

THE SALMON CREEK
WATERSHED COUNCIL

NEIGHBORHOOD HANDBOOK

Western Sonoma County

WELCOMES YOU

The Salmon Creek
Watershed Council's

Neighborhood Handbook

Western Sonoma County

compiled by

Noël Bouck, Diane Masura, Bob Fink,
David Shatkin

This Handbook is available online at
www.salmoncreekwater.org/

DISCLAIMER

This booklet has been crafted by volunteers who have learned from their personal experience and made every effort to provide accurate information. However, as communities and organizations evolve, information changes. The authors assume no responsibility for errors, omissions, or for any damages resulting from the use of the information contained herein. The authors specifically disclaim any responsibility for any liability, loss, or risk, personal or otherwise, which is incurred as a consequence, directly or indirectly, of the use and application of any of the contents of this booklet.

We are grateful for advice on key portions of this booklet from Alistair Bleifuss and from the Gold Ridge RCD.

Cover Photo by Steve Killey

Graphic layout by Plan/A Design
planagraphics.com

Spring, 2018

Revised, Spring 2020 during the Covid-19 Pandemic. At this time it is unclear whether or not many of the traditional events and opportunities cited here will continue after restrictions are removed.

CONTENTS

-  **INTRODUCTION:** **PAGE 1**
History of the area with sources for plant and animal lists
-  **SETTING UP YOUR HOME:** **PAGE 8**
What you need to know to do the paper work required to settle in
-  **LAND STEWARDSHIP:** **PAGE 13**
How to live gently on your land and sustain its beauty for the future
-  **JOINING YOUR COMMUNITY:** **PAGE 29**
Opportunities for volunteering and participating in the arts, sports, and recreation
-  **EMERGENCY CONTACTS:** **PAGE 41**
For problems should they occur
-  **GENERAL ASSISTANCE:** **PAGE 50**
Aid for when you need help getting on with your life

INTRODUCTION

Hello from the Salmon Creek Watershed Council to all of you who live in our watershed and its surrounds. The council is a volunteer organization whose overall purpose is to build a vibrant sense of place while learning to live gently on the land. It is our aim to expand the community's knowledge about the forests, creeks, beaches and prairies that we all call home. We hope that this handbook will make it easier for you to be good stewards of the plant, animal and human communities that make West Sonoma County so magical.

Map

Nature organizes her landscapes into watersheds, geographic areas of land within which rainfall is collected and then released into a body of water. The Salmon Creek Watershed, outlined on the frontispiece map, consists of 35.3 square miles of coastal ridges and valleys west of Sebastopol, CA. Here rain from the ridges collects in a series of tributary streams where salmon and steelhead spawn before it flows into the main stem of Salmon Creek that carries it on to the ocean. This booklet is designed for residents of this watershed and its surrounding towns and watersheds.

A Short History of Our Area

People have lived and prospered on this land for thousands of years. The earliest artifacts date to 6000 BCE. Large Miwok middens exist from the seashore to the ridge tops; buried metates, arrowheads, and spear heads can still be recovered from disturbed land. Throughout California, the native people

carefully managed the land, planting and harvesting and using fire to their advantage. The Coast Miwok met annually at Duncan's Point with the Pomo, whose territory was to the north, to agree on hunting and gathering rights. For century after century the Salmon Creek Watershed and other nearby lands sustainably supported populations close in number to those living here now. We write this booklet in part to urge current residents to adopt practices that led to sustainability in the past.

The first Europeans to attempt farming the area were Russians who arrived in 1808 seeking trade and food as they expanded their sea otter harvesting down the California coast. They built an adobe in Bodega and planted crops including apples in Freestone and along Coleman Valley creek. They also brought smallpox and other diseases that devastated the native peoples whose labor they needed. Ultimately unsuccessful in raising food and having depleted the number of marine mammals, the Russians sold what they could to General Vallejo, John Sutter, and others and departed in 1841.

Logging began in 1834 with a large harvest near Freestone for General Vallejo. In response to growth of the San Francisco Bay Area initiated by the Gold Rush, lumber mills opened. The first was near Occidental in 1859. Potato farms, dairies, and orchards followed. By 1876 a narrow-gauge railroad carried their products from Cazadero through Occidental, Freestone, and Valley Ford to the ferry in Marin County. In 1882, the Spechter brothers planted some of the first grapes at the top of Joy Road, founding the Indian Mound Winery. In the 1920's

Sonoma County was eighth in the nation in farm exports, including eggs, prunes, hops, apples, dairy, and livestock.

Now homes and ranches are scattered throughout the West County forests and prairies. Thanks to the actions of Bodega Land Trust, the Sonoma Land Trust, State and County Park districts, the Coastal Commission, and the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, 22 percent of the central 35.3 square mile Salmon Creek Watershed is now protected from further development.

This means that roughly 78 percent of the landscape we enjoy is in private hands, our hands. It is controlled by those of us who live here. If we wish to maintain the look, the feel, the lifestyle we treasure, it is incumbent upon us to be good stewards of our lands, to live in harmony with the natural world that we moved here to enjoy.

Please use this booklet for sources of information on how you can live lightly, gracefully and sustainably on your land, while maintaining a healthy ecosystem for all West County residents, the plants, the animals, and the people.

Local Histories

A SALMON CREEK HISTORY AND ORAL HISTORY SUMMARY

BY CATHERINE HARRISON

salmoncreekwater.org/pub/Salmon_Creek_Oral_History_Project.pdf

SALMON CREEK WATERSHED TIMELINE

salmoncreekwater.org/timeline.html

RANCHO BODEGA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND ARCHIVES

ranchobodega.org

Historical Resources

WESTERN SONOMA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM
AND ARCHIVES

261 South Main Street, Sebastopol.

wschsgrf.org/

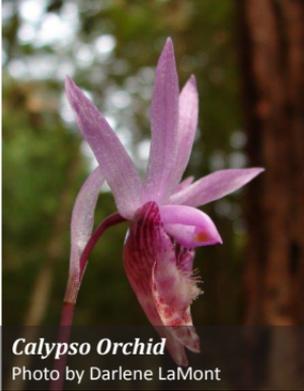
TOMALES REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER

26701 Highway 1, Tomales.

tomaleshistory.com

SONOMA COUNTY HISTORICAL RESOURCES ON THE WEB
sonomalibrary.org/locations/sonoma-county-history-and-genealogy-library

Flora and Fauna of West Sonoma County



Plants

From March to June on forest floors and along streams these two - three inch fairy slipper orchids sometimes bloom in profusion.

For details on local plants and endemic and threatened species see milobaker.cnps.org/index.php/conservation/rare-plants

Plants found on the hills around Occidental are listed at oaec.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Wildlands-Stewardship-Plan-08.17.2015.pdf, on page 29. Lists of all plants found in Sonoma County can be found at milobaker.cnps.org/index.php/nativeplants/plant-lists/



Birds

These woodpeckers are the size of a crow and perhaps the most striking bird in North America. Often heard before seen, they sound like someone knocking on your door as they drill rectangular holes in dead trees in search of carpenter ants. They are sometimes attracted to suet.

For information about local birds see the local chapter of Audubon Society madroneaudubon.org/. For details about abundance, seasonal occurrence, and habitats *Birds of Sonoma County California* can be purchased from Redwood Region Ornithological Society at rros.org.

