Environmental Health Staffing, Workload & Funding

Los Angeles County Association of Environmental Health Specialists
Bargaining Unit 331

This presentation examines:

1. Environmental Health staffing levels
2. Field inspection capacity
3. Permit-generated revenue
4. Increased workload demands
5. Decreased ability to protect public health.

PERMITTED FACILITIES THAT HEVE NEVER INSPECTED

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Program Activity — FY 2022–23 → FY 2025–26

	FY 2022–23 → FY 2025–26	% Change
High Risk Food Permits Issued	19,366 → 19,227	**-0.01%**
Sites Never Inspected	5453 → 8,449	**+55.00**
HOUSING 5+ Units	59859 →59842	**0.00%**
Sites Never Inspected	27,542 → 58,180	**+111.%**
Public Pools	15,741 → 15741	**0.00%**
Sites Never Inspected	7752 → 12,148	**+56.00%**

PERMITTED FACILITIES THAT HEVE NEVER INSPECTED

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Increase in Sites Never Inspected

HIGH-RISK FOOD
5453 → 8,375 = +55%
HOUSING – 5+ UNITS
27,542 → 58,160 = +111.00%
PUBLIC POOLS
7752 → 12,226 = +56%

- Permitted workload remains stable while
- Number of "Never Inspected" Food, Pool, Housing sites have increased.

Food, Housing, & Pool Inspectors

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June 2020:
235 Environmental Health Specialist II

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June 2026:
85 Environmental Health Specialist II

- 150 Fewer Field Staff
- 64 Percent FIELD STAFF DECREASE
  Public Food Facilities, Public Pools, Public Housing

FIELD STAFFING

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Staffing Overview — August 2026

- **309 Field Inspection staff**
  - Primary public-facing workforce conducting inspections and enforcing State of CA and Los Angeles County health and safety requirements
  - Includes Environmental Health Specialists I, II, and III
- **110 Supervisors**
  - Includes Director, Assistant Directors(2), Branch Directors (5), Managers(11), Chiefs(56), EHS IV(35)

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	June 2020	June 2026
Field Staff	235	85
Supervisors	33	38

. How does the significant decrease in staffing affect inspection capacity?

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RETENTION–RECRUITMENT

- 2 million dollars approved for Environmental Health Department budget in 2024, to hire 14 ADDITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INSPECTORS for the new Rent Habitability program.
- Management did not hire 14 new Inspectors for this program; they INVOLUNTARILY transferred 5 long term staff members. Some of the staff were transferred more than 25 miles from their previous headquarters, incurring personal financial losses(PAY CUT) due to increased cost of gasoline, auto insurance, wear and tear on personal vehicle, etc.
- The toll on their mental health is undeniable. They are driving an extra personal hour or two each way back and forth to work due to traffic conditions and this is interfering with their personal lives. This type of action, due to a high vacancy rate, has a significant impact on employee recruitment and retention.

