

Marin Emergency Radio Authority

Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA) Measure A Parcel Tax Frequently Asked Questions

[Access the Application](#)

(APPLICATION FILING DEADLINE - on or before - JUNE 1, 2016)

Who is eligible to receive a low-income senior exemption for the Measure A Parcel Tax for the 2016-2017 tax year?

To qualify for a low-income senior exemption for the Measure A parcel tax for a single family residence, you must (1) be 65 years of age or older by December 31, 2016, (2) own and occupy your residence, and (3) not have earned a total annual household income of more than **\$65,700 in 2015**.

What is the deadline to file a low-income senior exemption application for the 2016-2017 tax year?

The deadline to file a low-income senior exemption application for the 2016-2017 tax year is June 1, 2016.

Note: Mailing address (as noted on application):

Marin Emergency Radio Authority
c/o NBS
32605 Temecula Parkway, Suite 100
Temecula, CA 92592

Fax: (1) (951) 296-1998

Email: pos@nbsgov

***APPLICATIONS MAILED, FAXED, EMAILED OR HAND-DELIVERED TO MERA
AT THE NOVATO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED***

Do I need to submit a low-income senior exemption application every year?

Yes. Because the exemption is based upon income, and income may change from year-to-year, you will need to file a low-income senior exemption application every year.

Marin Emergency Radio Authority (MERA)

Measure A Parcel Tax FAQs - FY2016-2017 Tax Year

Page 2

Where does the money go?

The parcel taxes will be used to replace Marin County's aging emergency communications system; reduce 911 response times, improve communications reliability during earthquakes, floods, fires and other disasters; and ensure reliable communications among police, fire, and paramedic first responders throughout Marin County.

For how many years has the parcel tax been authorized?

The Measure A parcel tax has a term of 20 years, commencing in the 2015-2016 tax year. The final levy for the Measure A parcel tax will be for the 2034-2035 tax year.

Who voted for this parcel tax?

The Measure A parcel tax was put before the registered voters of Marin County as a General Election ballot measure on November 4, 2014. The measure passed with 67.14% approval.

I occupy multiple residences which are located on different parcels. Can I receive an exemption for all of them?

No. You may only claim **ONE** parcel as your primary residence.

I sent in the low-income senior exemption application before June 1. Why is the charge for the Measure A parcel tax still on my property tax bill?

If you have evidence that you submitted a low-income senior exemption prior to June 1 (e.g. certified mail receipt, fax confirmation, receipt from our office of hand-delivery, etc.), please provide a copy of such evidence to us. We will review on a case-by-case situation to verify your submission of a low-income senior exemption application.

If you have further questions, please contact NBS: (1) (800) 676-7516

What is NBS?

NBS is the consulting firm MERA has contracted with to provide post-election tax administration services, including property owner support, handling exemption requests and placing correct parcels and tax amounts on the County tax roll. They also provide comprehensive annual parcel tax administration services to other public agencies in Marin County and throughout California.

NBS assures confidential and secure handling of all taxpayer information.

Low-Income Senior Exemption Application

Measure A: Marin Emergency Radio Authority - \$29 Parcel Tax

This application serves as a request for a Measure A low-income senior exemption.

(Measure A) - To qualify for a low-income senior exemption for the \$29 Measure A parcel tax for a single family residence, you must be 65 years of age or older by December 31 of the tax year, own and occupy your residence located within Marin County, and earn a total annual household income* of not more than **\$65,700** (HUD Low-Income limit for Marin County residents).

This application must be filed on or before June 1, 2016 for the 2016/17 tax year. Failure to file on time will result in rejection of your application unless good cause can be shown for failure to timely file. If approved, the low-income senior exemption will only apply for one year. You must file a new low-income senior exemption form for each year in which the Measure A parcel tax is in effect.

All applicants must complete the following information (Please print clearly or type):

Owner-Occupied Residential Parcel #: _____

(This 8 digit Parcel # can be found on the upper left hand corner of your Property Tax Bill)

Property Owner's Name(s): _____

Property Address: _____

City & Zip: _____

Daytime Telephone: _____

1. PROOF OF AGE (Required)

Please attach a copy of one of the following documents that shows that you will be at least 65 years of age by December 31, 2016.

