



# County of Santa Cruz



## HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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## Press Release

For Immediate Release

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### **Santa Cruz County Recognized for Leadership in Tobacco Control**

**Santa Cruz, California** – The American Lung Association (ALA) has released its [State of Tobacco Control 2024 California Local Grades](#). Once again, each of the five Santa Cruz County jurisdictions earned an overall grade of an A or B, continuing their leadership among the 482 incorporated cities and 58 counties in California.

“This annual report clearly identifies progressive local government as the driving force behind the state’s tobacco reform efforts,” said Santa Cruz County Tobacco Education Coalition Co-chair, Rachel Kippen. “Santa Cruz policy makers continue to respond to the public’s demand to protect residents from the deadly toll of tobacco, second-hand smoke, and toxic tobacco waste. I applaud the American Lung Association for recognizing their efforts.”

The ALA report grades jurisdictions across California on smoke-free outdoor air, smoke-free housing, restrictions on the sale of tobacco products, and other tobacco-related metrics. The purpose is to increase public knowledge of tobacco-related policies and to encourage local leadership where improvement is needed.

“This year’s grades are definitely worth celebrating,” said Tara Leonard of the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency. “But there is still important work to be done to eliminate the deadly impacts of tobacco on both human and environmental health.”

In spite of recent policy advances, tobacco continues to be the number one cause of preventable death in California. In addition, a [2023 Report](#) by the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration determined that 24.5% of the litter picked up on the shores of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary is attributed to smoking.

“Now is the time to build on local successes and put public health ahead of tobacco company profits,” Kippen added. “I look forward to working with our local policy makers as they continue to lead this important public health fight.”

For more information, visit [State Grades | State of Tobacco Control | American Lung Association](#).

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