

County officials worth the money

The people who run departments of Santa Cruz County government make anywhere from \$50,000 to \$108,000 a year — and they're worth it, said Ray Belgard, county supervisor for the Watsonville area.

"To somebody on the outside, the salaries might look like a lot, but people don't understand all the things that go into it," Belgard said. A department head's job "is like being the chief officer of a company," said Belgard, former Watsonville chief of police.

For instance, John Fantham, who makes \$85,776 a year as head of Santa Cruz County's Public Works Department, oversees 226 workers and a budget of \$30 million annually.

The Health Services Agency, headed by Elinor Hall, has 363 employees for a variety of programs, including mental health, care for the indigent, outpatient clinics and drug- and alcohol-treatment programs. Hall's pay is also \$85,776.

Some department heads could make considerably more in comparable jobs in private industry, Susan Mauriello, county administrative officer, said.

"Take someone like our county counsel. If you were paying by the hour, it could cost \$200 an hour" or more, Mauriello said. County Counsel Dwight Herr makes \$94,704 a year, or \$45.53 an hour, based on a 40-hour week.

Mauriello said a chief financial officer of a corporation can make much more than county Auditor-Controller Gary Knutson, who is paid \$77,892.

District Attorney Art Danner said the top private trial attorneys in the county can make upward of \$200,000 annually.

The second-highest paid county official is Planning Director Diane Guzman, who makes \$101,640.

Guzman's salary is more than \$40,000 above the pay of her pre-

decessor, Kris Schenk, who resigned under pressure in 1988. Guzman's pay was \$79,747 when she was hired.

Supervisors hired Guzman with the idea that she could improve the Planning Department, which had been the target of critics who say the department is anti-growth and processes claims too slowly.

Dave Morales, a field representative for the Service Employees International Union, which represents county workers, said there's

a feeling among Planning Department workers that Guzman "has not risen to the occasion" and that she is making too much money.

Some workers on the Public Works Department crew feel they are not making enough and that those who work in the department's offices are making too much, Morales said.

But for county employees in general, Morales said, "Overall I don't get a lot of complaints."

—Lane Wallace

A look at city paychecks

	Watsonville	Santa Cruz
City manager	\$82,104	\$84,504
Asst. City Manager	\$69,096	*\$66,624
City attorney	\$68,040	**
City clerk	\$53,340	\$51,660
Police chief	\$67,044	\$74,052
Public works director	\$71,160	\$74,052
Recreation director	\$55,500	\$66,624
Library director	\$52,860	\$66,624
Fire chief	\$63,096	\$66,624
Finance director	\$57,732	\$66,624
Chief Building Official	\$50,784	\$48,876
Office assistant	\$16,632- \$20,232	\$18,744- \$19,680
Assistant planner	\$29,580- \$35,998	\$28,812- \$36,768
Police officer	\$27,324- \$34,896	\$30,456- \$40,812
Custodian	\$18,336- \$22,232	\$18,444- \$23,544

* Top step of a currently vacant position
** Contract with outside firm

(Source: City records)

How much do they make?

	Santa Cruz County	Monterey County
*Supervisors	\$49,176	\$52,932
Adm. Officer	**\$109,080	\$99,180
Planning Director	**\$101,640	\$68,988
*Sheriff-Coroner	\$89,832	\$77,928
*Treasurer	\$75,900	\$72,792
*Assessor	\$74,292	\$74,220
*Auditor-Controller	\$77,892	\$77,532
County Counsel	\$94,704	\$99,180
*District Attorney	\$92,244	\$88,872
Health Services Admin.	\$85,776	\$104,988
Personnel Director	\$69,948	\$71,304
Public Works Director	\$85,776	\$86,664
Ag. Commissioner	\$50,124	\$61,980
Parks Director	\$68,388	\$65,448
*County Clerk	\$69,972	\$69,024
*Mun. Court. Judge	\$90,680	\$90,680
*Sup. Court Judge	\$99,297	\$99,297
Deputy Sheriff	\$31,596- \$40,104	\$27,900- \$37,512
Planner I	\$24,936- \$32,304	\$21,240- \$26,376
Typist-clerk	\$17,724- \$21,756	\$14,256- \$20,616
Custodian	\$18,264- \$22,752	\$16,800- \$20,820
Asst. Dist. Atty.	\$31,740- ***\$73,816	\$29,532- \$66,576
Sheriff's Lt.	\$47,316- \$63,132	\$39,444- \$48,864

*denotes elected position
**Includes \$7,500 in deferred compensation
***Includes two attorneys paid 15% above top scale of \$64,188 because of specialized abilities

(Source: Alameda County Taxpayers Assn. annual salary survey of all California counties)