



# County of Santa Cruz

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Sheriff-Coroner

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**Phil Wowak**  
Sheriff-Coroner

## Sheriff's Media Release

### July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Santa Cruz County attracts thousands of people from the greater Bay Area, Central Valley and beyond during the Fourth of July holiday. The vast majority of visitors and residents look forward to celebrating the holiday by spending time with their families and friends near the coast and having a good time. Unfortunately, our experience shows us there is a small number of people who choose not to respect the rights of others, drink too much, start fights, or use the holiday as an excuse to commit crimes. This is why we require all of our Deputies to work on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July – to prevent law breakers from endangering others, causing disruption, and damaging our environment.

115 Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Deputies will be working on July 4. The Sheriff's Office is working closely with other agencies including the California Highway Patrol, California State Parks, Santa Cruz County Probation and local fire agencies to maximize public safety resources. The most significant problems deal with drinking in public, public intoxication, fighting, uncontrolled parties, and the possession and use of fireworks. Santa Cruz County has an ordinance that increases the fines for the possession of fireworks during the holiday, known as the "Safety Enhancement Zone," which triples amount of the usual fine.

Santa Cruz County has a Loud or Unruly Gathering ordinance. Under this law, property owners, party hosts, and/or those who engage in loud or unruly conduct can be held responsible for a Loud or Unruly Gathering. A Loud or Unruly Gathering can result in an enforcement action that can include a civil citation for those present and individual fines of up to \$3,000 for property owners, tenants, party hosts and / or those who engage in loud or unruly conduct (party attendees). Additionally, those responsible may be subject to citation or arrest for violations of any other law.

The Sheriff's Office suggests that people be responsible for the guests invited to their parties, know those who attend, and make sure people keep open alcoholic beverages on private property.

Teams of deputies will be assigned to various blocks and beaches with large gatherings and will be strictly enforcing all laws. Flyers will be posted in the unincorporated areas and beaches in reference to County ordinances, and deputies will be available to talk to residents and visitors while walking the area. Residents are encouraged to share any concerns they have with the deputies.

Parking is always difficult in the beach areas, and we encourage people to carpool. Spaces fill up early in the morning, and entering and leaving the area by vehicle is even more difficult as the day progresses.

**Remember:**

- Fireworks are illegal to possess in the unincorporated area of Santa Cruz County.
- Alcohol and glass containers are prohibited on County beaches.
- Effective July 2<sup>nd</sup> thru July 6<sup>th</sup>, anyone found in possession of any fireworks, glass containers or open containers of alcohol on a county beach or park may be fined \$1,000.
- Pack your trash and recycle appropriately.
- Be environmentally aware, fireworks are destructive to our beaches and forests.

Anyone with questions regarding road closures in Santa Cruz County can get more information from the County of Santa Cruz Public Works Department at [www.dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us](http://www.dpw.co.santa-cruz.ca.us)

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