

California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

State Responsibility Area (SRA)
Fire Prevention Benefit Fee
Definitions and Application

SRA Fees, Defined

- Public Resources Code Section 4210, *et seq.* imposes an annual “State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fee”.
- The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (the Board) refers to this fee as the State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Benefit Fee (SRA Fee), in accordance with Title 14, Chapter 13 – State Responsibility Area Fees [Emergency Regulations].

SRA Fees, Defined

- As defined by the law, individual owners of habitable structures located on lands or parcels that lie within California's designated State Responsibility Area (SRA) will pay this fee.
 - In accordance with law, all fees collected, aside from various administrative costs, will be appropriated in the annual Budget Act.
 - The State will use the money to fund a variety of fire prevention activities, as specified.

Other Important Definitions Related to SRA Fees

In order to understand the application of the SRA fee on various lands or parcels within California, the following definitions apply:

- **State Responsibility Area (SRA)** – SRA lands correspond to areas within California that are covered in timber and other vegetation, or adjacent rangelands, which provide watershed value.
 - The State of California holds primary financial responsibility of preventing and suppressing fires in these areas.
 - The Board designates SRA boundaries, pursuant to Public Resources Code 4102 and Board Regulation 14 CCR 1220, et seq.
 - SRA responsibility does NOT include lands within Federal Responsibility Area (FRA), Local Responsibility Area (LRA), or lands within an incorporated city.

SRA Fee Definitions, Cont.

- **Dwelling Unit** – As defined by Title 14, Chapter 13 – State Responsibility Area Fees [Emergency Regulations], a dwelling unit is a unit providing independent living facilities for one or more persons, including provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and/or sanitation. Mobile and manufactured homes and condominiums are considered dwelling units.

SRA Fee Definitions, Cont.

- **Habitable Structure** – A building that contains one or more dwelling units or that can be occupied for residential use.
 - Buildings occupied for residential use include single family homes, multi-dwelling structures, mobile homes and manufactured homes, and condominiums.
 - Habitable structures do NOT include incidental buildings, such as detached garages, barns, outdoor facilities, and sheds.

SRA Fee Definitions, Cont.

- **Property Owner** – means that individual, company, corporation, or other entity that is the owner of record of said habitable structure in the county assessor rolls or as recorded on the records of the Department of Housing and Community Development on July 1 of the State fiscal year for which the fee is due.

SRA Fee Definitions, Cont.

- **Fire Prevention Fee Amount** – The fee assessed by the State to the owner of a habitable structure on a parcel within the SRA. In accordance with Board of Forestry regulation, this fee is currently one hundred-fifty dollars (\$150.00) per year.

SRA Fee Definitions, Cont.

- **Fire Prevention Fee Reduction Amount** – Under qualifying conditions, the owner of a habitable structure on a parcel within the SRA could receive a reduction of the annual Fire Prevention Fee Amount of thirty-five dollars (\$35.00). In order to receive the reduction, the following two conditions must be met:
 - Must be a property owner of a habitable structure within the SRA;
 - AND**
 - Also must be within the boundaries of a local agency that provides fire protection services.

How the SRA Fee is Assessed to Habitable Structures

- The Title 14, Chapter 13 – State Responsibility Area Fees [Emergency Regulations] stipulate that State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Prevention Benefit Fees (SRA Fees) are to be imposed on “Habitable Structures” as defined within the Emergency Regulations. Pursuant to the Emergency Regulations, the fees shall be imposed on:
 - A building that contains one or more dwelling units; or
 - That can be occupied for residential use
- The delineation of a property that meets the criteria to receive a bill for the SRA Fee is based on data received from the county assessor’s offices, the California Department of Housing and Community Development, and other information sources.

Examples of “Habitable Structures”

Single Family Homes

Example 1: A qualifying single-family home built on a 5-acre parcel that resides within the SRA, but is not in an area that receives local fire protection services. No other qualifying structures exist on the parcel.

Total Fee amount = \$150.00

Example 2: Same as above, however, the structure is also located within an area that receives local fire protection services.

Total fee amount = \$150.00 - \$35.00 = \$115.00

Habitable Structure Examples, Cont.

More Than One Habitable Structure on a Single Parcel

Example 1: Three (3) habitable structures on single parcel of land.
Total Fee amount = \$150.00 x 3 = \$450.00

Example 2: Same example as above, however, the structures are located within an area that receives local fire protection services.
Total fee amount = \$450.00 - \$105.00 (\$35.00 x 3) = \$345.00

Habitable Structure Examples, Cont.

Multi-Dwelling Structures

(This includes duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and apartment buildings)

Example 1: A qualifying apartment building with 10 dwelling units (under one ownership).

Total fee amount = \$150.00 per building

Example 2: Same as above, however, the apartment building is located within an area that receives local fire protection services.

Total fee = \$150.00 - \$35.00 = \$115.00

Habitable Structure Examples, Cont.

Residential Condominiums

Example 1: Residential condominiums or townhomes within a larger building (that have individual parcel numbers).

Total fee amount = \$150.00 per condominium

Example 2: Same as above, however, the condominium or townhome is located within an area that receives local fire protection services.

Total fee amount = \$150.00 - \$35.00 = \$115.00

Habitable Structure Examples, Cont.

Mobile and Manufactured Homes (residential)

Example 1: Single mobile homes or manufactured homes.
Total fee amount = \$150.00 per mobile or manufactured home

Example 2: Same as above, however, the mobile or manufactured home is located within an area that receives local fire protection services.
Total fee amount = \$150.00 - \$35.00 = \$115.00

Habitable Structure Examples, Cont.

Residential and Commercial/Other Mixed Use Buildings

Example 1: A building with both residential and commercial facilities within the building; (example - a building with grocery store on the first floor and the owner's home on the second floor)

Total fee amount = \$150.00 per building

Example 2: Same as above, however, the structure is located within an area that receives local fire protection services.

Total fee amount = \$150.00 - \$35.00 = \$115.00

Habitable Structure Examples, Cont.

Government Owned or Other Non-Profit Owned Residential Housing

Example 1: A single family home owned by a governmental or non-profit agency that is exempt from property taxes.

Total fee amount = \$150.00

Example 2: Same as above, however, the structure is located within an area that receives local fire protection services.

Total fee amount = \$150.00 - \$35.00 = \$115.00

Habitable Structure Examples, Cont.

Government Owned or Non-Profit Owned Multi-Dwelling Structure

Example 1: An apartment building owned by a governmental or non-profit agency that is exempt from property taxes.

Total fee amount = \$150.00 per building

Example 2: Same as above, however, the structure is located within an area that receives local fire protection services.

Total fee amount = \$150.00 - \$35.00 = \$115.00

Examples of Buildings That Typically are Not Classified as “Habitable Structures”

Commercial or Industrial Property

Property types that are typically classified by county assessors as commercial or industrial use buildings typically would not be subject to the SRA Fees.

- These properties are considered to be a commercial enterprise, and such buildings most often do not provide provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and/or sanitation.
- Typical examples would include offices, stores, hotels, motels, commercial short term occupancy cabins and other commercial or industrial uses.

Examples of buildings that typically are not classified as “Habitable Structures”

Institutional Property

Other property types that are often classified as institutional or other by county assessors may not be subject to the SRA Fees.

- They either do not typically provide provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and/or sanitation within the dwelling unit.
- They are not typically considered as being a residential type property.
- These property types would also include such buildings as jails, hospitals, churches, and schools.

State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fee Expenditures

Please See Handout

QUESTIONS?