201	3,612,834	4,129,695	4,213,911	4,143,505	3,873,973
Fire/EMS Operations	2202	21,395,380	22,113,446	22,585,293	22,229,514	23,234,456
Fire Prevention	2203	1,683,339	1,645,698	1,655,958	1,481,662	1,725,071
Office of Emergency Services (OES)	2205	43,867	132,382	132,382	84,642	132,382
Fire Strike Team	2206	462,576	750,000	750,000	416,360	750,000
<i>Subtotal General Fund</i>		<i>27,197,995</i>	<i>28,771,221</i>	<i>29,337,544</i>	<i>28,355,683</i>	<i>29,715,882</i>
Marine Rescue Program	2204	1,332,070	1,377,057	1,386,722	1,486,721	1,440,053
<i>Subtotal Other General Funds</i>		<i>1,332,070</i>	<i>1,377,057</i>	<i>1,386,722</i>	<i>1,486,721</i>	<i>1,440,053</i>
Total Expenditures		28,530,065	30,148,278	30,724,266	29,842,404	31,155,934
RESOURCES BY FUND:						
General Fund	101	5,928,164	5,961,937	6,089,284	6,442,133	6,460,104
Municipal Wharf	104	11,387	12,500	12,500	12,500	12,500
Public Safety Impact Fee - Fire Fund	217	187,107	125,000	125,000	125,000	200,000
Technology Surcharge	295	6,671	5,200	6,800	6,300	6,500
Total Resources		6,133,328	6,104,637	6,233,584	6,585,933	6,679,104
NET GENERAL FUND COST:		(22,396,737)	(24,043,641)	(24,490,682)	(23,256,471)	(24,476,830)

	<u>FY 2025</u>	<u>FY 2026</u>	<u>FY 2027</u>
TOTAL AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL:	70.00	72.00	72.00

*Sums may have discrepancies due to rounding

Organization Chart

