

Measure H:  
The Improved and Enhanced Local Fire  
Protection, Paramedic Services and  
Disaster Response Tax

DRAFT Comprehensive Annual Report – FY 2024–2025

Prepared by the Measure H Oversight Committee

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## Executive Summary

In March 2024, Sonoma County voters approved Measure H, the Improved and Enhanced Local Fire Protection, Paramedic Services and Disaster Response Initiative (Ordinance), with 61.71 percent voter approval. The measure established a countywide one-half cent transactions and use tax to provide stable, long-term funding for local fire protection, paramedic services, wildfire prevention, and disaster response. The tax became operative on October 1, 2024, making FY 24-25 the first fiscal year in which revenues were collected and distributed.

Measure H requires an independent Oversight Committee to provide transparency and fiscal accountability for revenues generated by the tax. Agencies receiving Measure H funds submit annual reports to the Committee, which reviews revenues and expenditures to evaluate whether spending is consistent with the Ordinance. The Committee compiles this information into a Comprehensive Annual Report for the Board of Supervisors.

During FY 24-25, Measure H generated approximately \$46.2 million in total revenue, including tax receipts and interest earnings. After administrative costs, about \$45.7 million was distributed to local fire agencies and designated countywide programs in accordance with the allocation structure established in the Ordinance. Agencies reported approximately \$17.8 million in expenditures during the fiscal year.

Agency reports show Measure H funds were used across the categories authorized by the Ordinance, including firefighter staffing, equipment and facilities, wildfire prevention and vegetation management, and countywide services. Agencies reported meeting the maintenance of effort requirement, indicating that Measure H funds were used to expand services rather than replace existing funding. Many agencies reported phased implementation of staffing and capital improvements, including firefighter hiring, vegetation management projects, apparatus purchases, facility planning, and regional coordination.

As part of its first-year review, the Committee identified areas where additional discussion may support consistent evaluation of expenditures, such as the use of Measure H funds for administrative support. As Measure H moves beyond its first year of implementation, the Committee will continue working with agencies to support transparent reporting and review of Measure H revenues and expenditures.

## About Measure H

Measure H provides stable, long-term funding for local fire protection, paramedic services, wildfire prevention, and disaster response. The tax is expected to generate approximately \$60 million annually.

The Ordinance directs that revenues remain local and be distributed to fire agencies according to a defined allocation structure. The Ordinance and subsequent funding agreements between the County of Sonoma and funding recipients require that the tax proceeds supplement existing funding for fire protection, paramedic services, wildfire prevention, and disaster response rather than replace existing sources.

The Ordinance also requires independent oversight and annual reporting to ensure transparency and fiscal accountability. The [Ordinance is available on the County of Sonoma's website](#).

## Agencies Receiving Measure H Funding

Measure H revenues are distributed to local fire agencies and designated countywide programs according to the allocation plan established in the Ordinance.

The Ordinance provides that if a recipient agency consolidates with another recipient agency, the successor agency receives the associated allocation. As a result, some allocation percentages below differ the Ordinance.

During FY 24-25, funds were allocated as follows:

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
City of Healdsburg	2.50%
City of Petaluma	7.17%
City of Rohnert Park	5.49%
City of Santa Rosa	14.36%
City of Sebastopol*	1.17%
City of Sonoma	1.18%
Cazadero Community Services District	1.14%
Cloverdale Fire Protection District	2.77%

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
Gold Ridge Fire Protection District*	11.11%
Graton Fire Protection District	1.06%
Kenwood Fire Protection District*	1.22%
Monte Rio Fire Protection District*	1.59%
North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District	2.38%
Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District	4.99%
Occidental Community Services District	1.61%
Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District	3.49%
Schell-Vista Fire Protection District	1.20%
Sonoma County Fire District	6.59%
Sonoma Valley Fire District*	5.83%
Timber Cove Fire Protection District	2.46%
Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District – Vegetation Management Program	4.99%
County of Sonoma Fire (Permit Sonoma)	0.42%
Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association	14.03%
Administration (program implementation and oversight)	1.25%