Fish and other animals



Coho Salmon
Photo by Sierra Cantor

In the spring, young coho salmon begin to emerge from the gravel of our creeks. These tiny fish spend a year or two growing here in the fresh

water. To survive through the rainless summer months they need cool, shady, oxygenated water and deep pools with logs to hide under. Essential oxygen comes from the trickle of water that seeps down from the surrounding hillsides to run through the almost dry streambeds. When the winter rains come, salmon fry need places to retreat from the fast, silty currents that sweep from the hills to the ocean. After a year or two, the young fish gather in the estuary, and when the rain and ocean waves have opened the mouth of the creek to the ocean, the young salmon swim out into the sea. At three years of age, they find their way back to the stream where they hatched and in its shallow riffles form gravel nests and lay their eggs, renewing the cycle.

For information about local animals, as well as plants, that occur in Sonoma County see inaturalist.org/places/sonoma-county/ or for a specific West County animal list go to oaec.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Wildlands-Stewardship-Plan-08.17.2015.pdf, page 37.

Flora and fauna to be wary of

Poison oak is a native plant that bothered the Native Americans just as it does us. All parts of the plant can release a toxic oily resin that causes an itchy rash. The resin is not soluble in water hence hard to wash off so it clings to pets, garden tools, and clothes. Very hot water will temporarily quell the itch. Topical alcohol may help. Leaves are arranged in three and turn a lovely red in the fall. Do not burn it as breathing its smoke is dangerous to eyes, nose, throat, and lungs.

Stinging nettle, a four-to six-foot-tall leafy summer plant in the rose family, has serrated soft green leaves with fine hairs that come off when touched, imbed in skin, and cause a painful sting that usually lasts about 24 hours. Scratching makes it worse. If allowed to dry for 10 min., soap and water will then decrease the rash. Baking soda, vinegar, leaves of jewelweed, and even spit help somewhat.

Large wildlife are definitely around as our woods are cougar and brown bear habitat. Large animals have large territories (a male mountain lion can cover about 250 sq. miles), so sharing is not hard. Although skittish, these animals can be attracted to homes by uncovered garbage, pet food, or uncovered compost piles.

SETTING UP YOUR HOME

If you are new to the area, as soon as the moving van pulls away, there are a thousand things that have to be done at once. The farther you have come, the more daunting the task. We offer the following tedious information to help you power through the necessities of setting up so that as soon as possible you will be able to sit down, lean back, and relax comfortably into your new life in West County.

Voter registration. If you are at least 18 years old, you can register to vote by email at [trov-voterreg@sonoma-county.org/](mailto:trov-voterreg@sonoma-county.org) or online at sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration/. Re-registration is required after any change in name, residence, or party. You can also register to vote when you obtain or renew your California driver's license.

Driver's license and car registration. Department of Motor Vehicles, 2570 Corby Avenue, Santa Rosa, is open Monday to Friday 8am-5pm. Call **800-777-0133** for appointment or go online at <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/field-office/santa-rosa/>.

An alternate is Petaluma DMV, 715 Southpoint Boulevard, Petaluma. **800-777-0133**, dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/fo/offices/fieldoffice?number=634

After establishing residence by registering to vote, filing homeowner's property tax exemption, or utilizing in-state tuition, new residents have 10 days to apply for a California driver's license. Vehicles must be registered in California within 20 days after you become a resident or get a job.

Water/septic hook-up. If available at your property, inquire at Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department at **707-565-1900**.

Land line phone. It may still be useful if a fire or earthquake takes out the towers or cables cell phones depend on. Go to att.com/local/phone/california/santa-rosa/ or call **844-723-0252**.

Cell phone and internet. Service can be spotty as various providers attempt to cover our diverse area. Availability depends on exactly where you live so asking a neighbor is your best bet.

Trash. Several commercial companies collect garbage and recycling and yard waste weekly (see website at zerowastesonoma.gov/disposal-options/whos-my-waste-hauler) but it is also possible to handle it all yourself. Plant and food waste can be composted if protected from animal predation. One can haul garbage to either the Guerneville Transfer Station, 13450 Pocket Canyon Drive off Hwy 116, Guerneville (closed Sunday and Wednesday) or the Central Disposal site, 500 Meham Road, Petaluma (closed Sunday). The central site will recycle reusable household items, also bottles, cans, plastic, paints and scrap metal. They will dispose safely of household toxins on certain days.

Drugs can be safely discarded at locations in the county listed at www.safemedicinedisposal.org/dropoff-locations. Occidental Health Center, 3820 Main Street, Occidental will provide bags to mail discards to disposal facility.

Household items from clothes to furniture can be repurposed in Sebastopol by donating to Sutter Hospice Thrift Store, 748 Gravenstein Highway N, or to Goodwill, 6826 Sebastopol Avenue.

Wood can be burned but there are strict limits on when and how. A burn permit is required (see below p. 25). Several Santa Rosa companies will recycle wood for a small price. The county has a web site with advice on how and where to recycle almost everything you can think of at sonomacounty.ca.gov/_templates_portal/ServiceListing.aspx?id=2147503569.

Pets. Your dog will require a license to be renewed yearly and a current rabies vaccination. See sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/License-Your-Dog/. Throughout West County dogs must be leashed unless on your own property or at a fenced dog park. The law requires that you pick up dog poop in parks and along trails. See sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/ for more information.

Your cat will not need a license but as even some of the best-fed cats often can't resist killing a bird or two a week, consider an indoor cat or, if yours roams free, a bell or collar can help a bit.

Places of worship

BUDDHIST GROUPS IN BAY AREA are listed at www.urbandharma.org/udharma4/nocenters.html

BODEGA BAY UNION CHURCH (Christian) 1320 Bay View Street, Bodega Bay. Call 707-875-3559. bodegabaychurch.org/

CONGREGATION SHOMREI TORAH 2600 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa. Call **707-578-5519**. www.cstsr.org/

ENMANJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE 1200 Gravenstein Highway South, Sebastopol. Call **707-823-2252**. enmanjitemple.com

FISHERMAN'S CHAPEL BY THE BAY (nondenominational) 1370 Bodega Avenue, Bodega Bay. fishermanschapelbythebay.org

ISLAMIC, see Islamic Society of Santa Rosa, 545 Mendocino Avenue, Santa Rosa. Call **707 525-1144**. facebook.com/Islamic-Society-of-Santa-Rosa-585004638231717/

OCCIDENTAL COMMUNITY CHURCH (Christian) 3637 Church Street, Occidental. Call **707- 874-3501**.
occidentalcommunitychurch.org

SAINT PHILIP CATHOLIC CHURCH 3720 Bohemian Highway,
Occidental
and

SAINT TERESA CATHOLIC CHURCH 17242 Bodega Highway, Bodega.
Call **707- 874-3812**. stphilipstteresa.org

SPIRITUAL GATHERINGS are listed each month at The Sonoma County Gazette under 'Faith.' sonomacountygazette.com/

West County school districts

HARMONY UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT (K TO EIGHT) 1935 Bohemian Highway, Occidental. Call **707-874-1205**.
www.harmonyusd.org/

WEST SONOMA COUNTY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
462 Johnson Street, Sebastopol. Call **707 824-6403**.
wscuhsd.k12.ca.us/

SHORELINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT 1200 Canon Street, Bodega Bay. Call **707-875-2724**. bodegabay.shorelineunified.org/

Survival kit

This relatively isolated part of the county has, in the past, survived devastating earthquakes and fires. You may suddenly need to take care of yourself, family, pets, and livestock for two weeks or more without any outside help. Details on what you would need are at occidental-ca.org/oep.html. As you set up your home please complete these four tasks:

- Arrange with someone outside the area to serve as an emergency contact for your family.
- Stockpile enough food, water (1 gallon/person/day), and essential medicines to last for 2 weeks.
- Become aware of exit routes. See frontispiece map for roads; quiz neighbors for emergency-only routes.
- Prepare for an extended electrical outage.