Driver's License California ID Card Passport Birth Certificate Other Proof of Age

2. PROOF OF INCOME (Required)

Total Household Income* \$ _____ (Max Household Income is \$65,700 ¹)

1 - HUD Low-Income Limits for Marin County for FY 2015

**Household Income is the combined gross income, taxable or non-taxable, for all persons who occupy a single family residence and does not include Federal and State income tax adjustments, deductions, exemptions or credits.*

Please enclose in a sealed envelope a copy of your most-recently filed Form 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ tax return. This form will be stamped and kept "Confidential" and will only be used for determining your income qualification. Please include only the page(s) showing income.

3. SIGNATURE IS REQUIRED BELOW TO PROCESS APPLICATION

I declare under penalty of perjury that this claim is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and complete.

Executed this day of _____, 2016.

Property Owner's Signature: _____

Warning: This application is subject to verification and any misrepresentations could result in denial of the exemption.

4. MAILING ADDRESS (Before mailing, please make a photocopy for your records)

Please mail, fax, or email the completed application with attachments to:

**Marin Emergency Radio Authority
c/o NBS
32605 Temecula Parkway, Suite 100
Temecula, CA 92592**

**Fax: (951) 296-1998
Email: pos@nbsgov.com**

APPLICATIONS MAILED OR HAND-DELIVERED TO THE NOVATO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

If you have any questions about the Measure A Parcel Tax or the low-income senior exemption, please call NBS at 1-800-676-7516

Marin Voice: MERA is making headway in emergency radio upgrade

By Richard Pearce and Dave Jeffries

Thursday, March 3, 2016

In our combined 66 years in public safety, we've learned that reliable communication tools are critical to the security of the residents we're sworn to protect.

When residents dial 911, they need to know that the system can help our public safety workers respond to any emergency.

In November 2014, Marin County voters approved a parcel tax to support the development of an updated radio communication system for first responders. There is a lot of progress to report.

First, the basics: Twenty-five agencies belong to the Marin Emergency Radio Authority, or MERA. All of Marin's law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services rely on MERA to enable rapid response and coordination for emergency needs. The MERA system provides Marin agencies their first true multi-agency, multi-discipline system to support not only day-to-day operations but the mutual aid capabilities we need to enable local agencies to work together efficiently during time-sensitive emergencies.

Although it has worked well since it was designed in 1998, it is aging and approaching obsolescence.

Prior to the 2014 election, MERA staff delivered presentations to all 25 MERA member councils and boards as well as to community groups. MERA decided to move forward with plans for a new system, which we're calling the Next Generation Public Safety Voice Radio System, for several key reasons:

- **Reliability.** The original system is experiencing component malfunctions. Replacement equipment is either no longer manufactured or being phased out.
- **Capacity.** MERA has nearly 2,900 users today on a system originally designed for 1,580. The system must expand capacity to eliminate busy signals during major emergencies and add mutual aid partners. The Next Gen system is planned for 5,000 users.
- **Coverage.** Some areas of Marin have limited radio coverage, which can result in longer response times for public safety personnel. The Next Gen system will include the addition of new tower sites.
- **Loss of radio frequencies.** Existing federal legislation will require that we give back our current radio frequencies in 2021, forcing a move to new frequencies.

Since the election, MERA has worked diligently to implement the new system. MERA selected Federal Engineering in July 2015 to help guide the selection of a vendor for the Next Gen system. Federal Engineering has been busy reviewing our current radio sites and areas where MERA would like to improve radio reception.

Federal has developed guidance on strategies to extend the life of the Next Gen system, and reviewed current and expected coverage scenarios in preparation for soliciting vendor bids in May 2016 for the MERA Next Gen System.

The request for proposals is a key next step. By late summer, MERA will be reviewing proposals with the intent of having a vendor selected by the end of the calendar year. After that critical milestone, we will focus on detailed design and implementation.

We want the new system operational by the end of 2018.

A Citizens Oversight Committee has been selected and will be reviewing the use of the parcel tax proceeds. The committee includes one member from each supervisorial district selected from citizens who are subject to the parcel tax.

We appreciate the countywide support for this critical project.

We would like to remind the community that there is a low-income senior exemption to the MERA parcel tax. Requests for exemption must be filed annually no later than June 1 of each year.

For more information about MERA, visit meraonline.org.

Tiburon Fire Chief Richard Pearce is the president of the Marin Emergency Radio Authority board. Dave Jeffries, a retired police captain, is deputy executive officer for MERA's Next Gen System.