*\*During FY 24-25, Kenwood Fire Protection District was consolidated into Sonoma Valley Fire District, and Monte Rio Fire Protection District and fire services previously provided by the City of Sebastopol were consolidated into Gold Ridge Fire Protection District.*

## **Allowable Uses of Measure H Funds**

The Ordinance establishes six categories of allowable expenditures for tax proceeds to strengthen wildfire preparedness, fire protection, paramedic services, and disaster response throughout Sonoma County.

## Wildfire Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Vegetation Management

Wildfire prevention and response activities, including the addition of firefighters to enhance fire response, paramedic services, and wildfire prevention. Funds also support regional fire inspectors, a countywide vegetation management crew, and vegetation management activities conducted by local agencies, including defensible space inspections and fuel reduction projects.

## Recruitment and Retention of Local Firefighters

Support the recruitment and retention of firefighters and paramedics who provide wildfire suppression, emergency response, and vegetation management fire prevention services.

## Update Essential Equipment and Facilities

Improve or replace fire facilities and equipment needed for fire suppression and prevention. With approval from their governing bodies, agencies may also issue bonds backed by their Measure H allocation to finance capital improvements.

## Transfer of Funds Among Designated Local Agencies or Other Entities

Agreements with other agencies to deliver services that accomplish the purposes of the Ordinance.

## Implementation Costs

The County of Sonoma may allocate revenues to support implementation and administrative costs, including revenue distribution, Oversight Committee operations, and required reporting.

## Countywide Expenditures

Revenue allocated to the Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association may support countywide fire service activities, including dispatch services, regional recruitment and training programs, vegetation management initiatives, emergency upstaffing during major weather events, and other countywide fire service needs.

# Oversight Committee

## Committee Purpose and Responsibilities

The Oversight Committee was established by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors on January 14, 2025, as required by Measure H. The Committee reviews revenues and expenditures, including annual reports submitted by agencies receiving Measure H funds, to evaluate whether spending is consistent with the Ordinance.

The Committee compiles information from agency annual reports into a Comprehensive Annual Report presented to the Board of Supervisors before the beginning of the following fiscal year.

The Committee does not make decisions regarding spending priorities, financing plans, or tax rate projections, and it does not direct County staff or fire agency staff.

The Committee may recommend investigation into misuse of funds to the California State Attorney General, the Sonoma County District Attorney, or the Sonoma County Grand Jury.

More [information on the Committee, including the bylaws, is available on the County of Sonoma’s website.](#)

## Membership list

The 11-member Measure H Oversight Committee includes representatives appointed by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, the Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association, and the Sonoma County Fire Districts Association, representing local government, labor organizations, and county residents. Members serve three year terms on the Committee and are eligible to be reappointed.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Appointing Body</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>
Christopher Derner	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	Labor Organizations
Becky Ennis	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	Countywide Independent Resident
Jeff M. Lemelin	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	Countywide Independent Resident
Jeff Okrepkie	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	Mayors’ and Councilmembers’ Association

<b>Name</b>	<b>Appointing Body</b>	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>
Sandra Lowe	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	Mayors' and Councilmembers' Association
Matt L. Tognozzi	Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	Labor Organizations
Michael LeComte	Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association	Independent Resident
Tony Gossner	Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association	Independent Resident
Todd Derum	Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association	Independent Resident
Lisa Yoshida	Sonoma County Fire Districts Association	Independent Resident
William Jackson	Sonoma County Fire Districts Association	Independent Resident

### Committee Activities

The Committee met in September and December of 2025 and in February, March and April of 2026 to establish bylaws, discuss their roles and responsibilities, discuss the agency annual reports, and to develop the Comprehensive Annual Report.