LAND STEWARDSHIP

As you move about your land you may find obsidian shards, arrowheads, perhaps a metate, left behind by the Native Americans who tended your land with care for eight to ten thousand years before you arrived. It is now your turn to care for this land before you pass it on to the next tender. The principles of good stewardship are no longer part of accumulated cultural lore as they were in native populations but often must be learned anew by each landowner. Below are some rules of thumb, some sources for advice, and some alerts to dangers that will help you to care for your land and share its resources with the denizens of the ecosystem you have joined by settling here. Many questions you may have are answered in a summary of best management practices for small rural properties available at: sonomarcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/SmallAcreagesPublicationFull.pdf.

Living with Water Scarcity

In West County, water is a precious resource. It is a commons that we share with all our neighbors, from the people next door to the pumas that roam our woods, from the salmon in our creeks to the redwoods in our forests. For the health and survival of all living things in our part of Earth, keep two things in mind:

First, use as little water as you can, both indoors and outdoors. Domestic use can be as low as 25 gallons/person/day if water conservation is taken seriously. Short showers and purchasing water saving-appliances, especially toilets and washing machines, can help. Outdoors, hand or drip watering your

gardens and landscaping with less thirsty natives can help immensely.

Second, manage with care the surplus that winter rains supply. We have been inspired over the years by our neighbor Brock Dolman's motto for using storm water: slow it, spread it, sink it, save it. A booklet that explains how to use winter rain water to protect and replenish surface water and groundwater resources, offset well-water use, reduce erosion and pollution, and provide water security for your property can be found at: sonomarcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Slow-it-Spread-it-Sink-it-Store-it.pdf. For more advice for owners of small properties, visit: oaec.org/our-work/projects-and-partnerships/water-institute/publications.

Protecting Your Creek

If salmon and other wildlife in West County are to survive, it is essential that individual landowners, who control over 90 percent of our creek side property, care for their creeks. The Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (goldridgercd.org) provides advice and assistance on how best to manage a creek to ensure both healthy habitats for its creatures and safety for infrastructure and people.

By law, a wide undisturbed buffer zone must be maintained along your creek. This riparian, or streamside, corridor prevents erosion, assists with recharge of clean groundwater in your well, and supports wildlife, providing shade to help keep water cool enough for the fish while providing shelter and migration

pathways for terrestrial animals. Along the main stem of Salmon Creek, downstream from Occidental to Bodega, the riparian corridor set back is approximately 200 feet from top of bank, and 50 to 100 feet for most other streams in West County. Visit: sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Regulations/Riparian-Corridors/.

By law these riparian areas are designated streamside conservation areas in which shade trees and native plants are protected and agriculture and structures are not permitted. Within the creek, rocks, fallen trees, and other large wood pieces provide essential habitat and food for young fish. These should not be removed without a permit. Any work in the creek or within the Riparian Corridor along county streams requires regulatory approval and may trigger a need for one or often more permits. Figure out what is required at sonomarcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/PermittingOnepager2014.pdf

Please do not divert water from streams, particularly during the summer and fall. Even if you have a permit to do so (which is required), please minimize your water use.

Caring for Redwood Trees

Many of our redwoods are 100-150 years old. Although they look like adults, they are in the teen years of their life, so please treat them gently. Be careful not to crush their roots. Redwood roots run outward in the topsoil for up to 100 feet, interlocking with roots of nearby trees to provide stability for these giants that lack a taproot. If limbs overhang your house, hire a tree climber to remove dead branches every few years. But beware

of over-pruning as lower branches can break the fall of higher ones, limiting damage. Avoid topping as regrown tops may be less vigorous and more likely to topple on you; also topping may create an entry for disease. Each year about one third of redwood needles brown and fall off, creating duff—a blanket of mulch—that should be left on the ground where it protects the shallow roots and creates the acid soil environment that the redwoods need.

Keeping Oak Trees Healthy

Because our venerable native oak species are adapted to our dry summers, they do not need and do not tolerate summer watering. The older, and thus more beautiful they are, the less they tolerate changes in their environment. Root protection zone (half again as large as the drip line) must be protected, so avoid trenching, filling, and paving within the root protection zone. Prune only dead or diseased branches. More extensive advice is on line at: californiaoaks.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CareOfCAsNativeOaks.pdf.

Many oaks in our county are sick or dying from a fungus that causes Sudden Oak Death syndrome. Dead trees should be removed; live ones can often be treated. To learn more, visit nature.berkeley.edu/garbelottowp/?page_id=117.

Caring for Grasslands

The native California perennial grassland, or coastal prairie, persists as a strong component in many grasslands across

Sonoma County. Throughout history, grasslands have been a source of the staple grains in humans' diets and were key in the domestication of livestock and the development of agriculture. In recent decades, we have come to understand better how the root systems of grasses, particularly long-lived perennial species, hold water in the soil and allow it to percolate into underground aquifers. Recent studies have demonstrated that management of grasslands through periodic, carefully timed grazing can capture CO₂ from the atmosphere and sequester it in the soil. For grasslands to continue these valuable eco-services effectively, they must be protected from overgrazing and also from under-grazing, which supports the encroachment of shrubs and trees. Mowing and weeding can be useful management tools on small parcels, but if you own a larger parcel you may wish to seek advice from rangeland professionals. For ideas about how to maintain this important resource, visit: cnga.org/prairie or contact Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District: [707-823-5244](tel:707-823-5244), goldridgercd.org

Keeping up Your Private Roads

The most serious threat to the fish in our creeks during the rainy winter is sediment that washes into the creeks from dirt roads and poorly placed culverts that have deteriorated. For watershed health it is important that all road surfaces be disconnected from streams. This can be done with a combination of techniques to spread out surface drainage by shaping the road surface or installing rolling dips and other devices that prevent water from concentrating and gathering

speed before it drains. The Gold Ridge RCD provides free technical advice to landowners on road drainage improvements (goldridgercd.org). Best practices advise that roads that are used year round should be paved with permeable material that covers the surface completely. Unsurfaced roads are best left unused during the rainy season and, if not essential, professionally decommissioned. See also napawatersheds.org/roads.

Gardening

As you introduce plants to your West County garden remember that native plants place less demands on your well water. Avoid planting invasive species that are aggressive, competitive, difficult to control or eradicate, or are fire hazards. For fire safety, keep plantings well away from your house, especially if it is wooden. Identify invasive plants at www.marinrcd.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MSWMA_Invasive-Weeds_eng.pdf. For fire safe planting advice go to firesafemarin.org/landscaping.

Excellent help on garden maintenance is also available from Sonoma County Master Gardeners. These are volunteers who are trained and certified by the University of California. The Master Gardeners' mission is to provide unbiased, high quality, science-based information to noncommercial home gardeners in Sonoma County. They consult on such topics as soil and plant nutrition, irrigation, weed-insect-disease control, vegetables, trees, berries, shrub, lawns, flowers, home composting, and pesticide alternatives. Visit sonomamg.ucanr.edu/.

Their Water-Wise gardening site is: sonomamg.ucanr.edu/projects/Water-wise_Gardening/.

Day Labor Assistance

Help with chores from gardening to ditch digging to house cleaning can be arranged at the Graton Day Labor Center, 2981 Bowen Street, Graton, CA, [707- 829-1864](tel:707-829-1864) or gratondaylabor.org.

