

PARK USE FEES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **Why does the Santa Clara County Parks Department collect park use fees?** - Park fees account for approximately 10% of the Parks Department's total budget. Without this money the Parks Department would have a very difficult time meeting operational and maintenance needs and obligations.
2. **What park use fee category provides the most revenue?** - It is estimated that vehicle entry fees will provide approximately 4% of the FY2008 budget. For the past 27 years, vehicle entry fees and other types of park use fees have been collected at County Parks.
3. **Why does the Parks Department adjust park use fees every year?** - In June 1999, the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) directed the Parks Department to establish park use fees at a level "no less than the average of all use fee comparisons compiled through a market analysis. In addition, a recent management audit of the Department by the Board of Supervisor's Audit Division recommended continuation of this policy to present fees to the BOS, which are "at least the average of surveyed agencies". The BOS fully approved this recommendation in February 2008.
4. **How does the Parks Department determine the "average park use fee"?**- Every year the Parks Department completes a survey of park use fees. Other Bay Area and Central Coast park agencies and districts are surveyed each September and October by phone, internet and by mail. More than sixty (60) individual park user fee categories are included in the survey and an "average fee" is determined for each category. Some park districts and agencies do not provide the same services that our Parks Department provides. In fact none of them provide exactly the same services and use the same park use fee categories. The "average fee" is determined by comparing similar services with similar fees.
5. **Who makes the final decision on all park use fee adjustments?** - The County Parks and Recreation Commission reviews the Parks Department's fee adjustment recommendations every year in December. The Department and Commission's recommendations are forwarded to the Board of Supervisors in January, and reviewed by a policy committee (Housing, Land Use, Transportation and Environment) which then forwards a recommendation to the full Board of Supervisors (BOS). The BOS considers and approves any park use fee adjustments each year and they are effective May 1.
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7. **What will the Parks Department do with the additional park use fees collected?** - It is estimated that the park use fee adjustments will generate approximately \$194,500 in additional annual revenue for the Parks Department in FY 2009. This money will be used for continuing operation and maintenance of Santa Clara County Parks.
8. **When will the 2008 fee increases become effective?** - All of the new park use fees become effective on **Thursday, May 1, 2008.**
9. **Who can we refer customers to if they want more information regarding park use fees?** - If you cannot answer all of your customer's questions and concerns and they still need more information or wish to talk to a "supervisor", you can give them the following names and phone numbers to call.

Ed Souza, Customer & Business Services Manager – (408) 355-2221
Tamara Clark-Shear, Public Information Officer – (408) 355-2215