

Sources

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Artwork by Russell Brutsché



▶ Sea-level Rise in Santa Cruz County

What to expect and why

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Why is the sea rising?

People are creating too much air pollution in the form of carbon dioxide and other gasses. It's trapping too much heat from the sun so the earth is warming up like a greenhouse. The ocean is warming and ice is melting off the land so our water is rising and our beaches are going to become more narrow.

As sea-levels rise, the city of Santa Cruz will also experience an increased incidence of severe flooding near the riverbank including downtown and the beach flats neighborhood.

The water table near the riverbank is already close to the surface so businesses that currently pump the water away may not be able to continue to do so.

We can help our planet by...

- **Walking more instead of driving**
- **Using our air conditioners less**
- **Bringing our own bags to the store**
- **Sharing our used things so others don't need to buy new things**
- **Eating fresh food that is grown in California.**
- **Reducing our meat and dairy consumption**
- **Reducing our packaging by buying fresh produce or in bulk quantities in a recyclable container**
- **Reaching out to our politicians to express our concern over the climate**
- **Voting on measures that support environmental protection**

Estimated Local Rise

Last century, sea-level rose approximately one foot. Future estimates suggest:

1+ foot of rise by 2030

2+ feet of rise by 2050

5-7+ feet of rise by 2100 and downtown Santa Cruz may be flooded at high tide.

15 feet of rise by 2100 if the West Antarctic Ice Sheet collapses in a worst-case scenario.

Local rise differs from global averages. Sea-level rise **will continue** but we have the opportunity to affect its rate in the future. It depends on **whether we continue to pollute** at our current pace. We still have the chance to help make a difference.