Having or Not Having Fences

In West County we share our lands with a rich array of wildlife that must travel to find food, shelter and water. Build the fences you need in such a way as to minimize migration barriers to our local wildlife. Consider hedgerows or moveable electric fences instead of permanent fencing. Fence only a minimal area that does not block wildlife trails or wildlife's access to water. Keep fence height lower than 40 inches (3.3 feet), maintain a bottom passage of 16 inches, and use boards or smooth wire with no barbs that can impale birds and deer. The local Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District can give personal advice on these issues. Visit: goldridgercd.org. For the succinct *Landowner's Guide to Fences and Wildlife*, see: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSCconsumption/download?cid=nrcseprd1080607&ext=pdf

On most residential properties in West County, one is allowed to build a fence without a permit up to three feet high in the front of the home and up to six feet tall in the rear so long as the fence does not impinge on a creek's riparian zone. Taller fences

may need a use permit, building permit, and/or require a significant setback from the road. Rules vary from property to property depending on zoning. Agricultural properties have their own rules. You can identify your zone by address at sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Zoning-Information/ and from this page you can access the exact development criteria. Or to contact Permit Sonoma call **707-565-1900** with a specific question. They will generally return your call within the day.

Moving Vineyards towards Sustainability

Sonoma County is focused on becoming the nation's first 100 percent sustainable wine region (sonomawinegrape.org). Irrigated vineyards may use 20-90 gallons of water for every bottle of wine produced. In our water-scarce area, saving water is one reason to choose sustainably produced wine and to support the following sustainability certifications. These are, in order of increasing rigor:

SONOMA COUNTY SUSTAINABLE WINE LABEL recognizes wineries certified by CSWA, SIP, Fish Friendly Farming, or Lodi Rules.

CALIFORNIA SUSTAINABLE WINEGROWING ASSOCIATION (CSWA) depends on audited self-assessments and stimulates continual improvement in conserving water and energy and maintaining healthy soil.

SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE CERTIFICATION (SIP) has more rigorous measurements and certification including prohibition of more dangerous pesticides.

USDA ORGANIC prohibits GMOs, sulfites (a common preservative) and requires all additives to be organic.

DEMETER CERTIFIED BIODYNAMIC focuses on low-intervention practices and soil and vine health.

Repairing Your Home

If you replace windows or doors with others of same size and location or do minor repairs of interior walls or plumbing fixtures that do not involve concealed pipes, traps, vents, or rearrangements of fixtures, you probably do not require a building permit. Most other changes do require a permit. Rules are updated often and you may be subject to additional regulations beyond those of the building permit involving well, septic, drainage and zoning issues. All work must be done to code. So, before embarking on a project, it pays to check with Permit Sonoma: sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Permits/ or call **707-565-1900**.

Determining Zoning Rules

Zoning provides for orderly and beneficial land use through regulations aimed at protecting scenic, recreational, and natural resources. In our unincorporated western area, most properties are zoned Agriculture & Residential or Coastal. Each zone is overlaid with land use regulations. Each allows many of the same things (like keeping up to 50 chickens), but there are also many differences. Before you embark on any new projects, find out how your property is zoned as this defines usage rules.

Look for your zoning designation: sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Services/Parcel-Report/. Then check out the associated regulations for your zone: <http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Services/Zoning-and-Parcel-Report/Zoning-Codes/>.

Obtaining a Building Permit

Find out what permits any major house repairs or building projects will require before beginning work by calling PRMD at **707-565-1900**. Although permits are needed for many projects, others are exempt. A useful guide is available at sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/BPC-005-When-Is-a-Building-Permit-Not-Required/.

However, if you plan to repair or upgrade a well (sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Eng-and-Constr/Well-and-Septic/) or septic system or plan to remodel your home or build additional units, a permit is required. Most swimming pools also need permits unless above ground and <5000 gal. Accessory dwelling units (granny units) are allowed, but they are subject to many qualifications and limitations see sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Regulations/Housing/Housing-Types/Accessory-Units-and-Junior-Units/Accessory-Dwelling-Units/. Currently units can vary from 225 to 1200 square feet and must have provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation. If you run into permitting problems, some help is available from the Customer Service Ombudsman at **707-565- 8350** or sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Ombudsperson/.

Keeping Your Land Fire Safe

In western Sonoma County, we live in a high fire risk area. We are responsible for keeping ourselves, families, and homes fire safe. Each of us also has a responsibility to keep the community safe from fire risks coming from our own property. Most importantly, we need to know how to prepare for a wildfire and what to do during a fire emergency. In 2019, there was a mandatory evacuation order issued here after dark. The fire was contained before it had advanced to our area. Having prepared earlier to be ready to leave quickly and safely was a huge comfort.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, also known as CAL FIRE, has many online resources to help you prepare. The Ready for Wildfire website, www.readyforwildfire.org/, is a great place to start. You will find what to do to prepare for wildfire, to prevent wildfire, and much more. Fire Safe Sonoma also hosts an advisory web site www.firesafesonoma.org/. Another resource can be the community organized volunteer groups like Fire Safe Occidental that are a focus point for community planning on how to prevent wildfire and what to do when they occur. Fire Safe Occidental maintains a website containing much important information: firesafeoccidental.org/.

Today's fire season usually runs from mid-summer to the first heavy rains, and may shift in response to global climate change, but keeping our lands safe from fire demands year-round attention in the following ways:

In All Seasons, when maintaining your home, pay particular attention to changes that will harden your house, decreasing the likelihood that it will burn down should a fire occur.

readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/get-ready/defensible-space/

In Early Summer, before fire season is in full swing, pay special attention to creating Defensible Space around your home. This will decrease the chance of the house catching fire and reduce the risk to fire fighters defending it.

readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/get-ready/defensible-space/ CAL FIRE will help evaluate what you have done to protect your property. They maintain a seasonal fire station near Occidental (707-874-3668) on Graton Rd. Sonoma County offers a free chipper program to clean up carefully prepared piles of wood < 4" in diameter. 707-565-6070 sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Fire-Prevention/Vegetation-Management-Services/Curbside-Chipper-Program/Chipper-Program-Guidelines/

By Mid-Summer, sign up to receive timely notices of area fires. (See incidents.readyforwildfire.org/.) Bookmark the web site with real time feeds from cameras on nearby peaks where one can look for telltale smoke and check out rumors. alertwildfire.org/northbay/index.html?camera=Axis-Jackson

During fire season, especially when local fire stations display red warning flags, you must be prepared to leave at once on short notice. You will need an evacuation list of things to do before leaving (turn off propane, bring indoors outdoor

flammable furniture, etc.). Have at hand an emergency supply kit (a go-bag with tools, clothes, papers, pet food, etc.) readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/go-evacuation-guide/evacuation-steps/

If You Have Evacuated, you will want information on how things are going at home. One can determine the position and follow the progress of active fires at CalFire's incident report, see fire.ca.gov/incidents/. Fire maps can be found for the county at socoemergency.org/ and at the Press Democrat www.pressdemocrat.com/article/news/live-map-of-wildfires-burning-in-sonoma-napa-counties/. If fires threaten areas around Santa Rosa, then the radio station KSRO at 1350 AM, 94.5 or 103.5 FM will broadcast crucial updates.

Fortunately, there are many fire departments and stations in our area of Sonoma County, one in almost every village. Primarily manned by volunteers, they all support one another. They are called to local service by dialing **911**. They are asked to help with large wildfires by government groups like Cal Fire.

Obtaining a Burn Permit

To burn anywhere in West County requires a burn permit and following the permit rules. If you live on the coastal side of Occidental, Bodega, Forestville burn permits come from nosocoair.net/permits.html/ or call **707-433-5911**. If you live to the south and east of these towns, burn permits come from baaqmd.gov/permits/open-burn, **415-749-4900**. If you are on the border, check exactly which entity controls your particular

property at sonomacounty.ca.gov/Air-Quality/. You will also probably require a yearly burn permit from Cal Fire burnpermit.fire.ca.gov/apply-for-a-permit/. Even if it is windy, you may be allowed to burn, but you must monitor the fire constantly with hose at the ready and be sure it is extinguished within the allotted time frame. Be sure to start your burn from the top of the pile so that creatures that have sheltered there can escape unharmed.