## **Program Highlights and Impacts**

The following examples highlight how agencies used Measure H funds during FY 24-25, including staffing, equipment purchases, vegetation management, and planning for future capital improvements.

### **City of Healdsburg**

Added a full-time Fire Inspector, increasing the City's capacity to conduct fire safety inspections and enforce fire codes.

### **City of Petaluma**

Added an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Coordinator position responsible for EMS operations, training, and quality improvement. Funding also supported the purchase of a Type 1 fire engine (anticipated delivery in 2029), a Battalion Chief vehicle, and outfitting and maintenance for a pre-owned Type 3 wildland engine donated by Marin County.

### **City of Rohnert Park**

Measure H funds supported 24-hour Battalion Chief coverage and the addition of two Public Safety Officers. These positions support three-person staffing per apparatus and expanded supervisory coverage.

### **City of Santa Rosa**

Planning and preparation activities, including initial recruitment activities for Firefighter/Paramedics, establishment of promotional lists for new positions, planning for a new engine company and Battalion Chief, property due diligence for a future station, and equipment purchases for new positions.

### **City of Sebastopol**

Fire station assessment and feasibility study.

### **City of Sonoma**

Increased full-time staffing from six to nine positions, including Fire Captains, Engineers, and Firefighter/Paramedics, to bring minimum 24/7 staffing to three personnel.

### **Cazadero Community Services District**

Vegetation management activities, including roadside vegetation treatment along Cazadero Highway and Kidd Creek Road, along with equipment purchases.

### **Cloverdale Fire Protection District**

Implemented a fire dozer program for vegetation management and wildfire resiliency.

**Gold Ridge Fire Protection District**

Expanded to three-person engine staffing across three stations and staffing of a fourth station, including hiring Captains, Engineers, and Firefighters, along with personal protective equipment and uniforms.

**Graton Fire Protection District**

Three full-time firefighters to achieve three-person staffing 24/7.

**Kenwood Fire Protection District**

Increased full-time staffing from five to nine positions, including Fire Captains, Engineers, and Firefighter/Paramedics, to bring minimum 24/7 staffing to three personnel.

**Monte Rio Fire Protection District**

Salary parity for staff positions, personal protective equipment purchases, and repairs to station access stairs and exterior siding and paint at two stations.

**North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District**

Expanded contracted CAL FIRE staffing from five to nine positions and the hiring of a full-time District Administrator beginning in October 2024.

**Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District**

Converted three temporary firefighter positions to permanent positions, hiring four additional firefighters, and purchase of a Quick Response Vehicle.

**Occidental Community Services District**

Installed a 200-amp meter and power pole to facilitate training exercises.

**Rancho Adobe Fire Protection District**

Recruitment and retention expenses, including a full-time Fire Mechanic and a part-time temporary Fire Marshal.

**Schell-Vista Fire Protection District**

Increased full-time firefighter staffing from six to nine positions to achieve three-person staffing and implementation of 24-hour Duty Chief coverage.

**Sonoma County Fire District**

Hired response personnel including a Training Captain, Battalion Chief, and two Firefighter/Paramedics.

**Sonoma Valley Fire District**

Added six firefighter/paramedic positions, a fire mechanic, and two deputy fire chiefs. Funding also supported payments for property purchased for construction of Fire Station 2.

**Timber Cove Fire Protection District**

Staffing enhancements including a shared Fire Chief, duty officer, firefighter, and an Administrative Battalion Chief. Funding also supported training, personal protective equipment, communications and rescue equipment upgrades, and a down payment on a new water tender.

**Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District – Vegetation Management Program**

Fuel reduction projects along Chalk Hill Road, Old Cazadero Road, and Sweetwater Springs Road.

**County of Sonoma Fire (Permit Sonoma)**

Added two Extra Help Fire Inspector II positions and equipment purchases for vegetation management, defensible space inspections, and chipper operations.

**Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association**

Countywide fire service activities including vegetation management coordination through Fire Safe Sonoma, REDCOM dispatch costs, wildfire upstaffing, technology investments, and administrative operations.

# Revenue and Expenditures

## Revenue and Distribution

Measure H generated \$46,244,786.89 in total revenue during FY 24-25, including \$46,120,314.75 in tax receipts and \$124,472.18 in interest earnings.

Measure H revenues are distributed quarterly by the Sonoma County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector. The tax became operative in October 2024.

In total, \$45,665,896.38 was distributed to agencies and programs. Distributions to individual agencies ranged from \$190,734 to \$6,642,312, depending on each agency's assigned percentage.

Administrative costs totaled \$578,890. These costs are deducted from total revenues prior to distribution to agencies, as provided in the Ordinance. The majority of these costs reflect California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA) collection fees, including three quarterly administration charges and a one-time CDTFA implementation fee. County administrative costs totaled \$7,136.

## Expenditures by Category

FY 24-25 represents an initial implementation year for Measure H. Many agencies reported phased implementation of staffing and capital improvements, with expenditures reflecting early-stage activities such as capital planning, permitting and design work, and partial-year staffing costs for newly hired personnel.

Agencies reported a total of \$17,798,087 in Measure H expenditures during FY 24-25. The sections below summarize expenditures within the primary categories used by agencies when reporting Measure H spending in their annual reports.

### **Wildfire Prevention and Vegetation Management: \$8,075,167**

Wildfire prevention and vegetation management activities were implemented both locally and through countywide programs. Several agencies reported fuels reduction and defensible space inspection activities, while the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District operated a countywide fuels crew supporting vegetation management projects throughout Sonoma County.

### **Recruitment and Retention of Local Firefighters and EMS: \$2,714,733**

Expenditures supported firefighter and emergency response staffing. Agencies reported using Measure H funds for firefighter positions, supervisory roles, and other personnel supporting emergency response and related services.

**Essential Equipment and Facilities: \$4,100,402**

Most agencies reporting capital investments described projects in planning or early implementation phases, including facility assessments, planning activities, reserve accumulation for future projects, and long-lead apparatus procurement.

**Countywide Services: \$2,875,624**

Measure H funds allocated to the Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association supported countywide fire service activities including emergency dispatch services through REDCOM, wildfire prevention coordination through Fire Safe Sonoma, regional recruitment efforts, wildfire upstaffing during high-risk periods, and technology and administrative support for Measure H implementation.

## Fund Balance

Agencies reported a combined fund balance of \$19,389,822 at the close of FY 24-25. Many agencies reported phased implementation of staffing and capital improvements, and as a result, fund balances remain in place for planned future expenditures such as staffing, apparatus purchases, and capital construction.

Expenditures and fund balances do not equal total revenue due to the timing of agency reporting. Fourth quarter disbursements occur after the close of the fiscal year, and several agencies did not include these revenues in their FY 24-25 reports. The Committee will work with agencies in future reporting cycles to support annual reports that reflect the complete fiscal year.

## **Committee Findings**

The Oversight Committee provides transparency and fiscal accountability regarding revenues generated by the Measure H transactions and use tax. The Committee reviews the receipt and expenditure of these revenues to evaluate whether expenditures are consistent with the Ordinance.

The Committee found that agencies reported meeting the maintenance of effort requirements, showing that Measure H funds were used to increase services rather than replace existing funding. First-year investments resulted in improvements to services through increased staffing, expanded fire prevention activities, and the initial phases of capital planning that will support reduced response times and increased service capacity.

As this report reflects the first year of Measure H implementation, the Committee reviewed areas of the Ordinance where additional discussion may support consistent evaluation of expenditures, such as the use of Measure H funds for administrative support.

The Committee looks forward to continuing its role providing independent oversight to support transparency and fiscal accountability through ongoing review of agency reports and annual reporting to the Board of Supervisors.

## Appendix

- Map of Fire Districts

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