



SONOMA COUNTY VACATION RENTAL PROGRAM

District 5: Status Update and Next Steps (October 2023)

Website: PermitSonoma.org/VacationRentals | Email: PRMD-VacationRentals@Sonoma-County.org

Vacation rentals play an important role in Sonoma County’s tourism economy. However, they also have potential to cause detrimental impacts and pose a risk to the public safety, health and welfare, and impact availability of housing stock for long term tenants. From 2022 to 2023, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and Permit Sonoma took several steps to address these concerns.

Changes in 2022	Changes in 2023
<p>The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors approved updates to the Vacation Rental Ordinance, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibiting new vacation rentals in R-1 zoned (low-density residential) areas, • Allowing for caps to be placed on vacation rentals in areas of concentration, • Restricting corporate ownership of vacation rentals, • Limiting Vacation Rental Licenses to one license per property owner, • Calling for Vacation Rental Licenses and performance standards to apply in the Coastal Zone. 	<p>A Vacation Rental License is now required for all existing and proposed vacation rentals. The licensing requirement helps address health, safety, and quality of life issues regarding vacation rentals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum occupancies cannot exceed 12 guests regardless of vacation rental size or bedrooms. • New noise limits for daytime and nighttime, all outdoor amplified music prohibited. • Parking requirements are stricter. • Neighbors must be notified whenever licenses are issued or renewed. • Written evacuation instructions must be provided to guests. • Outdoor burning is prohibited and vacation rentals must maintain defensible space.

Enforcement Improvements:

- Penalties have increased for violations and property manager response times must be faster.
- Property managers must resolve issues within one hour, or 30 minutes during quiet hours (10 PM to 7 AM).
- Permit Sonoma continues to run a 24/7 hotline for vacation rental complaints to improve enforcement. Call: (707) 875-6619.

Vacation Rental Exclusion Areas:

Vacation Rentals are:

- **Prohibited** on lands zoned: R1, R2, R3, LIA, TP, C0, C1, C3, CR, AS, MP, M1, M2, M3, PF, and some PC zoned parcels.
- **Prohibited** on agricultural or open space lands subject to a Land Conservation Act (also known as the Williamson Act) Contract.
- **Prohibited** where the X Vacation Rental Exclusion Combining Zone is in effect .
- **Limited** to 5% or 10% of residences where the X Vacation Rental Cap Combining Zone has been applied.



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Status of the following areas of District 5:

Area Name	Limit	Current concentration, if applicable:
Armstrong Woods Road	Prohibited by X Zone	11%
Austin Creek	5% Cap	14%
Drake Road	Prohibited by X Zone	0%
Guerneville	Prohibited by R1 Zoning	12%
Hacienda	5% Cap	8%
Monte Rio	5% Cap	13%
Monte Rosa and Guernewood	Prohibited by X Zone	8%
Neeley Road	Prohibited by X Zone	5%
Northwood	5% Cap	15%
Rio Dell	5% Cap	4%
Rio Nido	Prohibited by R1 Zoning	7.1%
Summerhome Park	5% Cap	8%
Terraces and Villa Grande	5% Cap	13%
Vacation Beach	Prohibited by R1 Zoning	19.2%

Next Steps:

1. Staff is currently implementing recently adopted changes to the vacation rental program, including roll-out of the new vacation rental license program.
2. The County will monitor the effectiveness of new regulations and report back to decision makers with findings and recommendations.
3. Staff will work with community members, public safety officials, and other stakeholders through the General Plan process to inform future updates to the Vacation Rental Program.

Upcoming Informational Workshops

- October 5, 6-7:30 PM at Forestville Library. 7050 Covey Rd.
- October 19, 6-7:30 PM at Monte Rio Parks and Rec. 20488 Highway 116
- October 25, 6-7:30 PM at Guerneville School. 14630 Armstrong Woods Rd.