Insuring the Preservation of Your Property

There are organizations working to protect the rural scenic character of the land for future generations. They provide conservation easements which are legal agreements wherein you retain ownership of land while they insure that it is permanently protected and preserved. These easements not only sustain the beautiful creeks, forests, and prairies of West County but also may provide the landowner tax savings.

BODEGA LAND TRUST protects land primarily in the 35-square-mile Salmon Creek Watershed. www.bodegalandtrust.org/

SONOMA LAND TRUST conserves scenic, natural, agricultural, and open space for the future of Sonoma County. sonomalandtrust.org/

SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT permanently protects the diverse agricultural, natural resources, and scenic open space lands of Sonoma County for future generations. www.sonomaopenspace.org

Keeping Pollution at a Minimum

For the health of all who live here, please manage pests intelligently without using harmful chemicals, (see ipm.ucanr.edu/), minimize fertilizer use, keep grease out of the sink and septic, dispose of pet waste properly so it does not contaminate local creeks, dispose properly of drugs/ pharmaceuticals. Obtain mail-in bags at Occidental Health Service lobby at 3820 Main Street in Occidental, or at Sebastopol Police Station 6850 Laguna Parkway in Sebastopol, or at Mecham Road dump. Other household toxics take to Mecham Road dump. For more information on household waste management, visit the Zero Waste Sonoma at zerowastesonoma.gov/.

Getting Help with Neighborhood Problems

Abandoned vehicles and property violations by neighbors that are a safety hazard can be reported to Code Enforcement at Permit Sonoma (707-565- 1992) and will be investigated. sonomacounty.ca.gov/PRMD/Eng-and-Constr/Code-Enforcement/Submit-Complaint/. If you have a vacation rental complaint about units in your neighborhood, they can be reported to the property manager. Permit Sonoma (see above) will tell you how to find the manager. Or you may call the Sheriff's non-emergency number 707-869-0202. If you feel your safety is in jeopardy, call 911.

Road issues like pot holes, dangerous trees, or sign visibility can

be reported with accompanying photo via an app called SoCoReportIt. Learn more at: sonomacounty.ca.gov/Services/SoCo-Report-it/Submit-a-Service-Request/.

Seeking Financial Help with Land Stewardship Projects

THE GOLD RIDGE RESEARCH CONSERVATION DISTRICT is only a phone call away. They use grant monies to fund projects that enhance the natural resources of this area. Contact Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, 2776 Sullivan Road, Sebastopol. Call **707-823-5244** or visit: goldridgercd.org.

THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Natural Resources Conservation Service has an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices on agricultural land and nonindustrial private forestland. nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/eqip

THE SONOMA COUNTY OPEN SPACE DISTRICT maintains a list of agencies that provide advice and grant funds to help maintain county lands at <https://www.sonomaopenspace.org/protect-your-land/landowner-resources/>.

JOINING YOUR COMMUNITY

In this part of Sonoma County, there are many ways to discover hidden corners of the landscape, to meet individuals who share your interests, and to join the locals as they exercise, relax and do what needs to be done to keep our community going.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers form the backbone of many local organizations providing services for residents and visitors. A listing of current openings for volunteers appears each month in the Sonoma County Gazette. Pick one up free at stores, restaurants, or shopping areas. Or search online under Calendar/Volunteer at sonomacountygazette.com/. County-wide volunteer opportunities can be found at 211sonoma.org/. Local opportunities that range from gardening to fundraising to ambulance work are listed below:

Gardening

Occidental Arts and Ecology Center invites workers into their mother garden most Wednesdays from 10 am to 5 pm. oaec.org/events/volunteer-days/

Burbank Farm uses volunteers to help preserve and restore the Sebastopol farm where Luther Burbank developed most of the over 800 new plants that he introduced to horticulture. The volunteers garden there one morning a week, and docents are trained to give tours. wschs.org/farm/

Western Hills Gardens in Occidental, world renowned for its

exotic plants, seeks and trains docents to give tours.
westernhillsgarden.com

Sonoma County Master Gardeners offers training and certification to enable one to share science-based information with the public on topics from plant nutrition to composting and pesticide alternatives. <http://ucanr.org/sites/scmg/>

Wildlife

Salmon Creek Watershed Council is a volunteer organization that meets monthly to work towards expanding the community's knowledge of its watersheds and engaging residents in their stewardship. It offers opportunities to monitor local creeks. salmoncreekwater.org/

Wildlife Rescue in Cotati cares for injured wild animals until they can be released. After an extensive and fascinating free training program, working volunteers are asked to also contribute to the program as sponsors. Call **707-992-0274**.
scwildliferescue.org

Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods offers opportunities for seal and whale watching and citizen science projects monitoring pinnipeds and sea birds, as well as docent duties in parks and along the seashore. Office: 17000 Armstrong Woods Road, Guerneville. Call **707-869-9177**. stewardscr.org

Madrone Audubon Society is an all-volunteer organization that offers bird walks and work in environmental protection and citizen-scientist projects. madroneaudubon.org/

Road Kill Observation Center at UC Davis has a citizen science project where citizens can send information about observed road kills. Data tabulated will be used to plan better wildlife corridors. wildlifecrossing.net/california/

Preservation of rural land and forests

Forest Unlimited works to preserve the forestlands of the county and trains and supports residents to fight injurious timber harvest plans. Volunteers for this group have planted over 29,000 young redwood trees in the last 20 years. forestunlimited.org/

Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation enlists volunteers to help restore, conserve, and give guided tours of the Laguna in Sebastopol. lagunafoundation.org

Slow Foods Russian River is part of a global grassroots organization promoting good, clean, and fair food for all. Locally they work to preserve apple orchards, especially Gravensteins, and to connect people with local food producers. Each fall they run a popular apple press. slowfoodrr.org/

The Bodega Land Trust protects land from development by granting easements and depends on crews of volunteers for yearly inspections of its conserved properties. bodegalandtrust.org/

The Sonoma Land Trust uses volunteer monitors to hike lands throughout the county on which they have easements to ensure compliance. sonomalandtrust.org

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District runs outings to enable the public to enjoy and appreciate their protected lands. sonomaopenspace.org/outings-events/

Charity fundraising and community service

The Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury investigates local governments and organizations and issues annual reports, noting problems and suggesting solutions. Call **707-565-6330** sonoma.courts.ca.gov/info/administration/grand-jury

The Occidental Community Council presents a juried Craft Fair each year to raise funds for community projects and charities. occidental-ca.org/

Volunteer Fire Departments depend on citizen volunteers for firefighting and ambulance work. New volunteers are welcomed and trained. Citizen volunteers are also needed to help with their pancake breakfasts and other fundraising events.

BODEGA bodegafire.org/

BODEGA BAY bbfpd.org

FREESTONE, GOLD RIDGE FIRE DEPT. goldridgefire.org/fire-station-locations.html

OCCIDENTAL occidentalfire.com/

VALLEY FORD facebook.com/valleyfordfire/

Community Emergency Response Team training is designed to prepare you to help in a catastrophic disaster when emergency services are not available. It is offered in Sebastopol: sebastopolcert.org/cert-training and in Bodega Bay bodega-bay-cert.square.site/

The Ceres Project in Sebastopol uses volunteer youth as the primary chefs cooking organic, nutritious meals for community members with serious illnesses. ceresproject.org/volunteerteens.html

The Occidental Center for the Arts hosts musical groups, book launchings, art exhibits, and concerts of all types. It offers free entrance to volunteers who work at the door, on concessions, and as art gallery hosts. occidentalcenterforthearts.org/

Places to Go and Things to Do

In West County and its environs, you can attend a concert by a world-famous pianist, walk an open-ocean beach, hike a redwood forest, or be on a radio show, often hitting multiple events in single day. Below are hints on how to access these and other delights. County-wide suggestions can be found at sonomacounty.com/things-to-do and www.sonomacountygazette.com/all-sonoma-county-events/. For Occidental events see occidental-ca.org/activities.html and click on OCC Events Calendar.