URL: <http://www.marinij.com/opinion/20160303/marin-voice-mera-is-making-headway-in-emergency-radio-upgrade>

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Media Advisory
Marin Emergency Radio Authority
*A Joint Powers Authority of
25 Marin Agencies Providing Public
Safety Communications*

For Immediate Release:

March 8, 2016

Contact:

Dave Jeffries, (707) 483-1098

mera.djeffries@gmail.com

MERA Announces 2016 Senior Homeowner Exemption Applications
A Process for Income Qualified Seniors to Claim an Exemption from MERA's Parcel Tax

Qualified low-income seniors in Marin County are eligible to file for a tax exemption from a parcel tax that supports the County's next-generation emergency radio system. This exemption must be applied for annually, so anyone who qualified for this exemption this past year, must re-apply.

In November, 2014, Marin County voters approved Measure A, a parcel tax measure to fund the Marin Emergency Radio Authority's Next Generation Public Safety Radio System.

One item included in the measure was the ability of income-qualified senior homeowners to file for an exemption from the parcel tax.

Eligibility:

To qualify for a low-income senior exemption for the Measure A parcel tax for a single-family residence, you must (1) be 65 years of age or older by December 31, 2016, (2) own and occupy your residence, and (3) not have earned a total annual household income of more than **\$65,700 in 2015**.

Deadline:

The deadline to file a low-income senior exemption application for the 2016-2017 tax year is **June 1, 2016**. The exemption must be renewed annually.

Applications:

Applications for exemption and additional details are available at:

www.meraonline.org

QUICK LINKS

Low-Income Senior Exemption 2016-2017 Tax Year

If you have questions about the parcel tax exemption, please contact NBS at 1-800-676-7516.



Media Advisory
Marin Emergency Radio Authority
*A Joint Powers Authority of
25 Marin Agencies Providing Public
Safety Communications*

For Immediate Release:

April 4, 2016

DRAFT

Contact:

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A Reminder about MERA's 2016 Senior Homeowner Exemption Applications

A Process for Income Qualified Seniors to Claim an Exemption from MERA's Parcel Tax

Qualified low-income seniors in Marin County are eligible to file for a tax exemption from a parcel tax that supports the County's next-generation emergency radio system. This exemption must be applied for annually, even if you have previously qualified for it.

In November, 2014, Marin County voters approved Measure A, a parcel tax measure to fund the Marin Emergency Radio Authority's Next Generation Public Safety Radio System.

One item included in the measure was the ability of income-qualified senior homeowners to file for an exemption from the parcel tax.

Eligibility:

To qualify for a low-income senior exemption for the Measure A parcel tax for a single-family residence, you must (1) be 65 years of age or older by December 31, 2016, (2) own and occupy your residence, and (3) not have earned a total annual household income of more than **\$65,700 in 2015**.

Deadline:

The deadline to file a low-income senior exemption application for the 2016-2017 tax year is **June 1, 2016**. The exemption must be renewed annually.

Applications:

Applications for exemption and additional details are available at: www.meraonline.org
Applications have also been made available to all 25 member agencies for distribution as well.

If you have questions about the parcel tax exemption, please contact NBS at (800) 676-7516.



Media Advisory
Marin Emergency Radio Authority
*A Joint Powers Authority of
25 Marin Agencies Providing Public
Safety Communications*

For Immediate Release:
May 02, 2016

DRAFT

Contact:
Dave Jeffries, (707) 483-1098
mera.djeffries@gmail.com

A Final Reminder.....
MERA's 2016 Senior Homeowner Exemption Applications Are Due By June 1
Are you eligible for this Parcel Tax Exemption?

Qualified low-income seniors in Marin County are eligible to file for a tax exemption from a parcel tax that supports the County's next-generation emergency radio system, but it must be applied for each year.

In November, 2014, Marin County voters approved Measure A, a parcel tax measure to fund the Marin Emergency Radio Authority's Next Generation Public Safety Radio System.

One item included in the measure was the ability of income-qualified senior homeowners to file for an exemption from the parcel tax.

Eligibility:

To qualify for a low-income senior exemption for the Measure A parcel tax for a single-family residence, you must (1) be 65 years of age or older by December 31, 2016, (2) own and occupy your residence, and (3) not have earned a total annual household income of more than **\$65,700 in 2015**.

Deadline:

The deadline to file a low-income senior exemption application for the 2016-2017 tax year is **June 1, 2015**. The exemption must be renewed annually.

Applications:

Applications for exemption and additional details are available at: www.meraonline.org
Applications have also been made available to all 25 member agencies for distribution as well.

If you have questions about the parcel tax exemption, please contact NBS at (800) 676-7516.