Environmental Health Permit Revenue

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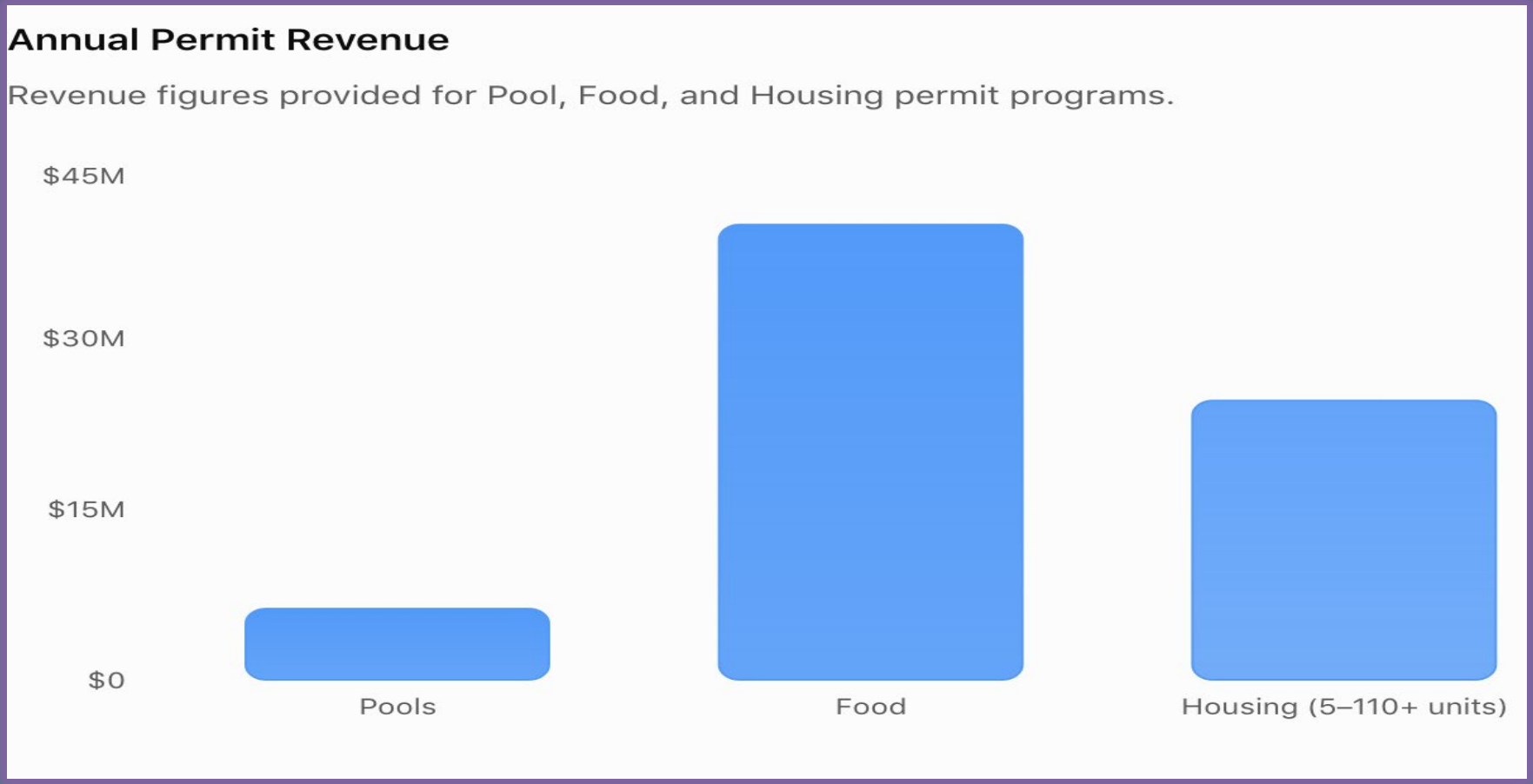

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Annual Revenue approximation

Public Pools – High/Moderate/Low Risk
$6.24M
Food – High/Moderate/Low Risk
$40.00M
Housing – 5–110+ Units
$24.50M
Total Annual Permit Revenue
$70.75M

Environmental Health Permit Revenue

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Estimated Annual Permit fees: $70.8M
Annual revenue from Food, Housing, and Pool permits
Estimated Additional Annual Permit Fees: $???
Fee Schedule is available to the General Public; however, the actual number of permits issued for all other Environmental Health Programs for fiscal years ending in 2023 and 2026, were not provided.

The Food, Multi Family Housing, and Pool permit programs generate over $70.8 million dollars in permit fees annually.
The Environmental Health Department also generates permit fees from several other programs including but not limited to:
Solid Waste, Used Tires, Cross Connections, Drinking Water, Onsite Wastewater Treatment, Cannabis, Garment, Body Art, Medical Marijuana, Camps and Schools, Rental Housing Habitability, Plan Check, Community Events, Food Trucks, and Home-based Food Operations.

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Environmental Health Classifications are FULLY revenue offset through fees and one time funding in the Environmental Health trust fund.

Department of Public Health operates this program within available flexibility afforded by the one-time Environmental Health trust fund that requires DILIGENT DEPT OF PUBLIC HEALTH OVERSIGHT
S7K Trust Fund
Permit fees are for Environmental Health Dept. expenses ONLY
Verification requested/required-not provided
List of all staff/job duties paid with EH permit fees

Assembly Bill 2561 — Vacancy & Recruitment Information

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Key Issue
Vacancies exceeding 20% of authorized full-time positions

- Lack of competitive monetary compensation, understaffed working conditions, and overstaffed supervisory positions may be adding to the ability to recruit and retain qualified Environmental Health staff.

- Are current recruitment, retention, and compensation strategies sufficient to maintain Environmental Health field staffing?

THE BIG PICTURE

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- **Stable Workload**

Permitted facilities remain substantial

- **Reduced Field Capacity**

235 → 85 field staff

- **Growing Inspection Gap**

Never-inspected sites have increased

The Public Health and Safety for Los Angeles County residents and visitors is at an increased risk due to continuous decrease in staff and subsequent field inspections.

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GOAL: ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES ARE ESSENTIAL TO PROTECTING ANGELENOS

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Achieving this goal has not been possible due to the following:

- Declining field staffing
- Increasing number of sites never inspected
- Recruitment and retention challenges
- Non-competitive compensation and working conditions
- Lack of transparency and accountability regarding Environmental Health resources

- The recommendation is that the Los Angeles County Board Of Supervisors ensure that the Environmental Health department has the staffing, funding, and resources necessary to protect the health and safety of all residents and visitors to Los Angeles County.