Professional presentations

The Redwood Arts Council presents a series of chamber music concerts that rival those in metropolitan areas yet are on a smaller stage allowing more intimate audience interactions. Many concerts are in Occidental. redwoodarts.org

The Occidental Center for the Arts presents musical programs of all types from guitar to improv to string quartet in an intimate, local, yet professional venue. occidentalcenterforthearts.org/

The Green Music Center in Rohnert Park presents world class classical music, jazz, and dance performances, a cabaret series, and summer lawn performances. gmc.sonoma.edu/

Local literary gatherings such as poetry readings are listed monthly in the Sonoma County Gazette. www.sonomacountygazette.com/all-sonoma-county-events/

Hands on participation in the arts

Read plays with the Reader's Theatre Group, take an art class, submit art work to juried shows, or launch a book, all at the Occidental Center for the Arts. Call **707-874-9392**. occidentalcenterforthearts.org

Sing with the Occidental Choir, a group that gives concerts twice a year, performing music and lyrics written by the members. occidentalchoir.org

Sing with the California Redwood Chorale that was founded in 2006 as a group of 45 singers who perform locally and travel around the world sharing Music Diplomacy.

californiareadwoodchorale.org/

Offer your handcrafts for sale at the **Artisans' Coop** in Bodega.

artisansco-op.com/

Host a tour of your art studio where you can sell your work through:

ART TRAILS OPEN STUDIOS in October. sonomacountyarttrails.org

ART AT THE SOURCE in June. artatthesource.org

SALMON CREEK ART WALK in May. salmoncreekartwalk.com

Participate in live radio by appearing on or helping to produce programs at KOWS, a volunteer-run west county community radio station in Santa Rosa. Listen at 92.5 FM. kows92-5.org/

Read library books checked out from the Sonoma County library branch in Occidental, 73 Main Street. Open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday, 12 - 5 pm. or from Forestville branch at 7050 Covey Road.

Attend classes at Santa Rosa Junior College that offers

REGULAR COLLEGE CLASSES requiring tuition. santarosa.edu/

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES for a fee. communityed.santarosa.edu/about-us-0

OLDER ADULTS PROGRAMS in art, writing, fitness, music for free. Call 707-527-4533. older-adults.santarosa.edu/

Join in the discovery, preservation and dissemination of historical information about this region with the Rancho Bodega Historical Society. ranchobodega.org/ or the West Sonoma County Historical Society wschs.org/

Recreation

Use the gym in Occidental to play basketball or volleyball, do Zumba, Tae Kwon Do, Bootcamp workouts, or strength and stretch, all at the Occidental Community Center, 3920 Bohemian Highway, Occidental. For schedule see www.scfymca.org/clientuploads/PDFs/Occ-Ongoing_Classes.pdf

Play tennis at free courts in downtown Occidental or Ragle Park in Sebastopol.

Bike with a group through the Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition. bikesonoma.org/

Surf waves large and small and connect with the surfing community at sonomacoast.surfrider.org/

Practice Tai Chi, Qigong, or Yoga by joining classes that are offered for a fee in many towns - see community bulletin boards.

Hike with a group in order to meet people, exercise, and see the county's sights.

LAND PATHS runs group hikes of all types for a variety of different ages throughout Sonoma County. landpaths.org

SONOMA LAND TRUST organizes On the Land Outings of many pes. sonomalandtrust.org/outings/index.html

SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT hosts group walks. sonomaopenspace.org/outings-events/

BODEGA LAND TRUST presents Walks and Talks that visit local farms, creeks, and other points of interest. Notices available at bodegalandtrust.org/

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS organizes guided group hikes. parks.sonomacounty.ca.gov/Learn/Field-Trips/

Enjoy local parks and centers

SONOMA COUNTY REGIONAL PARKS system includes West County gems like Doran Beach and Pinnacle Gulch/ Shorttail Gulch Coastal access. sonomacounty.com/articles/guide-sonoma-county-regional-park-system

SONOMA COAST STATE PARK consists of 17 miles of coastal headlands and beaches from north of Jenner down to Bodega Head. It includes the loop trail at Bodega Head, Kortum Trail, Pomo Canyon Trail, and Coastal Prairie Trail. parks.ca.gov/?page_id=451

SENIOR CENTERS offer a plethora of organized outdoor activities

at Russian River Senior Resource Center in Guerneville, 15010 Armstrong Woods Road, call 707-869-0618, westcountyservices.org/russian-river-senior-center/ and Sebastopol Area Senior Center in downtown Sebastopol at 167 North High Street, call 707-829-2440. sebastopolseniorcenter.org

CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS are available when schools are not in session at Salmon Creek School, 1935 Bohemian Highway, Occidental and at Bodega Bay Elementary School at 1200 Canon Street, Bodega Bay.

Check out places unique to West County

GROVE OF THE OLD TREES in Occidental provides a place to walk among ancient giant redwoods and to picnic on the forest floor. landpaths.org/grove-of-old-trees/

FISH JUMP OVERLOOK at Salmon Creek School provides a perch above a waterfall where every winter ocean-going steelhead can be seen trying to jump the falls. At 1935 Bohemian Highway, Occidental.

UC DAVIS COASTAL AND MARINE SCIENCES INSTITUTE in Bodega Bay is open for free tours most Friday afternoons from 2–4pm. marinescience.ucdavis.edu

STURGEON'S MILL is a restored steam-powered lumber mill that operates four weekends each year at which time it is open to visitors. Located at 2150 Green Hill Road, Sebastopol. sturgeonsmill.com/

WARM SPRING FISH HATCHERY has a museum and gives hatchery tours at 3246 Skaggs Springs Road, Geyserville. Call 707- 433- 6325.
wildlife.ca.gov/Fishing/Hatcheries/Warm-Spring

Watch for regularly scheduled events and festivals

JANUARY	Chowder Day in Bodega Bay (last Sat.)
APRIL	Fools Parade in Occidental (near April 1st)
MAY	Bodega Bay Fisherman's Festival (1st weekend) Castle and Kites Festival, Doran Beach
JUNE–OCT	Bodega Bay Farmer's market (Sun. 10am-2pm) Occidental Farmer's market (Fri. 4pm-dusk)
SUMMER	Chautauqua Series at Occidental Arts and Ecology Center Firemen's Pig Roast, Valley Ford Fireworks in Bodega Bay (near 4th of July) Fireman's BBQ in Occidental (3rd Sun. July) Bodega Big Event Parade & BBQ in Bodega (1st Sun. Aug.) Bodega Seafood, Art and Wine Festival in Bodega (last weekend Aug.)
OCTOBER	Bodega Land Trust Dinner and Auction

NOVEMBER Valley Ford Pie Auction (Tues. before Thanksgiving)

DECEMBER Bodega Christmas Craft Fair
(weekend after Thanksgiving)

Craft Fair in Occidental (2nd weekend)

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Whether you face an acute emergency (call **911**), a sudden health problem, an abuse issue, or just an infuriating annoyance, there is usually a number to call in hopes of information and, possibly, relief.

For Any Emergency that Is

Acute

Life threatening

Crime in progress

Fire

Ambulance needed

Call 911

**for faster service from a cell phone call
707-565-2121**

For Problems That Are Not Life Threatening

To report a crime

Here in West County general policing is done by the Sheriff's Department whose office is in Guerneville but has deputies that live nearby. Highways are the responsibility the CA Highway Patrol.

You can report a crime to the Sheriff in several different ways:

BY PHONE at **707-565-2650**, when not an emergency.

IN PERSON at Guerneville Substation, First and Church Streets, Guerneville, CA

TO A DEPUTY who will come to your location after you call **707-565-2121, when it is an emergency.**

ONLINE at sonomasheriff.org/report-a-crime/.

To report stolen vehicles, call California Highway Patrol at **800-TELL-CHP (835-5247)** or **707-588-1400**.

To deal with trespassers complete a Trespass Action Request and File it with Sonoma County Sheriff's OFFICE (First and Church Streets, Guerneville). Then you can ask them to insist that any-one not having lawful business on your property leave forthwith or be arrested.

For identity theft and fraud call the Sheriff at **707-565-2650**.

Problems with animals

Injured animal that is not yours, call **707 565-7100** or after hours Sheriff at **707 565-2121**.

Non-emergency problems like barking dog, and similar issues go to sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/Report-an-Issue/.

Lost/found pets can be reported and photos viewed of those turned in at sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Animal-Services/Lost-and-Found/.

Wildlife that are sick, injured, or orphaned should be reported to the Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue Hot line at **707-526-9453**. scwildliferescue.org/

Dead animal removal in unincorporated Sonoma County can be arranged at **707-565-7100**. If a dead animal is found on a state highway call **707-762-6641**.

Roads, overhead wires, electrical outages

To determine which roads are currently limited or closed, find a map and list at roadclosures-sonomacounty.hub.arcgis.com/.

To report road accidents, call California Highway Patrol at **800-TELL-CHP (835-5247)**.

To request pothole repair call Guerneville Yard **707-869-2024**, or **707-565-5100** to make a work request, or use the app [SoCoReportit](#) to make request.

Downed electric wires are dangerous. Stay away and call **911**.

To report an electrical outage call **800-743-5000** or see pge.com/en_US/residential/outages/current-outages/report-view-an-electric-outage/find-or-report-electric-outages.page

To obtain information about an extended outage call **888-PGE-4PGE (888-743-4743)**.

Food or housing emergency

Please see GENERAL ASSISTANCE section of this booklet, page 50.

General west county-wide emergency

In West County you are responsible for yourself. It is crucial to prepare by laying in supplies for you, family, pets, and livestock for at least 72 hours and up to two weeks.

Receiving Alerts: There are many types of disasters from forest fires and epidemics, to earthquakes and tsunamis. To receive the various types of alerts that Sonoma County sends out (e.g., SoCoAlert, NIXLE, NOAA Weather Radio, WEA ...), go to socoemergency.org/home/prepare/stay-informed to learn about them and sign up, or call **707-565-1369**.

To receive local emergency or disaster Information on your phone, sign up at sonomacounty.ca.gov/FES/Emergency-Management/SoCoAlert/ or call **707-565-1369**. Agencies that will help in a generalized emergency are listed below.

Sonoma County: socoemergency.org

Sonoma County Red Cross: www.redcross.org/local/california/northern-california-coastal/about-us.html

Santa Rosa Cope Program: srcity.org/directory.aspx?did=52

California Offices of Emergency Services: caloes.ca.gov/

Sebastopol Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): sebastopolcert.org/

Bodega Bay Cert: bodegabaycert.org/

PG & E - Natural Disaster Safety: pge.com/myhome/edusafety/naturaldisaster/

Where to seek disaster shelter and help:

OCCIDENTAL: Saint Phillip's Catholic Church Annex, Occidental Center for the Arts

BODEGA: McCaughey Hall

FREESTONE: Occidental or Sebastopol

BODEGA BAY: Nine preparedness stations are scattered throughout coastal neighborhoods.

VALLEY FORD: Occidental or Bodega

Health needs

Emergency Rooms

SAINT JOSEPH HEALTH - SONOMA COUNTY: SANTA ROSA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL-MAIN CAMPUS, 1165 Montgomery Drive, Santa Rosa, [707-546-3210](tel:7075463210).

SUTTER MEDICAL CENTER: SUTTER SANTA ROSA REGIONAL HOSPITAL, 30 Mark West Springs Road, Santa Rosa, [707-576-4040](tel:7075764040).

SUTTER MEDICAL CENTER: SUTTER WARRICK HOSPITAL, 2449 Summerfield Road, Santa Rosa, [707-576-4040](tel:7075764040).

KAISER PERMANENTE HOSPITAL (Only for those with Kaiser-Permanente Insurance), 401 Bicentennial Way, Santa Rosa, **707-393-4800**.

Free and Income based clinics

See [freeclinics.com/co/ca-sonoma](https://www.freeclinics.com/co/ca-sonoma)

Urgent care facilities listed online at www.stjoesonoma.org/our-services/urgent-care/.

SANTA ROSA ST. JOSEPH URGENT CARE, 925 Corporate Center Parkway, Suite A , Santa Rosa, **707 543-2000**. Open 9am-6:30pm daily, 9-5 holidays.

ROHNERT PARK, 1450 Medical Center Drive, Rohnert Park, **707 584-0672**. Open 9am–7pm every day. (Closed during the pandemic).

WINDSOR, 6580 Hembree Lane, Suite 270, Windsor, **707 838-2044**. Open 9am–6:30pm daily. Closes at 5pm on holidays.

SUTTER SAME DAY CARE, 3883 Airway Drive, Santa Rosa, **707-521-4495**. Open 8am–8pm M-F, 9 - 6 weekends.

West County Health centers found online at wchealth.org/ include:

FORESTVILLE WELLNESS CENTER, 6550 Front St., Forestville, **707-887-0290**. Free for those under 25.

FORESTVILLE TEEN CLINIC, 6570 1st Street, Forestville, **707-887-0427**. Free for those under 25.

RUSSIAN RIVER HEALTH CENTER, 16319 Third Street, Guerneville, 707-869-2849.

OCCIDENTAL AREA HEALTH CENTER, 3802 Main Street, Occidental, 707-874-2444.

GRAVENSTEIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER, 6800 Palm Ave., Suite. C-2, Sebastopol, 707 823-3166.

Planned Parenthood office in Santa Rosa at 1140 Sonoma Avenue, Santa Rosa, 707-527-7656. www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center?location=95465

Mental health resources include:

NORTH BAY SUICIDE HOT LINE: 855-587-6373 (Spanish 855-587-6373).

NATIONAL SUICIDE HOT LINE: 800-273-8255 (Spanish 888-628-9454).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOT LINE: (English or Spanish) 707-546-1234

BEHAVIORAL CRISIS SERVICES SONOMA COUNTY: 800-746-8181 or 800-576-8181.

LOCAL SCREENING/REFERRAL SERVICES: 707-565-6900 or 800-870-8786.

PATIENT RIGHTS ADVOCATE: 707-565-4978.

There is a Mobile Support Team that can provide emergency psychiatric health services in response to 911 calls.

Public health information is available at [707 565-4700](tel:7075654700).
sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health-Services/

Disease reporting is done at [707-565-4567](tel:7075654567).

Tick bites can be dangerous as ticks here may carry bacterial diseases. To have a tick tested for Lyme Disease, place it in a resealable plastic bag with a damp cotton ball or paper towel and send or take it to Public Health Regional Laboratory, 3313 Chanate Road, Santa Rosa, [707-565-4711](tel:7075654711).
sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Public-Health/Laboratory/Lyme-Tick-Test/

Suspected poisoning, call [911](tel:911) if the individual collapses, has a seizure, has trouble breathing, or can't be awakened. Otherwise call US Poison Control Center [800-222-1222](tel:8002221222) where confidential advice is offered in multiple languages. poison.org

Hazmat spills, if dangerous call 911, if no imminent danger, call the county during day at [707-565-2024](tel:7075652024), or call state 24 hour line at [800-852-7550](tel:8008527550).

Abuse of individuals or of substances

Confidentially report elder or dependent abuse or neglect to Sonoma County District Attorney Adult Protective Services at [707-565-5940](tel:7075655940) or [800-667-0404](tel:8006670404).

Contact the District Attorney's Office Elder Protection Unit at [707-565-2311](tel:7075652311).

Child Protective & Child Welfare Service Hotlines are reached at [707-565-4304](tel:7075654304) or [800-870-7064](tel:8008707064).

Domestic Violence

If You are in danger call **911** or sheriff dispatch at **707-565-2121**.

To discuss with a YWCA advocate what you can do to prepare to leave, especially how to get your children and pets to a safe place before you leave, call the YWCA hot line at **707-546-1234**.

Legal Aid of Sonoma County helps with urgent matters (**707-542-1290**), aids residents 60 and older with legal issues (**707-340-5610**), and with non-urgent housing problems (**707-843-4432**). legalaidsoc.org/

Sonoma County Substance Use Disorder and Community recovery Services offers help through recovery meetings, groups, and resources. sonomacounty.ca.gov/Health/Behavioral-Health/Substance-Use-Disorder-Services/

Sonoma County Intergroup Fellowship (AA) call 24-hour hotline **707-544-1300** (Spanish **707-623-6702**). sonomacountyaa.org/aa-meetings/

Narcotics Anonymous mans a 24-hour hot line (**707-324-4062**) and hosts meetings and events that support those learning to live without drugs. <http://www.sonomacountyna.org/meetings>

GENERAL ASSISTANCE

Programs are available in West County to help both young and old who need assistance in obtaining life's necessities. They may help with food, housing, counseling, rides, or just coping with challenges that come with aging. Contact information for government officials from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to the U.S. Senate is included at the chapter end.

Food

Rural Food Program of Saint Philip and Saint Teresa Parish

in Occidental provides groceries to individuals and families that live within parish boundaries on the second Tuesday of the month, 9-11am. Registration begins at 8:30 am at Saint Philip's Catholic Church, 3730 Bohemian Hwy, Occidental.

stphilipstteresa.org/rural-food-program.html

Food for Thought weekly supplies food and compassion to those living with serious illness who are at risk for malnutrition at 6650 Railroad Avenue, Forestville. fftfoodbank.org. To apply call 707- 887-1647 x 119 or email NinaR@FFTfoodbank.org.

Interchurch Food Pantry at Saint Stephens Episcopal Church, 500 Robinson Road, Sebastopol, serves West County, supplying staples and groceries to area residents on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 10 am to noon.

Graton Day Labor Center 298 Bowen Street, Graton, provides food on fourth Fridays, 9:30-10:30 am. 707-528-8712.

Other area pantries are listed at 211sonoma.org/ and getfood.refb.org.

Cal Fresh benefits, formerly known as Food Stamps, are available from the Sonoma County Human Services Department. The program supplies electronic benefit transfers for groceries to eligible individuals. Located at 2550 Paulin Drive #1, Santa Rosa. Call **877-699-6868**. sonomacalfresh.org/html/apply.htm or mybenefitscalwin.org

Ceres Community Project in Sebastopol supports low-income people struggling because of serious health challenges with free or low-cost home-delivered, locally produced meals, nutrition education, and the caring support of the Project. To become a client, call **707-829-5833** or email clients@ceresproject.org. ceresproject.org/

Meals on Wheels, run by the Council on Aging, delivers meals and bag lunches five days a week to homebound seniors, convalescents 60 years or older, and elders who are homebound and/or unable to shop and cook. To apply call **707-525-0143**. councilonaging.com/meals-on-wheels/

Senior lunches that provide opportunities for socializing are offered every Wednesday noon by West County Community Services at Saint Philip Hall in Occidental for \$4.00. **707-823-1640 x 403** and Tuesdays at noon at Forestville United Methodist Church, 6550 Covey Road, Forestville. **707-869-0618**

Shelters, Transportation, Drug Discounts, Protection

Homeless shelters in Santa Rosa or Petaluma can be found

through the Volunteer Center of Sonoma. Call **211, 707-565-2108** or **800-325-9604**. homelesshelterdirectory.org/cgi-bin/id/city.cgi?city=Sebastopol&state=CACOUNTY

General assistance for the homeless can be found at www.sonomacountyhomeless.org/ and westcountyservices.org/housing-services/.

Free/sliding scale dental clinics are listed at freedentalcare.us/zip.php?zip=95465&submit=Find+Clinic

Free transportation for veterans and college students is provided by Sonoma County Transport as described at sctransit.com/fares/discount-categories/. Call **707-576-7433**.

On Demand Transportation for seniors living in West County is offered by Sebastopol Senior Center Driver Program at 167 N High Street, Sebastopol. Five business days before the ride is needed, call **707-829-2440**. Busses are half price for seniors.

Protective services for seniors are part of Sonoma County Human Services Department which is located at 3725 Westwind Boulevard, Suite 101, Santa Rosa. Call their confidential, anonymous hot line at **707-565-5950** or **800-667-0404**.

Help with prescription copays can sometimes be arranged through the Health Well Foundation. **800-675-8416**. Free and objective advice for Medicare patients on how to arrange insurance to minimize drug costs can be found at HICAP-Sonoma County. **707-526-4108** or **800-434-0222**. cahealthadvocates.org/hicap/sonoma/

Sonoma County sheriff crime prevention unit extends advice on avoiding scams and ensuring public safety. Located at 2796 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa. Call **707-565-7398**.

If You Don't Know Where to Turn

Sonoma County Human Services Department may be able to help. Call **707-565-5800**. sonomacounty.ca.gov/Human-Services/

Council on Aging offers help to seniors with financial, legal, and social matters. Call **707-525-0143, 800-675-0413**. councilonaging.com

Sonoma County Community Resource Directory provides referrals on child/elder care, immigration, food, and shelter. Call **211**. <https://211wc.org>

Government Contacts

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors. West County is in District 5; our supervisor is LYNDY HOPKINS. Find her at Board of Supervisors, 575 Administration Drive, Room 100A, Santa Rosa, CA, 95403. Call **707-565-2241**. Email: district5@sonoma-county.org

California State Senate. West County is in District 2. SENATOR MIKE MCGUIRE, 1303 Tenth Street, Room 5061, Sacramento, CA 95814, **916-651-4002**. Email: senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov. Contact locally at 50 D Street, Suite 120 A Santa Rosa CA 95404, **707-576-2771**.

California State Assembly. West County is in District 2. ASSEMBLY MEMBER JIM WOOD, State Capitol, Room 6005, P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249. Call **916-319-2002**. a02.asmdc.org Contact at lcmspubcontact.lc.ca.gov/PublicLCMS/ContactPopup.php?district=AD02

United States House of Representatives. West County is in district 2; our representative is JARED HUFFMAN, 1527 Longworth House Office Building, Washington DC 20515. Call **202-225-5161**. huffman.house.gov/. Contact locally at 206 G Street Unit 3, Petaluma, Ca 94952. Call **707-981-8967**. Email him at huffman.house.gov/contact/email-me

United States Senate. SENATOR KAMALA HARRIS, 112 Hart Senate Office Bldg. Washington, DC 20510. Call **202-224-3553**. harris.senate.gov/ Contact locally at 333 Bush Street, Suite 3225, San Francisco, Ca 94104. Call **415-981-9369**. Email via harris.senate.gov/contact/email

SENATOR DIANNE FEINSTEIN, 331 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510. Call **202-224-3841**. Contact locally at One Post Street, Suite 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104. Call **415-393-0707**. To email her use <https://www.feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/e-mail-me>

